

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Record of the Laysan Albatross from Southern California.—The Laysan Albatross (*Diomedea immutabilis*) has been recorded from the California coast on but two previous occasions. The first record was the partial specimen secured by C. B. Linton on San Nicolas Island, April 5, 1909, as reported by J. L. Peters (*Condor*, 40, 1938:90). The second record for California waters was the specimen collected and reported by Karl W. Kenyon (*Condor*, 52, 1950:100) from 40 nautical miles off Bodega Head in central California, December 6, 1949.

On the afternoon of February 6, 1958, personnel aboard a sport fishing boat in the Santa Catalina

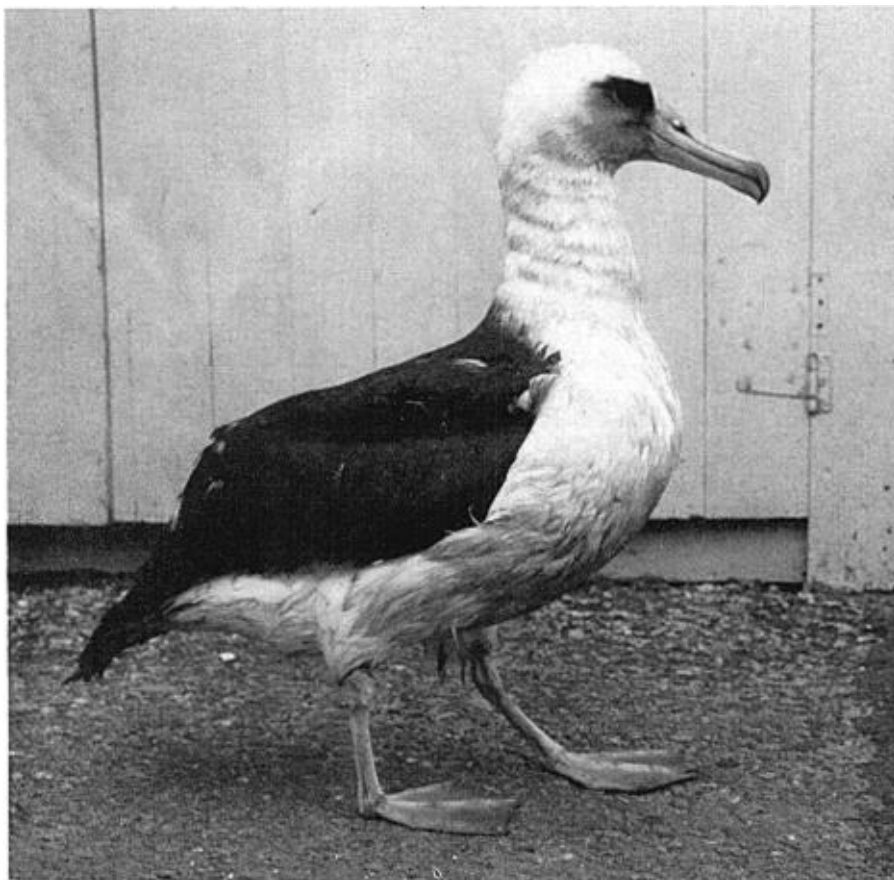


Fig. 1. Laysan Albatross (*Diomedea immutabilis*) captured in Santa Catalina Island channel, five miles off San Pedro breakwater, February 6, 1958.

Island channel, 5 miles off the San Pedro breakwater, noticed a large albatross alight on the water 50 yards away from the ship. The bird swam in close to the fishing boat, and J. E. McClintock succeeded in taking motion pictures of it at close range. The bird appeared to be in excellent physical condition and quite tame, as it readily took live bait offered to it on a hooked line. By means of a piece of fish line looped about its wing, the albatross was hoisted aboard the ship where it readily accepted a dozen live sardines, fed to it by hand. It was brought ashore at Pierpoint Landing in Long Beach where I had the opportunity to examine it and to confirm the tentative identification made by Clyde Paul of the California Department of Fish and Game. The bird, an adult specimen of the

