

12, 1909, the other from Tillamook collected November 26, 1925. Typical *velox* also occurs at both these places.

Porzana carolina. Sora. Hazelton, 1 ♂ juv., August 8. Not found by any of the earlier parties. This seems to be the most northwesterly point at which the species has been taken.

Totanus flavipes. Lesser Yellow-legs. Hazelton, 1 ♂, August 6. An addition to the upper Skeena list.

Larus argentatus smithsonianus. Herring Gull. Hazelton, 1 ♀ ad., August 14; 1 ♀ ad., August 15. Although unrecorded by either Taverner or Swarth, the Herring Gull is stated to breed at Babine Lake, only a few miles from Topley (W. W. Cooke, Bull. U. S. Dept. Agr., No. 292, 1915, p. 37).

Bubo virginianus saturatus. Dusky Horned Owl. Hazelton, 1 ♂, August 23. This specimen is even darker than any of our other skins of *saturatus*. Swarth took a series of 21 horned owls in this region, all of which he referred to *lagophonus*.

Colaptes auratus borealis. Boreal Flicker. Hazelton, 1 ♂, July 24; 1 ♀, August 26. Both show some traces of red-shafted blood.

Perisoreus canadensis canadensis. Canada Jay. Hazelton, 1 ♀ im., August 1; 1 ♂, August 16; 2 ♂, September 1. One of these birds shows an approach to *albescens* of southern Alberta.

Cinclus mexicanus unicolor. Water Ouzel. Hazelton, 1 ♀ ad., 1 ♂ juv., September 14. Not recorded by either of the previous expeditions.

Hesperiphona vespertina brooksi. British Columbia Evening Grosbeak. Hazelton, 1 ♂ juv., August 7.—PIERCE BRODKORB, *University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, December 9, 1939.*

Wilson Phalaropes and Avocets at Abert Lake, Oregon.—On July 6, 1939, W. F. Kubiček, of the U. S. Biological Survey, and the writer while driving south along the east shore of Abert Lake, Lake County, Oregon, were attracted by the sight of unusually large numbers of Avocets (*Recurvirostra americana*). Along a three-mile shore line we counted about 1200 of the birds. Others were seen a few miles farther south, and although we did not count those accurately, we estimated that we saw no fewer than 1800 Avocets along about five miles of shore line. Although these birds had nested in considerable numbers at Abert Lake for at least twenty-five years, the population during the summer of 1939 greatly outnumbered that of any previous year during the writer's experience.

While checking on the Avocets, we were astounded at the numbers of Wilson Phalaropes (*Steganopus tricolor*), both on the open water and feeding along the shore line. These birds covered acres of open water, and when detachments made short flights, they whirled and twisted in almost solid formation, much like massed flocks of sandpipers along the ocean beaches. We estimated there were no fewer than 25,000 of these birds in sight at one time. A few days later the area was visited by William L. Finley, the well-known ornithologist; David Aylard, President of the National Wildlife Federation; and Tom B. Murray, of the U. S. Biological Survey, who considered our estimate of the numbers too low. Later, Frank B. Wire, State Game Supervisor, visited the area and estimated that there were 100,000 phalaropes present. The writer does not vouch for the accuracy of any of these estimates, but is positive that he has never before seen such large numbers of Wilson Phalaropes at any one time during his thirty years of field work in the Pacific coast states.

The fact that millions of a species of small brown insect had evidently died over or on the waters of the lake and had washed up along the shore line, forming a solid mass for miles, on which both avocets and phalaropes were feeding, may account in part for such a great concentration of these birds.—STANLEY G. JEWETT, *Portland, Oregon, July 29, 1939.*

Polygamy in the English Sparrow.—What was unquestionably a case of polygamy in the English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) came to my notice in the spring of 1939. A pair of English Sparrows was taking one of two nesting boxes, put up for the Violet-green Swallows (*Tachycineta thalassina*) which nested in one of the boxes for some years; the boxes are close together in the same eave of the house. I destroyed the first nest of the English Sparrows, but, as usual, the birds promptly started nesting again, and I took a second nest with six eggs. Shortly afterwards, I saw the male sparrow with two females, both of which came out of the same box. Fortunately, the eggs taken had not been destroyed, and an examination of these showed four considerably incubated, but the other two showed only traces of blood. I judged that about five days had elapsed between the layings.

