

female became very excited and then suddenly dived with partly folded wings toward the tree into which he had flown. When she reached the level of the male, the female extended her wings and landed in the tree near him. Each time a chase through small trees followed in which the birds pursued each other from limb to limb. Then suddenly they paused and both returned to feeding. The male drummed only once during this period of observation. This was done on the dead top of a 75-foot ponderosa pine, not the same tree as that used by the female. I saw or heard no reaction to this drumming by any bird.

These observations seem to indicate that White-headed Woodpeckers are paired during the winter and that in this period they are responsive to their mates and engage in some form of courtship or pair reinforcement behavior.—GERALD ROBINSON, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, March 1, 1957.*

Rufous-sided Towhee in Colorado.—An immature male Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus*) in first autumn plumage was collected on October 26, 1956, at Hillside Road, Boulder, Colorado. The specimen is number 6206 in the collection of the University of Colorado Museum at Boulder. This is the first confirmed record for the eastern subspecies in the state.

The specimen was sent to Robert W. Storer of the Museum of Zoology of the University of Michigan for comparison with a series of this subspecies in that collection. Dr. Storer stated that the bird agreed very well with specimens of *P. e. erythrophthalmus*, although the back feathers had somewhat more brown on their tips than most of the fall-taken male towhees with which it was compared.

The bird was first heard calling in a lilac thicket, just after sunrise. This area, near Middle Boulder Creek, is apparently attractive to eastern bird stragglers because of its mesic condition. A fair amount of shrubby undergrowth is present. A Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), a new record for Boulder County, was seen in the same area on September 28, 1956.—OAKLEIGH THORNE, II, *Thorne Ecological Research Station, Boulder, Colorado, May 25, 1957.*

Cape May Warbler in Central America.—On November 21, 1952, I collected an adult male Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*) at La Rioja, near Boca de Barranca, which is situated on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. This species winters, for the most part, in the West Indies; it has also been reported from several offshore islands, some of which are in sight of the mainland, along the Caribbean coast of the Yucatán Peninsula and Central America. There seem to be, however, only two previous records from the mainland itself, both from the Yucatán Peninsula (Boucard, Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 1883:440; Peters, Auk, 30, 1913:378). The Costa Rican specimen, therefore, represents not only the first record for that country but also for all of Central America. In addition, it extends the mainland range southeastward some 600 miles. Moreover, the occurrence of the bird almost within sight of the Pacific beaches, rather than on the Caribbean slope of the country, seems to be particularly noteworthy. The specimen is housed in the George M. Sutton Collection.

During the last week of December, 1954, I saw this species on the Caribbean slope twice, both times in the same locality about three miles south of the town of Turrialba, Costa Rica. On one occasion I saw two birds, and on the other a party of at least six individuals. The birds, all males, were actively foraging in trees bordering the western rim of the gorge of the Raventazón River.

The presence of a small band would appear to indicate that the birds were not windblown vagrants as might otherwise be inferred from the presence of but a single individual. The late dates suggest that the Cape May Warbler may be an occasional winter visitant in Costa Rica and perhaps in other Central American countries as well. These occurrences may further suggest that the species had been experiencing a periodic increase in numbers, or that it may be in the process of extending its wintering range to include the mainland. The additional possibility remains that the wintering Cape May Warbler may be a wide-ranging wanderer in Central America where it had previously escaped observation.—PAUL SLUD, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 2, 1957.*

Breeding Record of Pintail in Humboldt County, California.—Grinnell and Miller (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:77) report no breeding records of the Pintail (*Anas acuta*) for the northwestern part of California. Therefore, the following observation is of interest from the standpoint of the breeding range of this species. On April 21, 1956, Earl Gibbs, Biologist for the California Fish

and Game Department, and other qualified observers flushed a female Pintail from a clutch of nine eggs located in grass-forb association on the sandy flat at the southwest side of South Humboldt Bay, about 300 yards northeast from the base of the cliff known as Table Bluff. This record is the only indication that we have that Pintails nest in this area.—CHARLES F. YOCOM, *Division of Natural Resources, Humboldt State College, Arcata, California, March 29, 1957.*

Hooded Mergansers at Afognak Island, Alaska.—The observations reported here were made at the research station of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game located at Kitoi Bay on the east side of Afognak Island in southwestern Alaska. The area is covered by a fairly typical forest of Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*).

On November 10, 1956, I collected a female Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) in salt water at the outlet of Big Kitoi Creek. Its ovary looked immature, but it may have been one that had retrogressed. Its lower mandible was yellowish, becoming black near the horn-colored tip. The upper mandible was gray with a yellowish tinge ventrally at its base and it had a darker horn-colored tip. Its feet were gray-green to yellow-green, and its iris was brown. The skin has been presented to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

On November 13, another female Hooded Merganser was seen and on the next day she, or yet another one, was observed swimming with a male Barrow Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*). On the 17th and again on the 20th of November, when I left the station, a female was observed near the outlet of Big Kitoi Creek. It seems likely that these records pertain to a single bird residing in the area during at least the latter half of November. These observations apparently constitute an extension of the known range of the Hooded Merganser from Haines in southeastern Alaska where it is known to breed.—ARCHIE S. MOSSMAN, *Douglas, Alaska, April 18, 1957.*

Observations on a Coot-Muskrat Relationship.—On April 12, 1955, while engaged in a field study at Lake McMurray, Skagit County, Washington, we noted certain relationships between the American Coot (*Fulica americana*) and the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethica*). The observations were made in mid-afternoon in a protected marsh area on the southern edge of the lake. The weather was marked by a strong southeast wind. The vegetation typified that of an acid bog. Red alder (*Alnus rubra*), willows (*Salix* sp.), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), and red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) formed the over-story. Creek dogwood (*Cornus occidentalis*), Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), hardhack (*Spiraea douglasii*), and salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) provided a secondary cover. The surface plant cover, with water depth varying from six to eighteen inches, was composed of skunk cabbage (*Lysichitum americanum*), duckweed (*Lemna minor*), and *Potentilla palustris*.

A group of five muskrats and seven to eight coots occupied the area under observation. The muskrats were feeding on the skunk cabbage roots. The spring of 1955 was phenologically late. Whether skunk cabbage was a food of preference or necessity for muskrats and coots is not known. The actions recorded here, however, indicated a possible food crisis. The skunk cabbage root has a mass of adventitious lateral roots that grow perhaps twelve inches below ground surface. The muskrats dug down along the main shaft of the root to the lateral roots, bit them off and carried them back to a favored, surface eating roost to devour them. These roots averaged an eighth to a fourth of an inch in diameter and three to five inches in length.

The coots were bathing and feeding on the pond surface. When a muskrat would leave its eating roost to secure more skunk cabbage roots, a coot would quickly clean up the root shreds left on the roost or on the adjacent water surface. Coots, apparently, could not dig or cut the skunk cabbage roots for themselves. On one occasion, a coot attempted to steal a root from a muskrat. The rat chased the coot about eight feet across the pool. No other attempts at thievery, in the presence of the rat at least, were noted. Coots were also observed to eat duckweed, sparingly.

The coots and muskrats on this area worked in close proximity, often passing within a foot of each other without noticeable antagonism. Coots appeared to be more antagonistic to each other than to muskrats. No antagonism between muskrats was noted.

When a Cooper Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) appeared, the relations that were being observed were interrupted. One coot, late in making its departure, maneuvered under a horizontal, six-inch willow