Laysan Albatross (fig. 1), is now sharing a pool with penguins at Marineland of the Pacific, Marineland, California. Aside from the fact that the Laysan Albatross has rarely been recorded from the California coast, it is of interest to find a pelagic species within the relatively shallow shelf waters of the Santa Catalina Island channel.—KENNETH E. STAGER, *Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, California, February 10, 1958.*

Mourning Dove Breeding in Costa Rica.—Under the name *Zenaidura macroura turturilla*, Wetmore has recently described the southernmost population of the Mourning Dove, which breeds in the western half of Panamá (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 69, 1956:123–126). He mentions that Mourning Doves have been reported from Costa Rica throughout the year, but “no evidence of nesting has come to attention.” In preparing my distributional list of Middle American species (Trans. Linnaean Soc. N. Y., 7, 1955:36), I found no record of breeding between Honduras and Panamá. Recently in checking the collection of the American Museum of Natural History to determine what examples belonged to Wetmore’s new subspecies, examination of labels on several Costa Rican birds taken by A. P. Smith indicated breeding in that country. Of two adult males from Agua Caliente, altitude 4500 feet, June 2, 1920, one is marked “testes greatly enlarged . . . This bird was shot while sitting on a nest containing 2 eggs $\frac{1}{2}$ incubated.” The other is tagged “paired: ♀ escaping.” Two birds from Volcán de Irazú, south slope, altitude 9000 feet, May 9, 1920, consist of an adult male labelled “testes enlarged . . . ♂ displaying before ♀ when shot,” and a female (with plumage indications of immaturity) marked “ovaries partly enlarged.”

These Costa Rican birds can be assigned to the same race as the breeding population of Panamá. Wetmore describes *turturilla* as resembling *marginella* of western North America, but smaller, especially in wing measurements, and as paler than the large eastern *carolinensis* and the small Cuban *macroura*. The Costa Rican breeding birds agree in color with Wetmore’s description, although the adult male from the Volcán de Irazú (labelled as displaying) has a richer ventral surface than the others, approaching that of some Cuban *macroura*. In Wetmore’s small Panamá series, wing measurements were: six males, 135.2–139.9 mm.; two females, 124.7–129.7 mm. The respective measurements of the four Costa Rican specimens mentioned above for flattened wing were: males, 137.5, 139, 137.5; female, 139 mm. An additional immature male from Agua Caliente, taken June 3, 1920, has a slightly longer wing than the others, 141 mm. Wetmore informs me (*in litt.*) that his measurements were of the wing chord, thus the dimensions of the males from Costa Rica and Panamá correspond very well. The larger size of the Costa Rican female from Irazú may only signify that the range of variation is wider than indicated by Wetmore’s two females, or that the cline toward increasing size northward is already apparent in the Costa Rican population. It is even possible that this immature female, taken on May 9, might be a wintering bird of more northern origin. This may be true of another female taken on December 4, 1895, by C. F. Underwood, at Miravalles, Costa Rica. The latter has a wing length (143.5 flat, 142 chord) well within the range given by Ridgway for females of the two migratory northern races and exceeding his average for females of *carolinensis* (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull., 50, 1916, pt. 7:345, 348). A slightly more deeply colored winter female (January 14, 1890) from Natá, Coclé, Panamá, may also be a northern bird, for the wing is relatively long (140 flat, 138 chord), considering that the longest primary is not quite full grown and the outermost is still in sheath. As both *carolinensis* and *marginella* are reported to winter south to western Panamá (A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds, 5th ed., 1957:262) and as there is considerable individual variation in these forms, I hesitate to attach subspecific names to these winter specimens.—E. EISENMANN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y., March 5, 1958.*

Blue Jay Sitting on Robin Nest in December.—A curious winter incident involving prolonged sitting by a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) on the nest of a Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) is worthy of record.

On December 8, 1955, at 1:20 p.m., I noticed the jay in an old nest of a Robin which was 20 feet up on a horizontal limb of a white birch on the campus of Indiana University at Bloomington, Indiana. The day was cloudy with a very light northwest wind; the temperature at the time was 38°F., the mean temperature on that date was 32.5°. I watched the nest, which was opposite a window of my office and directly over a heavily traveled walk, for the next two and one-quarter hours. During this period,