

other than a genetic one. Hutt (Genetics of the Fowl, 1949:183) cites several instances of depigmentation of hens that later reassumed normal coloration; these variations seem to have been caused only partly by genetic factors. Groody and Groody (Science, 1942:655-656) report partial feather depigmentation experimentally induced in black Minorca chicks by a diet deficient in pantothenic acid. Frazier (Bird-banding, 23, 1952:114) attributes the partial depigmentation of a previously normal male Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) to physiological causes. The reverse of this situation, in an albinistic Robin which acquired normal pigmentation, is reported here.

On April 22, 1955, I observed a partially albinic Robin constructing a nest on a sheltered ledge on the porch of a house at 1216 East Fifth South Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, the home of Mrs. S. G. Paul. She reported that the bird had first appeared in the neighborhood on March 27 and that it had begun the nest on April 21. I am indebted to her for her interest and prolonged observations.

At the time I first saw the bird, the underparts were largely white. A few horizontal lines of red appeared on the breast, and the sides and belly were mostly red, with some white blotches interspersed. The throat was normally patterned. The back and head were mainly white, with longitudinal streaks of gray, which were larger and more prominent on the back. The wings were mostly gray, especially at the tips of the primaries. Only one of the rectrices was not white. The eye was black, and the bill was yellow. This description closely fits that of a Robin now in the collection of the University of Utah, which was taken in mid-April, 1955, at Nephi, Juab County, Utah.

Mrs. Paul first noticed a male Robin near her albino on April 25; it was of normal appearance. The albino completed the nest by the next day. Presumably the two birds were mated at this time. Two eggs were laid in the nest, on May 9 and 11. They hatched between May 23 and 26. Inasmuch as only the albinistic bird of the pair was seen to work on the nest or to alight on it during incubation, it may be inferred that this bird was a female. Tyler (in Bent, U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 196, 1949: 20-21) states that the female of the eastern race usually assumes both these tasks. However, Mrs. Paul noted on May 28 that the albino and the normal Robins were alternating on the nest. The young were fledged on June 8. Neither Mrs. Paul nor I could discern any tendency toward albinism or other abnormalities of plumage in the young. On June 9, both parents were observed feeding the fledglings near the nest.

After the young Robins left the nest, I was absent in the field. Up to that time, while I had the albino under frequent observation, its plumage remained unchanged. The remainder of this account is based upon the report of Mrs. Paul. On June 30, the albinistic Robin began renovating the nest, and three eggs were found in it about July 3. The three young were fledged on July 27, 29, and 31. This brood, like the first, was normally colored, although the breast of one was somewhat lighter than those of the other two.

The adult albino began to become generally darker as the annual fall molt commenced about the time the second brood was fledged, and by August 20 all of the plumage was colored normally, except for the under wing-coverts and tail, which were still partly white. This assumption of normal coloration was gradual. That this was the same bird seems to have been established by the frequency of Mrs. Paul's observations while the change was taking place.

Thus we have an instance of the disappearance of albinistic characteristics in a feral bird.—  
JON GHISELIN, *Department of Zoology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, January 10, 1956.*

**Heavy Parasitization of Blue Grosbeaks by Cowbirds in California.**—In four separate seasons, from 1948 to 1951, I observed and kept notes on a small group of Blue Grosbeaks (*Guiraca caerulea*) which nested along the edges of a small tidal bay near Balboa in Orange County, California. They were first located when one nest with eggs was found on June 6, 1948. Further search revealed three more nests nearby. All the nests were in first year black willow (*Salix nigra*) and varied in height from 3 to 7 feet. The nests were constructed of grasses and the seed heads of several plants, including seaside heliotrope (*Heliotropium cutassavacum*); they were lined with finer vegetable fibres.

The following year I again visited the area and found seven nests of this species. All were heavily parasitized by the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). At least three separate cowbirds had laid eggs in these nests, since the individual eggs of each were distinctive.

Nest 1 was about 5 feet up in the first-year willow growth and when found on June 11, 1949, it contained one egg. On June 19 it contained three grosbeak eggs and one cowbird egg. On July 25 the



Fig. 1. Nest of Blue Grosbeaks with three different types of eggs of the Brown-headed Cowbird; June 19, 1949, near Balboa, California.

nest contained two cowbird eggs and one grosbeak egg. Cowbird egg A was ovate,  $18.5 \times 15$  mm., and was heavily blotched. Cowbird egg B measured  $20 \times 15$  mm. and was very finely speckled, ovate at one end, oval at the other end. On July 14 this nest contained one young cowbird and no grosbeaks.

Nest 2 was in the process of construction on June 11. It was located 4 feet up in a main crotch of new willow growth. On June 19 it contained two grosbeak eggs and one cowbird egg. Cowbird egg C was much smaller than the others, measuring  $16 \times 11.5$  mm. On June 25 this nest contained one grosbeak egg and three cowbird eggs—one each of cowbird eggs A, B and C (fig. 1). On July 14 this nest was empty.

Nest 3 was in the process of construction on June 11. It was located  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet from the ground in a dense clump of new growth willow. On June 19 it contained three grosbeak eggs. On June 25 it contained one grosbeak egg and one cowbird egg A and one cowbird egg B. On July 14 it contained one young grosbeak and one young cowbird.

