

2½ weeks old, two young that had much loose down were flapping their wings as though about ready to practice flying; but their wings still contained pin-feathers, and the primaries were less than half grown. Another brood of three downy young were seen flapping their way into the water; these little balls of fluff had no pin-feathers whatever. The birds in this second brood were probably not more than 10 days old; they might have been hatched between September 6 and September 10.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago, Illinois, January 2, 1946.*

**Red-naped Sapsucker in Santa Clara County, California.**—On Sunday, November 18, 1945, while observing birds with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society at Alum Rock Park, near San Jose, California, it was our good fortune to locate a Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius nuchalis*). The bird was feeding in a live oak. Ten of the party watched it with binoculars at a distance of 25 feet as it opened holes in the bark. At such close range it was easy to distinguish the black markings on the head. The belly was yellowish-gray.—JAMES G. PETERSON, *San Jose, California, December 31, 1945.*

**Swainson Hawks Working on Grasshoppers Again.**—About 30 miles southeast of Sonora, Sutton County, Texas, on May 3 and 4, 1945, considerable numbers of Swainson Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*) were observed feeding on the numerous grasshoppers on the overgrazed ranges. The hawks were usually observed flying low or perched on the ground. Twenty-five or more were observed at different times along a five-mile stretch of ranch road.

The grasshoppers, and likewise the hawks, seem to be more numerous on the overgrazed ranges infested with bitterweed. We saw none of the hawks and few grasshoppers on the better grassed pastures.

The observed relationship between the Swainson Hawk and the grasshopper outbreak was undoubtedly significant; also, although no actual grasshopper counts were made, it was obvious that a relation existed between the grasshopper plague and an extreme overgrazed condition of the range, as pointed out years ago by Treherne and Buckell (*Grasshoppers of British Columbia, Dominion Canada Dept. Agr., Bull. 39, n.s., 1924*).—WALTER P. TAYLOR, *Texas Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, College Station, Texas, September 22, 1945.*

**The Starling Arrives in Oregon.**—On January 22, 1946, a Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) was obtained in the Grande Ronde Valley one and one-half miles west of Cove, Union County, Oregon, just at the edge of the western foothills of the Willowa Mountains, at an elevation of approximately 3000 feet. The bird was taken by George L. Golay on his ranch when he shot into a flock of magpies congregated on pasture land. No other Starlings were noted by him at that time. Since the bird was strange to him, it was eviscerated and three days later was brought to me by his daughter, Bessie Golay. Although the bird was somewhat mutilated, it was possible to save it as a museum specimen.

Since the report by Wing (*Condor, 45, 1943:159*) of Starlings observed in southeastern Washington, it has been anticipated that the birds might soon be recorded in Oregon. The lapse of three winters until the first recorded arrival here in Oregon may be attributed partly to circumscribed field trips during gasoline rationing.

The Starling reported here appears to be the closest yet to the Pacific Coast, in point of longitude, except for the specimen collected by Howard Cantrell on January 10, 1942, near Tulalake, California (Jewett, *Condor, 44, 1945:79*). It, and the Pullman records of Wing (*loc. cit.*) may well presage an influx of Starlings which, once established, would have a clear sweep across the agricultural lands of the interior to the Cascade Mountains of Washington and Oregon. From here the Columbia River gateway offers Starlings the fertile Willamette Valley and the ultimate attainment of the shores of the Pacific.—CHARLES W. QUAINANCE, *Eastern Oregon College of Education, La Grande, Oregon, January 27, 1946.*

**Notes on Bird Mortality During Nocturnal Thunderstorms near College Station, Texas.**—In the months of March, April, and May, 1941, several nocturnal thunderstorms occurred in the vicinity of College Station, Texas. Observations by personnel of the Department of Fish and Game and the Texas Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit on the campus of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas after some of the more severe rains revealed an alarming number of dead birds, evidently victims of the storms. The number of birds obtained from such a small area indicates that the mortality over a considerable area must have been tremendous. In many instances the rains were accompanied by winds of very high velocity, which resulted in the birds striking objects such as trees, buildings, and power lines.

