

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.*