

contents of the stomach consisted of the remains of one striped shore crab, *Pachygrapsus crassipes*. According to Grinnell (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 1928, 32:85) this heron is a "common resident, locally, in the southern part of the territory [of Lower California], chiefly or altogether south of latitude 28° 30'." San Martín is situated at latitude 30° 29', thus the known occurrence of this heron is extended northward nearly 140 miles. The bird was in juvenal plumage and thus should probably be considered as a wanderer out of its usual range.

The Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) is recorded as taken at two localities and seen at an additional three localities along the coast of Lower California. Grinnell (*op. cit.*:85) states that this jaeger is "very likely a regular migrant over the ocean along the Pacific side of the peninsula." My observations substantiate this statement. On April 17, 1946, a Parasitic Jaeger was observed while it tormented a Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maximus*) near Santo Domingo Point, latitude 28° 15'. The following day another jaeger was seen to press a prolonged attack on a Royal Tern. On April 19, in the course of the four-hour trip southward between Santo Domingo Point and the mouth of Scammon Lagoon, a distance of approximately twenty miles, twelve Parasitic Jaegers were counted. Their approach was always heralded by the harsh distress notes of the Royal Terns, which were constantly about. This distress call invariably commenced before we were able to see the jaegers. On several occasions two or three jaegers were visible at the same time. The jaegers for the most part moved past from south to north. In my experience this is an unusually large number of jaegers to encounter on a trip of this length. The Royal Terns, which were nesting in the near-by lagoons at the time, and which the jaegers spent most of their time harassing and plundering of their fish, may well have been the attraction which brought this concentration of jaegers to the area.

The Green-tailed Towhee (*Chlorura chlorura*) is typically found on wooded mountain sides and among the mesquites in the lowlands of the Cape district of Lower California in the winter. However, it appeared entirely out of place on a small sandy and windswept islet in Scammon's Lagoon. One Green-tailed Towhee lived a precarious existence on such an island near the camp of several Mexican fishermen. It picked up the bits of food and drank the water the fishermen offered it, becoming quite tame. The towhee was first observed in the area on April 20, 1946, and it was still there when I left on May 7. It sought shelter from the almost constant wind under the many carapaces of the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) which lay scattered about near the fishermen's camp. Although the salt marsh near-by supported a population of Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), the towhee made no attempt to search for food in that area. Conversely the Marsh Sparrows infrequently entered the vicinity of the camp.

A list of the birds of Natividad Island, latitude 27° 53', published by Lamb (Condor, 29, 1931: 67-68) includes forty-nine species. Lamb was on the island between December 20, 1924, and January 13, 1925. On my visit to Natividad, from May 15 through May 17, 1946, I obtained specimens of two species which his list does not include.

House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) were found to be common on the cholla and brush-covered hillsides of the central part of the island. Mr. A. J. van Rossem, who kindly examined my specimens, informs me that he has two specimens of this species collected on Natividad in June of 1944 (letter, April 8, 1947). Mr. van Rossem's two males and the one which I collected all show extreme yellow coloration which appears to be a color condition occurring in birds of this species established in insular areas. This insular color phase of the specimens, together with the fact that the other four birds I collected there proved to be immature and that most of the twenty or more individuals that I saw were in small, apparently family groups, may indicate that this species has become established on Natividad since Lamb's visit. However, since Cedros Island is only ten miles to the north, where this race has long been known to occur, it is possible that their occurrence on Natividad is purely seasonal.

The Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) is referred to by Grinnell (*op. cit.*:82) as "of sparse and sporadic occurrence, irrespective of season," in Lower California. An example of this species was given to me by Jose Perez, who is employed by the Mexican Government to protect the guano-producing cormorants of the island from human disturbance. Although untrained in the care of specimens, he had made a fairly good skin of the bird. No written data were kept. However, he said that since the species was so unusual on Natividad, he remembered clearly that he had taken it on August 6, 1945, when it had come to the island.—KARL W. KENYON, *Mills College, Oakland, California, April 19, 1947.*

Concentrated Nesting of Marsh Hawks.—In April of 1944 while making field observations of Clapper Rails near Seal Beach, California, I flushed five nesting pairs of Marsh Hawks (*Circus cyaneus*). Each nest contained five unmarked eggs and each was on the ground in matted salicornia. The male and female of each pair were in the vicinity, and although they protested vociferously at my intrusion, they seemed to ignore each other. The nesting area did not exceed five acres although there were many hundreds of acres of similar terrain adjacent to the five. I retreated several hundred feet from the

nesting area and soon all the females were back on the nests and the males were drifting off toward their hunting grounds.—EDWARD M. HALL, *Whittier, California, January 15, 1947.*

Another Outbreak of Fungus Disease in Gulls.—In the early part of January, 1947, John J. Barry and others of the field personnel of the California Division of Fish and Game reported deaths of gulls at Bixby Slough, Los Angeles County. Several of the dead birds, including Western Gulls (*Larus occidentalis*) and California Gulls (*Larus californicus*), were sent to us for examination. The lungs and air sacs of all birds examined in the laboratory were infected with a fungus, *Aspergillus* sp., the causative organism of mycotic pneumonia in birds.

