

Breeding of the Fork-tailed Petrel off the Washington Coast.—The fifth edition of the A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds (1957) and Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 121, 1922:137), list the Fork-tailed Petrel (*Oceanodroma furcata*) as breeding on islands off the coast of Washington. However, Jewett, Taylor, Shaw, and Aldrich (Birds of Washington State, 1953:74), and Dr. Alexander Wetmore in a personal communication, agree that this statement is based on a questionable egg record and that there is no authentic breeding record of this petrel for Washington, although there are good breeding records for sections of the coast to the north and the south. Consequently, it seems worth recording that on July 17, 1959, Garrett Eddy, William Hawkins, Karl Kenyon, and I discovered numerous burrows of Fork-tailed Petrels containing adults, young, and eggs, on Bodelteh Islands off Cape Alava, Clallam County, Washington.

The two main Bodelteh Islands, of approximately five and ten acres each, lie about a mile offshore and are part of the Flattery Rocks group. They have steep, rocky slopes, generally brush-covered and leading to somewhat level, wooded top areas over 190 feet high. The burrows of the petrels were usually two to four feet deep on steep, rocky, sparsely vegetated areas from 20 feet or so above high tide to over 150 feet. Typically they started in crevices or under rocks and continued, with some excavation of soft earth, to the nesting chamber. After finding the first two petrels, one on an egg and one on a newly hatched young, Eddy and I found some seven more occupied burrows in perhaps one hour's additional search. Six of these held single young, up to about two weeks old, but no adults. Judging from our observations and those of Kenyon and Hawkins, the population of breeding Fork-tailed Petrels on Bodelteh Islands must consist of many hundreds of pairs.

Burrow-nesting species associated with the Fork-tailed Petrels on Bodelteh Islands were Leach Petrels (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) and Cassin Auklets (*Ptychoramphus aleutica*). Hawkins found four Leach Petrels on eggs in burrows on the brush and grass-covered south slope of the eastern island. The several occupied auklet burrows were all situated on fairly open areas beneath trees on the flattish tops of the islands above the slopes where the petrels were nesting. They held young, one of which was nearly fledged.

Evidence was seen of considerable predation, presumably by some mammal. Eight sets of wings and partial pectoral girdles of Fork-tailed Petrels were found under bushes in the course of a limited search. The difficulty of landing on Bodelteh makes it seem unlikely that predators such as domestic rats have been introduced to the islands, so it is hoped a native predator is involved and something of a balance has already been reached between it and the population of the Fork-tailed Petrel.—FRANK RICHARDSON, *Department of Zoology and Washington State Museum, University of Washington, Seattle, September 29, 1959.*

An Occurrence of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Southern Nevada.—On May 17, 1959, a male and female Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucicus ludovicianus*) were seen by me at Indian Springs Ranch, Clark County, Nevada. The birds frequented the shrubby vegetation adjacent to the spillway of the larger of two small irrigation reservoirs on the ranch property. The vegetation here consists primarily of mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora*), four-winged saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), and a tangle of cultivated blackberry (*Rubus* sp.). The birds remained in the area for several days. However, on May 24, the last date of observation, only the female was seen.

As far as is known the only previously reported occurrence of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Nevada is that of a single male bird observed over twenty years ago by Grater (Auk, 56, 1939:191) in the vicinity of Saint Thomas on the north arm of Lake Mead.—W. H. RICKARD, *New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, New Mexico, October 27, 1959.*

The Rusty Blackbird and Dickcissel in Oregon.—On March 20, 1959, while watching a mixed group of Redwinged and Brewer blackbirds at the feeding station outside our window at Tillamook, Oregon, my wife remarked that there was an odd looking blackbird among them. It was collected to confirm my identification of it as a male Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), a species hitherto unrecorded from Oregon. The specimen is now number 12420 in my collection.

