

Harris' Sparrow apparently has not been previously recorded in eastern Oregon and the White-throated Sparrow is, according to Gabrielson and Jewett, considered a rare straggler in Oregon for which there are no previous records for Harney County.—DAVID B. MARSHALL, *United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Burns, Oregon, December 10, 1958.*

Unusual Nesting Observations in Colorado.—Some unusual nestings observed in the San Luis Valley of south-central Colorado seem worthy of note.

On May 5, 1954, slightly southwest of the village of Mosca, Alamosa County, Colorado, a nest of a Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) was observed about 12 feet up in a lone cottonwood tree (*Populus* sp.). The tree containing the nest stood exposed in the middle of an open field of sagebrush. One of the hawks flushed upon our approach and in doing so one egg fell from the nest. The egg was fresh and it was found that the nest contained one other egg. While I was preparing to climb to the nest for closer observation, a Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*) flew from the bottom of the debris assumed to be the hawk's nest. Investigation revealed that the magpie was incubating six eggs and that the hawk had deposited its eggs in a slight depression, lined with grass, on top of the domed roof of the magpie nest. This was the first and only time that such an association was observed between these two species.

On the same date, May 5, 1954, a few miles north of the location just described, another Swainson's Hawk nest was examined in a grove of cottonwoods at the edge of an irrigated hay field. The nest contained two eggs in a crotch about 20 feet from the ground. The nest was large and bulky and three pairs of House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) had built nests in the lower part of the hawk nest. Two sparrow nests contained full clutches of five and six eggs, respectively, and the third had two eggs. An harmonious relationship seemed to exist between the hawks and the House Sparrows which seemed rather surprising in view of the normal pugnacity of the latter.

This same nest was used by a pair of Swainson's Hawks in May, 1957; no House Sparrow nests were noted at that time. Also a nest of Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus*) was found in an adjacent tree less than 40 feet away. These unusual nestings, in such close proximity to one another, may have resulted from lack of suitable nesting sites for the birds since the San Luis Valley is devoid of wooded areas other than some trees around ranch houses and in river bottom groves. These areas are not chosen by Swainson's Hawks if a more exposed location is available. Similar nestings in adjoining trees have been observed in the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*). In neither instance was any territoriality displayed. At the site of the Swainson's Hawk and Long-eared Owl nests, no apparent antagonism was evident in birds of either species since the owls often roosted in the tree containing the brooding hawk and the hawks in turn regularly perched on a main fork of the tree some 10 feet above the owl nest when approaching their own nest site.

On May 13, 1954, at Adam's Lake, Alamosa County, Colorado, a female Marsh Hawk (*Circus cyaneus*) was flushed from a nest of six eggs located among heavy tule at the lake edge. Upon approaching the hawk nest, a female Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) flushed from a nest containing seven eggs located only 12 feet from the hawk nest. At first appearance it seemed as if both birds had flown from the same nest. Both the hawk and the Mallard circled overhead while the nests were examined. Marsh Hawks and Mallards are both common breeders at the lake but no nests so close together have been observed before.

On April 25, 1954, near the village of San Acacio, Costilla County, Colorado, a Great Horned Owl was flushed from a rocky prominence. A nest containing four eggs was found in a small eroded pocket of the gently sloping rock less than six feet from the ground. Thirteen nests of this same species observed that season in the same general area were all located in cottonwood trees (one exception was a nest placed on the ceiling rafters of a barn) and none was so close to the ground or on rocky cliffs. The number of eggs exceeded the usual clutch size which is normally two and more rarely three. The eggs were removed and all were found to contain large embryos which had died sometime during the second and third week of development. The shells were very glossy and polished from long incubation and were less granular than normal shells of this bird. Most owls of this species begin laying about the third week in February in south-central Colorado. Thus the eggs taken may have been incubated for over two months. Strong parental attachment is indicated since the normal term of incubation is 28 days. Two of the eggs each had small holes in them. The cause of these holes could not be determined.