The first heavy rain of this sort occurred on the night of March 20. Next morning a Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) was found on the campus. Following a violent thunderstorm on the night of April 3 a report was brought to the Fish and Game Department of several dead birds about one mile north of the campus. Investigation revealed sixteen dead geese on the ground near electric power lines. Fifteen were Snow Geese (*Chen hyperborea hyperborea*), the other a Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). All these birds were apparently in one flock as they were close together on less than two acres of land.

On the night of April 29 another heavy rain fell. Dead birds recorded on this date included four Tennessee Warblers (*Vermivora peregrina*), one Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosa*), three Indigo Buntings (*Passerina cyanea*), one Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*), one Yellow-throat (*Geothlypis trichas trichas*), one Louisiana Water-thrush (*Seiurus motacilla*), two Chats (*Icteria virens*), and one English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

The next night, April 30, thunder showers caused the death of one Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*), one Louisiana Water-thrush (*Seiurus motacilla*), and one English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

Three nights later, May 3, another heavy rain fell. Birds found on the campus the following day included one Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), two English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), one Sycamore Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), one Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*), one American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), and one Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*).

In addition to the above records made in 1941, a White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*), was found below power lines on the campus following a thunderstorm on the night of October 20, 1939.

It is interesting to note that mortality was high when the weather was severe at night. Although the mean annual rainfall in this area averages close to 40 inches, normal rains, or even violent diurnal disturbances, have not produced alarming mortalities such as the ones just described. If violent nocturnal rains are consistently as deadly as these statistics indicate, it is indeed fortunate that they are of local occurrence and short duration.

The street lights of the campus might possibly be a factor in attracting night-flying birds; however, during such severe thunderstorms the visibility of the lights would be very low. Birds flying near a zone of thunderstorm activity may be attracted to the lights while seeking shelter from an approaching disturbance and be engulfed in violent winds and rain in so doing. This might account for the high concentrations of mortalities in a local area.

Eleven of the birds recorded are strictly migrants in this region, while three are summer visitors that were just arriving during the time these observations were made. Of the remainder, one is a winter visitant, one a vagrant, and one a resident. The White Pelican, a vagrant, frequently wanders over wide areas. The English Sparrow is the only strictly resident species affected. It will be further noticed that the birds killed were of species that migrate chiefly at night. This may be correlated with the fact that thunderstorms causing mortality at this season were nocturnal, although diurnal disturbances of equal violence occurred in the same period. Thus it would seem that violent night thunderstorms during the migrating season affect chiefly those birds in active migration and that resident species that will have sought adequate protection are less liable to harm.—RANDOLPH L. PETERSON and BRYAN P. GLASS, *Department of Fish and Game, Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, College Station, Texas, December 6, 1946.*

**Shrikes in the Humboldt Bay Area, California.**—From time to time people have reported shrikes in the Humboldt Bay area in California. However, actual specimen data seem to have been lacking; therefore the writer submits the following records.

An adult male Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*) was taken from a fence post amid the dunes just north of Samoa, California, by John Davis, on March 30, 1932. Another adult male, of the same race, was observed and collected by Mr. Davis and the writer a few miles south of Eureka, California, on November 7, 1939.

A first-year Boreal Shrike (*Lanius excubitor invictus*) was taken on October 9, 1939, near Arcata, California, by the writer, who also took an adult female a few miles south of Eureka on January 15, 1946. Both of the Boreal Shrikes were perched in the topmost branches of small shrubs.

There are three winter sight records by Mr. Davis and the writer, in which no identification as to species was made. These three winter dates all fall within the months in which actual specimens have been taken. All these birds have been taken or observed on open terrain within a few hundred yards of Humboldt Bay, California.—ROBERT R. TALMADGE, *Eureka, California, February 1, 1946.*

**Unusual Visitors at the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Nevada.**—The Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Elko and White Pine counties, Nevada, was visited by two unusual