

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Water Ouzel Raises Brood under Difficulties.—Late in April, 1940, the nest of a Water Ouzel (*Cinclus mexicanus*) was noted in the process of construction a short distance above the surface of the Merced River on a small ledge on one of the piers of Sentinel Bridge in Yosemite Valley, California. The location of this nest was peculiar in that it was on a section of the Merced River which is deep and very calm. When the nest was first noticed, several of the observers in the valley remarked on the possibility that it might be washed off the pier in the period of high water which was sure to come when the snows began to melt.

In May, when the Merced River began rising every evening, I went to see how the nest was faring and at 9:30 p.m. on May 10 found that it was completely covered by the river. On May 13, also at 9:30 p.m., the nest was about half covered by the water. As the highest point of the water usually occurs about 11:00 p.m., it seems probable that the nest was completely covered by the water after I had left on May 13. Despite these two soakings, and there probably were more, the female ouzel managed to brood the eggs successfully and the four young birds were seen by several people on the day that they left the nest. Presumably there was an air pocket in or about the nest during periods of submergence.—VINCENT MOWBRAY, *Oakland, California, October 31, 1940.*

Extension of the Known Range of the Flammulated Screech Owl in California.—On the night of July 8 and the morning of July 9, 1940, Mr. Joe T. Marshall, Jr., and I climbed over the northeast slope of Mount Hanna, Lake County, California, looking for Flammulated Screech Owls (*Otus flammeolus*). As a consequence of Mr. Marshall's excellent vocal efforts, two of these elusive little owls were enticed close enough to be seen with the aid of a flash light. One of these two individuals, an adult male, was taken, and is now number 79271 in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. The reaction of these owls to an imitation of their note would indicate that they were on their breeding grounds. This is apparently the first record of this species in the west-central part of the state.—NED W. STONE, *Berkeley, California, November 11, 1940.*

Water-Thrush at Zion National Park, Utah.—On September 22, 1940, a Water-Thrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) was observed along the Virgin River near the Narrows in Zion Canyon, Utah. For almost a week this bird was watched daily by hiking parties going up the Narrows Trail and was a source of great interest. This constitutes the third record of this species from southern Utah, and the first from Zion National Park.—RUSSELL K. GRATER, *Zion National Park, Utah, October 28, 1940.*

Notes on the Feeding Habits of Two Species of Hawks.—In the late afternoon of July 21, 1938, two Pigeon Hawks (*Falco columbarius*), probably a mated pair, were seen on the edge of a pond-like embayment on the shore of Quesnel Lake, British Columbia. They were very dark in color and heavily marked ventrally, suggesting the subspecies *suckleyi*. The birds were apparently hunting insects, as they would fly out rather leisurely, flutter, and return to perch. Twice after doing this one of them was observed to go through all the motions of eating something. The whole performance was very much like that of the "hawking" habits of many fly-catching birds.

Several times one or the other of the birds would pass over the embayment, causing a violent splashing of fish, which evidently feared an attack. Most probably the fish were not in danger from the Pigeon Hawks, but were unable to distinguish between them and the Ospreys which also hunted this water.

Although we camped by this pond for five days, Pigeon Hawks were seen only on the one afternoon. Possibly they had been driven from their normal hunting grounds by a forest fire then burning in near-by mountains.

An Osprey (*Pandion haliaëtus*) spent most of the morning of July 23 at the small embayment mentioned above. Sometimes it would fly about calling, but it spent most of the morning watching the water. After some time we heard a splash and saw the Osprey leave the water and fly off with an eight-inch fish of a kind locally known as "squaw fish" and not considered as game. The hawk returned in the afternoon and perched in a high tree, thirty feet off the ground. It appeared to watch a particular part of the pond intently, often moving its head backward and forward as though for a better view. Once it launched itself but did not strike, returning to its perch. Finally after going through the usual "seeing motions," it adjusted its position and suddenly dropped to the water, going under until only its back showed. Instantly, it was in the air again, carrying a "squaw fish" in each foot. After flying a little way the bird dropped one of the fish, but made no effort to retrieve it.

