

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Pied-billed Grebe in Ancient Deposits in Mexico.—The finding of a human skeleton near Tepexpan in the State of Mexico, northeast of the City of Mexico, has attracted much scientific attention as the oldest discovery of the kind yet made in North America. Dr. Helmut de Terra, working with the investigators who made the discovery, took out also bones of other animals, including those of the imperial mammoth. Among the other remains is one specimen of bird which has been placed in my hands for study.

The bone in question is a complete right tarsometatarsus from an individual fully grown but probably only recently so as porosity of the bony structure at the extremities seems to indicate immaturity. It comes from the Pied-billed Grebe, *Podilymbus podiceps* (Linnaeus), known in Mexico as zambullidor pico pinto. The bone has the large size characteristic of the male in this species and resembles modern specimens in detail, the only difference being that the lower support of the hypotarsus is slightly more constricted and somewhat more elevated on the shaft than in part of the comparative material in hand. This, however, is regarded as individual variation.

The Tepexpan man, excavated from beneath a layer of caliche, has been accorded late Pleistocene age with an antiquity of 10,000 to 15,000 years by Dr. de Terra, a belief shared by some of his colleagues among anthropologists. Most geologists, however, attribute the deposit to the early part of the Recent epoch, as in their opinion the Pleistocene terminated at a considerably earlier time.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., January 27, 1949.*

Second Record of Swamp Sparrow for Southern California.—On the morning of November 13, 1948, Bruce E. Cardiff and I observed a Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*) in a marsh along the Santa Ana River, five miles west of Riverside, California. The bird was collected and proved to be an adult female. It is now no. 739 in the Cardiff collection.—EUGENE E. CARDIFF, *Bloomington, California, January 31, 1949.*

Starling in the Sacramento Valley, California.—On January 13, 1949, along the southeast border of Gray Lodge Refuge, Butte County, California, six Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were observed intermingled with a large flock of Meadowlarks. One of them was collected.—CAROL M. FERREL, *Chico, California, January 14, 1949.*

Virginia Warbler in Idaho.—In the course of field work in Idaho in the months of August and September, 1948, several days were spent in Bannock County along the Portneuf River. This area is reminiscent of parts of the more southern Great Basin. Along the Portneuf River are willow thickets, with permanent sloughs nearby. The country adjacent to the river is rolling, with ravines cutting the hills in which are found willows, sagebrush, and some junipers and piñons. On the slopes, repeated burning has taken place, with consequent erosion, and only sagebrush and rabbitbrush are able to survive. On August 13, 1948, an adult male Virginia Warbler (*Dendroica virginiae*) was taken in a ravine one mile west of Bancroft, Bannock County. This specimen (no. 25083, Univ. Kansas, Mus. Nat. Hist.) is the first of its kind to be taken in Idaho, although, for Utah, immediately to the south, the species is stated by Behle (Condor, 46, 1944:67-87) to be a "common summer resident throughout the State." Probably, the Virginia Warbler will eventually be found to nest in southern Idaho.—M. DALE ARVEY, *Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, January 3, 1949.*

Swimming Pigeons.—On October 28, 1948, a flock of 16 pigeons or Rock Doves (*Columba livia*) was observed bathing and preening in the 12- to 18-inch-deep lily pond or reflecting pool just north of the new Interior Building, Washington, D.C. As the sides of this artificial lily pond have such a steep incline that the birds could not bathe from the shore, they were attempting to alight on and bathe from the large floating leaves of the royal water platter (*Victoria regia*). Singly, or in groups up to six, the birds competed continuously for standing room on the leaves. If three or more birds landed at one time on a lily pad, it sank and the birds could be seen swimming. On a number of occasions during the 15 minutes that I watched the performance, one or more birds alighted on the open