Nest 4 was in the process of construction on June 11. It was located 4 feet from the ground in a dense clump of willows about 50 feet from nest 3. On June 19 it contained two grosbeak eggs. On June 25 it contained two grosbeak eggs and two cowbird eggs—one each of cowbirds A and B. On July 14 it contained one young cowbird.

Nest 5 was found on July 2 and contained two grosbeak eggs. It was 6 feet up in a willow clump about 150 feet from nest 3. On July 3 it contained one grosbeak egg and one cowbird egg A. On July 14 it was empty and deserted.

Nest 6 was found on July 2,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet from the ground in a willow. It contained three grosbeak eggs. On July 3 it contained two grosbeak eggs and one cowbird egg A. On July 14 it contained one young grosbeak and one cowbird egg A which was pipped.

Nest 7 was found on July 14, 5 feet up in a willow. It contained two young cowbirds.

Since the California race of the Blue Grosbeak is a relatively uncommon bird, it is of interest to note that in 7 nestings in this area in 1949 the grosbeaks were able to raise a total of but two young.

Cowbird parasitization appeared to be about the same in the other years that I have visited the locality, but since I made few visits during the other seasons, my notes are too incomplete to afford an estimate of nesting success.—DON BLEITZ, *Los Angeles, California, October 18, 1955.*

**A Northern Nesting Station for the White-tailed Kite.**—When I took up residence at Corning, Tehama County, California, in 1948, I noted a pair of White-tailed Kites hunting in the area. In the next two years I located its nest in an eucalyptus grove about a mile north of my ranch. In 1954 the kites built in an olive grove, selecting a tree near the center of the grove and placing the nest about 20 feet off the ground. In 1955 they again built in an olive tree about 18 feet off the ground, and on May 10 they had three eggs. On the 17th there were four eggs, three of which hatched about June 12. Two left the nest site early and the third stayed in and around the tree for about two weeks.

Although kites have been reported north to Shasta County in the Sacramento Valley, successful nesting of the species seems not to have been recorded north of the lower section of the valley.—WARREN LABARTHE, *Corning, California, February 29, 1956.*

**Piñon Jays West of the Sierra Nevadan Divide in California.**—In the late summer and fall of 1955, several observations of Piñon Jays (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) were made on the west slope of the central Sierra Nevada, California, an area seldom visited by the species. All were at or near Kinsman Flat, a broad, flat area situated directly above and on the west side of the San Joaquin River in Madera County at 3700 feet elevation. The nearest landmarks shown on the geological survey map (Kaiser Quadrangle) are Hooker's Cove and Power House No. 8. The vegetation there consists primarily of heavy stands of chaparral 10 to 20 feet high, in which manzanita, ceanothus, mountain mahogany, interior live oak and flannel bush are predominant, and interspersed woodland consisting of Digger pines, black oaks and blue oaks.

On August 24, a flock of approximately 25 Piñon Jays was first heard and then seen. The birds remained well above the ground, stopping only in the tops of taller Digger pines. Although the flock was moving as a unit, individuals within it flew and landed independently; consequently they were more or less scattered. They flew several hundred feet between stops, frequently uttering their loud, single-note call in flight. While resting, they remained silent.

On September 12, two Piñon Jays were seen and heard flying overhead about one-half mile north of the first observation site. The latest observation was made on the east slope of Lion Point, 1½ miles to the southwest of Kinsman Flat, at an elevation of 4000 feet on October 12, when a flock of exactly 26 Piñon Jays was counted.—PETER A. JORDAN, *North Fork, California, November 3, 1955.*

**An Unusual Record of the Lesser Yellow-legs in the Pacific Ocean.**—On September 23, 1945, at latitude 25°, 17' N and longitude 148°, 23' W, some 600 miles northwest of Hawaiian Islands, I netted a Lesser Yellow-legs (*Totanus flavipes*) that landed on the flight deck of a United States naval carrier en route from the United States to Pearl Harbor. Examination showed that the bird was a female weighing 48.2 grams and with a completely empty digestive tract. The skin was preserved and is in the United States National Museum, Washington, D.C. This species has not been reported heretofore in or near Hawaiian Islands.—IRVEN O. BUSS, *State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington, December 13, 1955.*

**Breeding of the Short-billed Dowitcher on the Copper River Flats, Alaska.**—On June 25, 1955, six dowitchers were observed on the extensive grassy tide flats on Pete Dahl Slough, about fifteen miles southeast of Cordova, Alaska. Jack Walker of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service showed me a nest which he said was used by dowitchers and contained eggs on June 10, 1955. It was empty at the time of my visit but the actions of a pair of these birds left no doubt that young were nearby. Four specimens were collected. Two females had large, convoluted oviducts. Color pattern and measurements agree closely with descriptions of *Limnodromus griseus caurinus* (Pitelka, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 50, 1950:43). Heretofore this form of the Short-billed Dowitcher has been recorded breeding only at Bristol Bay and Yakutat Bay in southern Alaska.—GEORGE E. HUDSON, *Department of Zoology, State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington, December 30, 1955.*