On May 4, 1954, near the town of Blanca, Costilla County, Colorado, a female Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) was found dead on her nest. The nest was under the eaves of a shed and had been under observation since nest construction began. The bird had laid three eggs and dissection revealed a well-formed egg in the lower oviduct ready to be laid. Cause of death could not be determined because of the decomposed condition of the specimen, but speculation indicated that the bird may have died due to insecticidal toxicants used on ingested insects. Possibly, also, some malfunction occurred which prevented normal passage of the egg.—JOHN H. BRANDT, *Truk, East Caroline Islands, May 11, 1958.*

Vermilion Flycatchers Nesting in San Diego County, California.—The A.O.U. Check-list, fifth edition (1957) regards the Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) as wintering "sparingly in California (Santa Barbara, San Diego) . . ." On February 18, 1958, at Santee, San Diego County, California, a female Vermilion Flycatcher was observed starting a nest. Mr. Kerry Muller who has studied birds in this area for several years said that a male Vermilion Flycatcher had been seen for about a year. This nest was completed and the eggs were laid on March 4, 5, and 6, respectively. On March 22 one egg had hatched but on March 23 one egg and the young bird were gone and one egg remained in the nest. The nest was deserted but the same pair built another nest about 50 yards to the west. This nest was also completed and two eggs were laid which disappeared from the nest and the birds again deserted. They returned to the same tree in which they had built their first nest and here were successful in raising a brood of three which left the nest on May 18–19. At this writing the female has another nest with three eggs.

Another male Vermilion Flycatcher had been observed during the winter months on the grounds of the United States Naval Hospital in Balboa Park, San Diego, California. Dr. Leon L. Gardner undertook the observation of this bird. On February 23 he saw a female and on March 22 nest building was observed. On April 6 three eggs were in the nest and on April 24 the young were leaving the nest. This pair is now in the process of raising a second brood. A second male Vermilion Flycatcher was seen in the company of this pair on the hospital grounds but it apparently had no mate.

As far as I am able to ascertain, these are the first nesting records of this species in western California.—JAMES E. CROUCH, *San Diego State College, San Diego, California, June 9, 1958.*

European Starling Nesting in the San Joaquin Valley, California.—On May 12, 1958, I found a nest of a European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in Micke Grove Park, San Joaquin County, approximately four miles due south of Lodi, California. This nest was located in a small live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*) about 17 feet above the ground in a cavity in the tree. The tree is located in a grove of live oaks and white oaks (*Quercus lobata*) which is much used as a picnic area. Both parents were seen making many trips to and from the nest bringing insects to the young, the exact number being unknown as the cavity was too deep to allow the young to be counted. However, from a distance several young birds were seen as they appeared at the nest opening to receive food. Mr. John Roumasset, a warden with the California Department of Fish and Game, and Zerifa Kroll both saw the parents bringing food to the young on May 14. On May 17 the nest was empty and presumably the young had left. This species has been observed in flocks in this immediate area during the winter of 1956–57 and in the past winter, but it is believed that this is the first nesting record in the San Joaquin Valley.—RONALD T. REUTHER, *Micke Grove Zoological Garden, Lodi, California, May 19, 1958.*

Breeding of the Starling in Southern California.—Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were first reported in California in 1942 (Jewett, *Condor*, 44, 1942:79). Since that date they have been seen in various localities in steadily increasing numbers, but these were usually winter observations. To our knowledge, the records of breeding herein reported are the first for southern California.

On March 28, 1958, Tramontano observed an adult Starling on electrical wires in Artesia, Los Angeles County, California. The heavily traveled street was in a residential area with numerous dairies in the vicinity. A row of palm trees (*Washingtonia filifera*) lined each side of the street. A single adult was observed in the same area on April 5, 17, 29, and May 2, 1958, and a nesting site was discovered