In January as many as 500 gulls were observed on one day at Bixby Slough. Losses were first observed in the first week in January. On January 12 at least 100 birds were seen in a weakened condition. They made no attempt to fly when approached. In the course of the outbreak Barry counted 34 dead gulls and estimated that at least that many more were probably hidden in a dense tule growth. Both immature and adult birds were involved. A few of the birds showed evidence of being shot, but most of them had succumbed from the fungus infection. By January 28 the epizootic apparently had run its course since no further sick birds were observed.

In February, 1943, Herman and Bolander (Condor, 45, 1943:160-161) obtained a fungus-infected Glaucous-winged Gull from a pond in San Francisco. Mycotic pneumonia may be an important and widespread disease in gulls of the Pacific coast and the authors are desirous of obtaining further information on its incidence and distribution.—CARLTON M. HERMAN and MERTON N. ROSEN, *Bureau of Game Conservation, California Division of Fish and Game, Berkeley, California, June 14, 1947.*

Water-surface Feeding of Blackbirds.—Manzanita Lake on the campus of the University of Nevada has extensive growths of the water-weed *Anacharis canadensis*. Each year by the end of May the new growth of this plant forms a dense mat an inch or less below the water surface. For several years now both Red-winged (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) and Brewer (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) blackbirds that nest in the vicinity of the lake have been observed feeding on insects associated with the waterweed. The blackbirds alight on the plants, the water usually coming to the middle or upper part of the birds' tarsometatarsi. Typically, the wings are then fluttered as the bird hops two or three feet to new vantage points. Less often a bird will walk, even a distance of thirty feet, without moving the wings. The tail, as appeared to be the habit in one individual especially, may be submerged and possibly pressed against the underwater vegetation for support.

The most readily visible food obtained, and certainly the major item for a period of weeks in the early summer, is recently emerged damselflies. The naiads of this insect crawl to the surface of the waterweed and metamorphose on projections just above the water. The blackbirds have been seen repeatedly catching these newly emerged and still pale and flightless adults. On the largest area of waterweed (approximately 30 by 80 feet) as many as five blackbirds at a time have been seen feeding. Most of the birds observed have been female Red-wings, although the males of both species have occasionally been seen similarly surface feeding. This seems largely explained by the constant feeding of the young, apparently chiefly by the females, in nests adjacent to the largest waterweed area.

Brewer Blackbirds of both sexes have been seen several times walking and feeding on pad-lily (*Nymphaea*) leaves, even one leaf serving to hold up a bird. On two occasions, once on the Truckee River and once on the Carson River, Brewer Blackbirds have been seen hovering over open water and snapping food from the surface. A male of this species was seen similarly to obtain a large piece of bread in Manzanita Lake and carry it to shore to be eaten.—FRANK RICHARDSON, *University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada, July 28, 1947.*

The Black Phoebe in Western Oregon.—At 11:15 a.m., on May 24, 1947, while on the South Santiam Highway, in Linn County, we saw a Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) near Dobbin Creek. Dobbin Creek enters the South Santiam River from the south, a half mile east of the town of Cascadia, in the western foothills of the Cascade Mountains. The mountains are here forested principally with Douglas fir, but the immediate vicinity of the point of observation is a flat, open, and quite dry grassland bench above the south bank of the river.

The Black Phoebe is placed in the hypothetical list in Gabrielson and Jewett's Birds of Oregon (1940:605), in which they state: "It may possibly be taken in the State at some future date." This statement was later vindicated by Jewett (Condor, 44, 1942:37), in which he tells of a specimen taken by Mr. Overton Dowell at Mercer, in Lane County, on the Oregon coast, on June 1, 1936. The species occurs normally in northwestern California.—FRED G. EVENDEN, JR., PHILIP C. DUMAS, and KENNETH L. GORDON, *Department of Zoology, Oregon State College, Corvallis, Oregon, June 2, 1947.*