I shot four females in a week from this particular box; the first one I did not examine, but it actually came off the eggs; the second had a brood patch whereas the last two showed no sign of brooding. This seemed to exhaust the supply of unpaired females, for although the male remained around some time and was calling all the time, no further nesting took place.

The swallows are quite capable of retaining possession of a nesting box against the sparrows after they have seriously started nesting, but this does not take place until early June when the sparrows are well established. Though the swallows take up their territory soon after their arrival in March, and there is always a fight for it, for the next two months they visit the site irregularly and it seems then that the sparrows are able to get ahead and cannot be ejected.—THEED PEARSE, *Courtenay, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, December 30, 1939.*

Townsend Solitaire at Benicia, California.—Townsend Solitaires (*Myadestes townsendi*) have not often been observed near Benicia, and therefore three observations of this species in the winter of 1938-1939 I deem of interest to record.

On December 26, 1938, five miles northeast of Benicia, I observed one feeding with Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana*) on toyon berries on a brushy hillside.

On March 5, 1939, in my yard in Benicia a cat caused some commotion among the birds. A Hermit Thrush and a Robin scolded, attracting a Solitaire which came down from a large pepper tree to within ten feet of me, eyeing the cat but making no utterance of any kind.

On March 9, 1939, what was probably this same individual was in my yard. It was interesting to note the similarity in the wing pattern of this bird to a Mockingbird in rather poor plumage. This individual was probably attracted to my yard by the abundance of pepper berries.—EMERSON A. STONER, *Benicia, California, March 22, 1939.*

An Early Record of the Dickcissel in Arizona.—The Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) is a bird typical of the Mississippi Valley and the plains east of the Rocky Mountains. It is a straggler as far west as New Mexico (F. M. Bailey, *Birds of New Mexico*, 1928, p. 681). Arizona records are few, and apparently there has been none since 1884. Swarth (*Pac. Coast Avif. No. 10*, 1914, p. 61) summarizes the status of the species as follows: "Only known to occur in Arizona as observed by Henshaw . . . , who found it in small numbers and secured specimens [5] on the San Pedro River, at Fort Crittenden and at Fort Lowell, in August and September, 1873 and 1874; . . . specimen taken by Brown at Tucson, September 11, 1884 . . ."

Among some small bird bones from Indian dwellings that were sent to me for identification by Mr. J. C. McGregor of the Museum of Northern Arizona is a maxilla of *Spiza americana*. The bill of this fringillid is so well set off structurally from that of other North American types that no doubt arises concerning its identity. The maxilla of *Spiza* is distinguished from that of others of somewhat similar proportions particularly by the depth of the internarial bridge which bears a ventral keel. The maxilla from the Indian dwellings, no. A. O. 486, Mus. N. Ariz., was taken at Ridge Ruin, locality NA 1785, two and one-half miles east of Winona Village, Upper Sonoran Zone, Coconino County, Arizona. The room in which it was found was used during the twelfth century, A. D.

One does not expect to find the bones of distinctly rare species in Indian dwellings. The record here reported, the first for northern Arizona, and the nineteenth century records for southern Arizona lead one to suspect that the Dickcissel at least migrated through this part of the Southwest in moderate numbers in past times. In the Atlantic coast area the species has diminished in the last century. May not there have been a similar retreat on the western frontier of the bird's range?—ALDEN H. MILLER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, January 21, 1940.*

Mountain Plover at San Diego, California.—An encouraging note in connection with a bird usually feared to be growing rarer, is the fair size of two flocks of the Mountain Plover (*Eupoda montana*) which have been observed in the vicinity of San Diego within the past couple of years. On November 18, 1939, L. W. Walker, of the San Diego Natural History Museum staff, found a flock of some 75 individuals on the U. S. Navy flying field, Kearny Mesa. They remained there for a number of days and he saw them more than once. Always, he said, there seemed to be two component parts to the group. Each part, about half of the whole, would usually keep to itself, but should all the birds happen to be together and there was any disturbance, the two halves would instantly separate and maneuver as units. He described the plovers as absurdly "dumb." Not only would they permit easy approach, but when two specimens were collected for the San Diego Society of Natural History, their companions, he said, would come running up to gaze at each dead bird. He considered the birds hardly smart enough to escape the airplanes and thought there might be some fatalities from this cause.

The other flock of Mountain Plover, which was also reported by Walker, was found on January 1, 1938, at Coronado Heights, near the south end of San Diego Bay. It contained about 35 individuals, of which a few were collected. Beside these two records, specimens in the collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History show the following localities and dates on their labels: San Jacinto Valley,