

Alexander Wetmore kindly made the identification of the specimens at the United States National Museum. I follow Zimmer (Am. Mus. Novitat. No. 1193, 1942:2) in using the name *Dacnis* rather than *Hemidacnis*.—HELMUT SICK, *Fundação Brasil Central, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 5, 1959.*

**Roadrunner a Predator of Bats.**—On two occasions in the summer of 1959, the author observed a Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) killing and eating Mexican free-tailed bats at Davis Cave, Blanco County, Texas. On June 15 a bird picked up two bats from a group of baby bats that had been placed on the ground about fifteen meters from the cave entrance. These animals had been removed from the cave floor where they had fallen. After the second bat was consumed, the bird was accidentally frightened away. On July 28, a Roadrunner was surprised at 6:00 a.m. about five meters from the cave entrance with a bat held in its beak.

It was not necessary for the Roadrunner to have entered the cave to have obtained the bat. On many occasions, particularly when the young bats are beginning to fly in July and August, they crawl and hang to rocks outside the entrance to the cave. Many of these animals after falling near the mouth of the cave or colliding with a wall, ceiling, or another bat at flight time, are able to take off again, but some remain for some time outside the cave and are thus easy victims for various predators.—CLYDE F. HERREID II, *Laboratory of Comparative Behavior, School of Hygiene and Public Health, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, August 25, 1959.*

**Black-and-white Warbler and Purple Finch in New Mexico.**—On December 30, 1957, I collected a Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) along the Gila River near the town of Cliff, Grant County, New Mexico. The bird proved to be a male, with an incompletely ossified skull. It had only a slight amount of fat and weighed 9.8 grams. During the fifteen minutes or so that it was under observation it fed on and near the ground under some large cottonwoods, foraging apart from several Audubon Warblers (*Dendroica auduboni*) and Bridled Titmice (*Parus wollweberi*) which fed in the same trees.

On January 2, 1958, I discovered a highly plumaged male Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*) feeding on the seeds of mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*) with a number of Cassin Finches (*Carpodacus cassinii*) five miles northwest of Silver City, Grant County, New Mexico, elevation 7000 feet. It weighed 22.8 grams and had little fat. The specimen has been deposited in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology where I have identified it as the western race, *C. p. californicus*. The warbler specimen is in my collection at New Mexico Western College. I have found no previous New Mexican record for either of these species.—DALE A. ZIMMERMAN, *Department of Biology, New Mexico Western College, Silver City, New Mexico, September 20, 1959.*

**King Eider at Monterey, California.**—On February 3, 1958, we saw a King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) in the harbor of Monterey, Monterey County, California. It was first seen swimming among the moored boats near the United States Coast Guard Pier. Later we saw it perched on a mooring raft in the same area, about 150 yards from shore, where we were able to observe it with the aid of a 20×60 telescope for about an hour. It was in the brown plumage of a female or of a first-winter male. The head-and-bill profile, together with the diagnostic patterns of feathering and processes of the bill, could be clearly seen.

The bird was subsequently watched on a number of days, sometimes for prolonged periods, often at close range. It was always between the Coast Guard Pier and Municipal Wharf No. 2, an area not more than about a quarter of a mile square. Much of its time was spent sleeping and preening while perched on the raft. Its presence was not noted after March 16, 1958.

On several occasions the King Eider was seen swimming and diving close to the sides of some of the boats at anchorage. Once, on February 3, it "tipped up," in the manner of a dabbling duck, along side a boat, apparently feeding on green algae, or some other organism adhering to the hull. Harry C. Adamson writes that he watched the King Eider on March 1 as it swam and dove at a distance which was sometimes not more than 10 yards away. Each time it returned to the surface it held in its bill a pale flesh-colored starfish, estimated to be about four or five inches across. The bird "seemed to 'chew' the starfish into smaller pieces" which were then quickly swallowed. "Some of these pieces were dropped in the process of 'chewing' and quickly picked up before they could sink."

Echinoderms are listed among the animal items eaten by this species (Kortright, *The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America*, 1943:320). Bent (*Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl*,

U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 130, 1925:114) includes starfish among various marine organisms which the species is "said to eat."