Instead, it adjusted the other to the characteristic head-first "carry," flew to a dead tree and, after looking all about, began its meal.—JOHN E. CUSHING, JR., *California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, October 9, 1940.*

Waterfowl Breeding Records from San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, California.—*Butorides virescens anthonyi*. Anthony Green Heron. Although the Anthony Green Heron has been recorded as breeding in a number of places in southern California, it may be worthwhile to record two more regular breeding stations. Green herons have bred commonly at Lake Elsinore, Riverside County, for at least the last three years. On June 20, 1938, a nest with five eggs and another with three eggs were found. On July 6, 1939, a nest with five young was found, three of which were banded (nos. 39-522905—39-522907). On June 13, 1940, two nests were located. One nest held four half-grown young which were banded (nos. 39-522922—39-522925); the other nest we were unable to reach. There were undoubtedly some nests each year which we did not find.

A nest with five small young was found at a pond about ten miles from Redlands on June 3, 1938. Four of the young ones were subsequently banded (nos. 37-502918—37-502921) on June 11. The birds have been present at this same place during the summers of 1939 and 1940, but no effort was made to find the nest.

Botaurus lentiginosus. American Bittern. This species was seen twice near Chino, San Bernardino County, on June 16, 1940. It is probable that the birds were breeding, as Mr. Charles Bradford of Pomona, who showed me the birds, has in his collection a set of three American Bittern eggs which he collected at this place on April 14, 1934. This species has been recorded previously as breeding in southern California at three places near the coast (Willett, *Pac. Coast Avif.* No. 21, 1933:24).

Ixobrychus exilis hesperis. Western Least Bittern. Has been observed during the summers since 1935 at a group of small tule-bordered ponds near Redlands. As many as five individuals have been seen at one time. While the birds' actions at times indicated that they were breeding, no definite proof was obtained until 1940. Two young birds out of the nest, but unable to fly and with juvenal down still on their heads, were captured and banded (nos. 40-413153 and 40-413154) on June 24. On July 5 Herbert Hill found a nest with four eggs. No bird was on the eggs when they were discovered but a Least Bittern was seen to return to the nest.

Mr. Charles Bradford collected a set of four least bittern eggs in a marsh near Chino April 16, 1931. This set (no. 4947) is now in the collection of Mr. Wilson C. Hanna. The birds are still present in this marsh, as one was seen here July 17, 1940, by Herbert Hill.

Although the species is recorded in Willett's distributional list (*loc. cit.*) as a fairly common summer resident, only two nesting localities are given: Nigger Slough, Los Angeles County, and San Jacinto Lake, Riverside County. Neither of these marshes still remain.

Charadrius nivosus nivosus. Western Snowy Plover. Three eggs were found in a slight depression in the sand at Lake Elsinore on July 6, 1939. The birds nested here again in the summer of 1940, one downy young and the parents being found on June 13. There are a few inland breeding records for this species, as for example at Salton Sea.

Recurvirostra americana. Avocet. A pair of Avocets was seen on July 6, 1937, and several were seen July 6, 1939, at Lake Elsinore, but the birds were apparently not breeding, being indifferent to our presence. However, on June 13, 1940, three pairs were found which became very excited at our approach. We were able to locate two eggs in small hollows on the bare sand, each probably the first of a clutch.

The heavy rains in the spring of 1937 flooded much of the old San Jacinto Lake bed, Riverside County, and on July 4 there still remained in one place a body of water about three-fourths of a mile long. Here there were thirty or forty Avocets which gave every indication that they were nesting. One bird repeatedly dove at us and many of them were much disturbed by our presence. We actually found no nests, the deep mud and intense heat making it almost impossible to reach the small sand bars in the center of the pond. The birds, however, could not have had a successful breeding season, as we found the pond completely dry and all the birds gone when we returned on August 8. The only other recent breeding records for Avocets in southern California are from Del Rey, Los Angeles County (Willett, *op. cit.*, p. 68).

Himantopus mexicanus. Black-necked Stilt. In the spring of 1937 Lake Elsinore greatly increased in size, creating conditions which were apparently very attractive to stilts. On July 6 of that year we found about forty birds breeding there. We located only eight nests with eggs, but two nests held only one egg and there were several nests still empty, indicating that the birds had not all laid. We probably also failed to find some nests. On August 8 we returned and were able to capture and band five nearly-grown young stilts (nos. 295131 and 295133—295136) and we found one nest still with