

On August 3, 1939, Dr. Ernst Mayr and I watched a male Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) that had learned a handy method of feeding on grass heads. The bird was first noted as it flew along the roadside in Strawberry Canyon, Berkeley. It alighted on the barbed wire fence ahead of our car and began feeding at once. Canary grass (*Phalaris californica*) grew to a height of 20 to 26 inches and thus extended above the lowest fence wire which was 18 inches above the ground. This species of grass appears to have insufficient rigidity to support a bunting on the tips of its stems. The bunting flew laterally from the wire to a distance of about one foot, seized a grass head in its bill and returned with it to the wire, the grass stem bending over readily. The bird then lowered its bill to the wire and clasped the compact seed head against the wire with its left foot. In this position it picked out the seeds. When the head was well broken apart and the seed supply depleted, the grass stem either slipped free or was allowed to spring back to its normal position. Immediately the bird flew out for another grass head, hovered and returned, and the feeding was continued. This activity was seen at least six times in succession, the foraging taking place to either side of the wire. The bunting seemed able successfully to gauge the distance to which it could operate. Tall grasses no more than 15 inches away always were taken. At no time did it fail through attempting to bend over a head that was too short or one that was too far away.

The fence for 100 feet passed through grass of similar height and maturity. Undoubtedly the bird had lived in or about this vicinity during the current summer and had developed, to its special advantage, this method of feeding from the fence wire.—ALDEN H. MILLER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, October 12, 1939.*

Four Species New to Grand Canyon National Park.—Since publication of the "Check-list of Birds of Grand Canyon National Park" in July, 1937, four species new to Grand Canyon have been recorded. All of these were observed in 1939.

About 3 p.m. on February 12, I found a Western Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea ochracea*) sitting on a clump of burro brush about one-half mile above Indian Gardens. The place marked the lower limit of the snow at that time. I was able to approach within fifteen feet of the bird and to observe it for several minutes. To my knowledge the only other record of this species from northern Arizona is that listed by Swarth (*Pac. Coast Avif.*, No. 10, 1914, p. 54) which was reported by Kennerly from the Little Colorado River in December, 1859.

A Rocky Mountain Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma pinicola*) was discovered in a ponderosa pine by Mrs. H. C. Bryant, about one-half mile east of Grand Canyon village on April 25. Attention was drawn to the owl by the calls of Long-crested Jays. Later, on the same day, Dr. H. C. Bryant, Mrs. McKee and I all had opportunity to see the owl where it sat about thirty feet above the ground. A few days later its nest hole was found by Mrs. Bryant in a neighboring pine and on June 4, when I revisited the site, this hole was still being used. Furthermore, about ten feet below it, a hole of



Fig. 53. Young Saw-whet Owls; south rim of Grand Canyon, Arizona.

Photo by A. L. Brown.

similar appearance was being used by a Black-eared Nuthatch, and five feet still lower was another occupied by a Red-shafted Flicker.

On April 28, a Phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens lepida*) was seen by Mr. A. T. Sevey flitting about among willows and arrowweeds in Lower Pipe Creek Canyon near the Bright Angel Trail. It was observed for about twenty minutes at close range. This species, which is common in the Lower Sonoran Zone in some parts of Arizona, has not heretofore been recorded from the Grand Canyon.

The fourth species new to Grand Canyon is the Saw-whet Owl (*Cryptoglaux acadica acadica*), first seen by rangers A. L. Brown and Perry Brown on June 2 near Hearst Tank, at the National Park boundary about three miles south and east of Grandview Point. At this time four young birds, barely able to fly and with tails still undeveloped, were found near together, one on the ground and three about ten feet up in a ponderosa pine. On several subsequent days these young owls were revisited. Not all of them could be located on any one of these days, but at least two were always in the vicinity. Although they would usually fight one another when placed close together, they could be handled easily and were photographed many times at close range. Only two previous state records of this species are known, one from the San Francisco Mountains (Mearns, Auk, vol. 7, 1890, p. 54) and the other from the Chiricahua Mountains (Miller, Condor, vol. 39, 1937, p. 130).—EDWIN D. MCKEE, *Grand Canyon, Arizona, June 15, 1939.*

Killdeer Nest Sites.—On June 16, 1938, I found the nest of a Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) with four eggs, in the middle of the main-line tracks of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway west of Centerville, Utah. I again visited it on the 18th, taking a friend to photograph it. On my next visit, nineteen days later, the nest was empty, but there was no indication of destruction of either eggs or birds.

In front of the New State Gun Club's house, Davis County, Utah, is a cinder fill through which some stubby salt grass struggles for existence. A roadway to the porch circles this area, which is twenty feet in diameter. Dogs, cats, children, and autos are ever present, but this spot has served as home for a pair of Killdeers for eight seasons according to the custodian's son, Bill Bader. I have noted the nest myself for several seasons, and on May 18, 1938, the first egg had just hatched. In the middle of the one-way road to the clubhouse were several nest excavations, two of which held one and four eggs, respectively.

On another part of the club property I found a full clutch of Killdeer that had been laid in a slight excavation in wet mud. Only a few salicornia stems lined the nest. Twenty feet away in contrast, and possibly with a show of better judgment, an Avocet had erected a platform fully six inches high on which to lay her eggs.—C. W. LOCKERBIE, *Salt Lake City, Utah, April 15, 1939.*

Migration Records at Sea.—Information on coastwise or oceanic movements of land birds is sufficiently scarce to justify recording a few observations on birds seen on their autumn passage when I was a passenger on the *Aorangi*, Australia-bound from Vancouver, B. C., in September, 1938. The vessel left Vancouver on September 28 and we passed through the Strait of Juan de Fuca that night. On the following day numbers of land birds alighted on the ship, with lesser numbers thereafter, and near the Hawaiian Islands flocks of migrating Golden Plover were encountered. The following log gives details of the occurrences.

September 29. Position at noon, latitude 46° 18' N, longitude 129° 02' W; 278 miles from Victoria and 2067 miles from Honolulu. At 8 p.m. the ship was 411 miles from Victoria. The ship began to roll moderately after midnight, but conditions were fair all day. The sky was overcast. In the morning a party of Black-footed Albatrosses (*Diomedea nigripes*) was following the ship; they remained in evidence the whole day, though there were fewer in the afternoon. The main feature of interest, however, was the number of land birds resting on the vessel's decks. The most numerous was the Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). Several birds were seen flying over the water like storm petrels and a number rested for quite a while on the boat deck, aft. Several were tame, evidently because of exhaustion, and I was able to catch one and handle it. The superciliary stripe, lores and medial crown stripe were quite yellow. The coloration was distinctly brighter than that of the form nesting in the Seattle region (*P. s. brooksi*) and I felt that the birds belonged to the Aleutian breeding race, *P. s. sandwichensis*. The birds were seen up till noon but there was none in the afternoon. At 5 p.m. a small sparrow alighted on deck, but I could not get near enough to identify it before it disappeared.

With the Savannah Sparrows, at 11 a.m., were two large sparrows which apparently were Golden-crowns (*Zonotrichia coronata*).

Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) were prominent. In the morning they were seen in pairs and singly, flying to the ship and perching on the deck, until noon. One approached the ship's side shortly before