On March 21, 1959, Holmes, Roger T. Peterson, and others, saw another King Eider, this time on ocean waters at Cypress Point, about five miles from Monterey. Although this bird remained for most of the time rather far from shore, often in the company of a group of Surf Scoters (*Melanitta perspicillata*), it occasionally approached to within 30 yards of the beach. The bird was "a young male . . . just going into adult plumage . . ." and having the "fundamental pattern of white chest and dark back." The short bill, as compared to *Somateria mollissima*, was "fairly orange or deep chrome yellow, but the bird had not yet developed the full frontal shield . . ." (Peterson, in a letter). The forehead profile, however, was abrupt, and not sloping, as in either *S. mollissima* or in the Spectacled Eider (*Lampronetta fischeri*). The bird was seen again in the same area of water on March 22 and 23 and was last seen there by Williams on March 26, 1959.

A King Eider was again seen on June 24 and 25, 1959, in the same section of the harbor of Monterey in which the first eider was watched during February and March, 1958. Its presence was reported first by Hubert Arnold. Like the eider of March, 1959, it was a sub-adult male, possibly the same individual?, with orange-yellow bill and characteristic head profile, but lacking the frontal shield. The neck and sides of the head were white, irregularly mottled and blotched with grayish, but the whitish line, which in adult plumage arches over the eye and extends down the neck, was distinctly outlined. When the bird turned its head upside down during preening, the forward-pointing V-mark on throat and chin showed faintly. Although no attempt was made to test the bird's ability to fly, flightlessness was indicated by the extremely worn condition of the primaries and secondaries, the latter appearing to be mere shafts without barbs.

The status of the King Eider in California, according to Grinnell and Miller (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:88), is that of a "rare straggler in winter from far north," being heretofore known from only "three definitely determined" occurrences in the San Francisco Bay area based on specimens taken between 1879 and 1933.—LAIDLAW WILLIAMS, *Carmel, California*, and RICHARD T. HOLMES, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 25, 1959*.

**The Age of the Cave Swallow Colonies in New Mexico.**—On July 23, 1930, a field party from the University of Kansas Museum of Natural History collected two Cave Swallows (*Petrochelidon fulva pallida*), at Slaughter Canyon, eight miles southwest of White City, Eddy County, New Mexico. These birds were fairly clearly from a nesting colony; the field notes of Harry C. Parker, one of the Museum party, read: "The boys got back from Slaughter Canyon with a story of a huge hole in the mountain side. . . . They also had two swallows. . . . The swallows live in the big cave, which goes several hundred feet straight down." The two specimens (KU 18028, 18029) were prepared as skins, identified as Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*), and have remained unreported until now.

Recently Kincaid and Prasil (Condor, 58, 1956:452) published the only heretofore known records of Cave Swallows in New Mexico, based on birds seen and specimens taken in 1952 and subsequent years at a colony in Goat Cave, eight miles southwest of the entrance to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Eddy County. A reasonable implication of this report by Kincaid and Prasil, although not so stated by them, was that the colonization of southeastern New Mexico by Cave Swallows had taken place recently, perhaps owing to an extension of range paralleling the generally northward extensions of breeding range now known of several kinds of vertebrates of México and the American southwest. Such implication should be avoided in view of the specimens dating from 1930, 22 years antecedent to the erstwhile first records of occurrence in New Mexico. It is wholly possible that the age of the Cave Swallow colonies in New Mexico is only 29 years, but it is much more likely that the colonies have been established for a longer period of time, during which collectors did not look for southern "exotics" as far north as New Mexico.—RICHARD F. JOHNSTON, *Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, September 25, 1959*.

**The Rock Sandpiper, Another Northern Bird Recorded from the Cool Coast of Northwestern Baja California.**—For several years I have been convinced that the Rock Sandpiper (*Erolia ptilocnemis*) migrates southward as far as the discordantly cool northwestern coast of Baja California, México, but inasmuch as the species had been reported as ranging no farther south than