On March 24, 1959, Mr. Paul Lewis told me of a bird that for several days had been visiting the feeding station at his home in Tillamook. He believed it to be a Dickcissel and asked me to check his identification. The following day I took several Dickcissel skins from my collection to the Lewis residence where, for more than 15 minutes, we watched the bird feeding just outside the window. I did

not hesitate to verify his identification of the bird as a Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*). Unfortunately, Mrs. Lewis did not wish the bird collected, so it can be reported only as a sight record. I was later advised that the bird remained around the feeding station two or three days longer and then disappeared. I know of no other record of the occurrence of this species in Oregon.—ALEX. WALKER, *Tillamook County Pioneer Museum, Tillamook, Oregon, October 20, 1959.*

Wilson Petrel off the California Coast.—On August 29, 1959, we identified a Wilson Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) about two miles south of the Farallon Islands, California. There are few records of the species in California and for the west coast of North America. The first specimen was taken by R. H. Beck on Monterey Bay, August 24, 1910 (Grinnell, *Pac. Coast Avif. No. 11, 1915:29*) and the second by Loye Miller 25 miles west-northwest of Point Loma, San Diego County, August 31, 1935 (Miller, *Condor*, 38, 1936:13).

The bird remained around our boat for seven or eight minutes, and at times it approached within about 30 feet, when we had clear views of the characteristic yellow webs of the feet, which extended well beyond the end of the tail. The tail was square-ended, slightly rounded at the corners; the upper tail-coverts were pure white, without a dark center line; the remainder of the plumage was sooty-black, with the upper wing-coverts slightly grayer. The bird appeared about the size of a Fork-tailed Petrel (*Oceanodroma furcata*), which was in view at one time for comparison, but its wings were shorter and broader, and its flight was direct and deliberate, with slow, even wing-beats; it often settled on the water. On one occasion it dangled its legs and "walked" on the water in characteristic fashion.—I. C. T. NISBET, *Cambridge, England*, and R. G. McCASKIE, *Tahoe City, California, October 21, 1959.*

Nesting Attempt by a Pair of Barn Swallows in Northern Alaska.—No species of bird wholly or even primarily dependent on flying insects for food has become established in the high arctic. This is not due to lack of opportunity to do so; for example, six of the eight species of swallows which occur on the North American mainland north of México have been recorded at Barrow, Alaska (Bailey, *Colorado Mus. Nat. Hist. Popular Series, No. 8, 1948*). The factors limiting the northward spread of these species are presumably connected with the scarcity of flying insect species in the arctic, their short season of activity, and the fact that periods of cold weather, even in the arctic summer, will keep insects inactive for days at a time. However, lack of proper nesting sites may also be limiting. In this light it is of interest to report an attempt by Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) to utilize an artificial site for nesting in an area north of the normal range of this species.

On June 17, 1959, two Barn Swallows were seen foraging over the tundra near the mouth of the Pitmegea River, Cape Sabine, Alaska. This species has not been recorded in two previous years of field work in this area (H. E. Childs, Jr., MS). On the following day one was seen near our tent, situated next to the river one mile from the coast. On the evening of June 19 two were seen there. From then until early July the pair was seen frequently. On June 22, courtship activity and attempted copulation were observed at our tent. On June 25 we found one member of the pair roosting in a deserted cabin at the mouth of the river. On July 1 a partly constructed nest, measuring $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, was found built on the side of a beam in the cabin. No additional construction was done, and by the middle of July only one bird still remained in the area.

Barn Swallows were observed at two other localities in this general area in 1959. Maher recorded two at Cape Beaufort, 20 miles east of Cape Sabine, on June 27. On July 15, a male was collected by Childs at a locality seven miles inland along the Pitmegea River.

Bailey (*op. cit.*) indicates that nesting by Barn Swallows may occur, though rarely, in the Alaskan arctic. He cites a report by Charles Brower of a possible nesting at Barrow. Brower collected a female with three flying young of the year and suggested an abandoned sod igloo near the village as the probable nest site. The specimens have unfortunately been lost.

There are now two instances of Barn Swallows nesting or attempting to nest in the Alaskan arctic. Both times the birds sought a site which met their nesting requirements in an environment where these requirements were not found naturally. Such nesting attempts by vagrants lead to the colonization of new areas, an important event in the adaptation to climatic changes through geologic time.

These observations were made during field work on projects supported by the Arctic Institute of