

**Food Habits of the Horned and Barn Owls.**—Although numerous authors have reported on the food habits of Horned and Barn owls, little data are available on food taken in southern California. The results herein presented are based on an analysis of three samples of pellets, two from the Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) and one from the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), from coastal Los Angeles County, California.

The Barn Owl pellets were collected in January, 1954, at the base of a Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) in a typical residential area. Because of the high percentage of wood rats (*Neotoma*) and the low percentages of pocket gophers (*Thomomys*) and meadow mice (*Microtus*) in the material, it is concluded that the birds foraged largely in the chaparral-covered Santa Monica Mountains approximately two miles north of the collection site. Other workers have similarly found that Barn Owls roosting in residential areas traveled considerable distances to forage (Hall, Condor, 29, 1927:274-275; Parmalee, Auk, 71, 1954:469-470; Wallace, Michigan State Coll. Agric. Exp. Sta. Tech. Bull. 208, 1948).

	Horned Owl		Barn Owl	
	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 1	Sample 2
	No. of specimens	Per cent of total	No. of specimens	Per cent of total
<b>MAMMALS</b>				
<i>Neotoma fuscipes</i>	40	7.9	26	11.3
<i>Thomomys bottae</i>	119	20.7	83	36.2
<i>Mus musculus</i>	142	25.0	32	14.0
<i>Microtus californicus</i>	86	14.9	31	13.5
<i>Reithrodontomys megalotis</i>	10	1.7	20	8.7
<i>Perognathus</i> sp.	24	4.1	18	7.8
<i>Dipodomys agilis</i>	25	4.3	7	3.1
<i>Peromyscus</i> sp.	22	3.8	7	3.1
<i>Notiosorex crawfordi</i>	2	0.3	3	1.3
<i>Sylvilagus</i> sp.	5	0.8	1	0.5
<i>Sorex ornatus</i>	1	0.1	1	0.5
<i>Scapanus latimanus</i>	4	0.7	....	....
<i>Rattus</i> sp.	....	....	....	....
				13
				12.2
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>				
<i>Stenopelmatus</i> sp.	12	2.1	....	....
<i>Elgaria multicarinata</i>	1	0.1	....	....
Birds (unidentified)	25	4.3	....	....
				4
				4.5

Approximately 25 pounds of pellet material from Horned Owls (sample 1) was collected from a tower on the campus of the University of California, Los Angeles. The high incidence of house mice (*Mus*), *Thomomys*, and *Microtus* indicates that the owls probably foraged largely on the coastal sage-covered slopes immediately southwest of the campus.

The second sample of Horned Owl pellets was taken from a ledge 19 feet above the ground on a southwest-facing vertical sandstone cliff in the Santa Monica Mountains. Typical chaparral vegetation surrounds the site. The mean size of these pellets was 40 × 28 × 21 mm. While others have reported Horned Owls feeding on domestic fowl (Grinnell and Storer, *Animal Life in the Yosemite*, 1924; Peyton, Condor, 32, 1930:124), none was recovered from this sample, although a ranch with several thousand chickens and turkeys is located a quarter of a mile from the ledge. All the species identified in the pellets could have been captured immediately to the southwest of the nesting ledge and it is probable that these owls were localized in their feeding.—JOHN D. CUNNINGHAM, *Department of Education, University of California, Los Angeles, November 3, 1959.*

**Occurrence of the Polymorphic Attila in Sonora, México.**—According to the "Distributional Check-List of the Birds of Mexico" (Part II, Pac. Coast Avif. No. 33, 1957:59) the Polymorphic Attila (*Attila spadiceus pacificus*) is found in Sinaloa north to the "junction with Sonora and Chihuahua." However, no definite Sonoran locality is cited.

While going over a collection of birds taken on the Josephine Scripps-Natural History Museum Sonoran Expedition of 1959 a specimen of the Polymorphic Attila was discovered. The bird was taken

at Guirocoba, Sonora, México, on April 10, 1959, by Rodney Montgomery, a Mexican hunter employed by the expedition. The bird, of undetermined sex, is now in the collection of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

For help in identification I would like to express my appreciation to Ken Stott, Jr., of the San Diego Natural History Museum, Ed. N. Harrison of Los Angeles, and Kenneth E. Stager of the Los Angeles County Museum.—JAMES R. SAMS, *San Diego Natural History Museum, San Diego, California, November 23, 1959.*

**Imperfect Albinism in a Sandhill Crane.**—On April 2, 1958, during the height of the migration of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) through central Nebraska, the writer observed an extremely light-colored individual of this species in a group of some 100 cranes feeding in a field along the Platte River, two miles south of Odessa, Buffalo County, Nebraska. The bird in question was markedly paler than any of its companions and when first observed from a distance of approximately one-half mile, it stood out in strong contrast to the group.

On closer observation it was readily determined that the bird was definitely not a total albino, but possessed a pale or diluted version of the normal plumage. The characteristic mouse gray color of the feathers was replaced by gray of an extremely light hue. The red coloration on the bare areas of the head also appeared to be paler. In all respects this individual seemed to express the phenomenon of imperfect albinism or dilution, wherein a paler than normal coloration is due to a more or less general reduction of pigmentation throughout the entire plumage (Hutt, *Genetics of the Fowl*, 1949: 187). The term schizochroism has also been applied to birds having "the normal plumage pattern of the species but an abnormally pale, washed-out appearance" (Van Tyne and Berger, *Fundamentals of Ornithology*, 1959:99-100). Imperfect albinism has been recorded for a variety of domestic and wild birds, including the Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*), California Quail (*Lophortyx californicus*), and Redwinged Blackbird, *Agelaius phoeniceus* (see Nero, *Auk*, 71, 1954:137-155). Experimental evidence indicates that in some of these species a sex-linked recessive factor is responsible for the dilution effect.

There appears to be no previously published record of albinism in the Sandhill Crane. The subject is not mentioned in Walkinshaw's monograph on the species (*The Sandhill Cranes*, Cranbrook Inst. Sci. Bull. No. 29, 1949). Walkinshaw has further remarked (personal communication) that he has never observed true albinos, although he has encountered some birds with partial albinism in which a few white feathers are present.

At the time of the original observation, the writer was impressed with the possibility that chance viewers might readily mistake such pale mutants for the rare Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*); however, it would appear that albinistic individuals are of such very infrequent occurrence that the possibility for mistaken identity would seldom be presented.—JOSEPH R. MURPHY, *Department of Zoology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska, December 4, 1959.*

**Least Grebe on the Coast of Southern California.**—On December 20, 1959, we observed a single Least Grebe (*Podiceps dominicus*) swimming in the waters of the flood control channel in Mission Bay Recreation Area, San Diego, San Diego County. It was approximately 50 feet from where we stood on the road along the north side of the channel, and we watched it for a period of 10 minutes. This is, we believe, a first record for the Pacific coast of California. We are both thoroughly familiar with the species, having observed it on numerous occasions in various areas in the American tropics, as well as in the Colorado River Valley in Imperial County, California.—KEN STOTT, JR., and C. JACKSON SELSOR, *Museum of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, December 21, 1959.*

**Correction.**—Owing to an error of the author's, all references to primaries 7 and 8 on pages 8 and 9 of his paper (*Condor*, 62, 1960:7-24) on the behavior of the Inca Dove should be given as primaries 6 and 7.—RICHARD F. JOHNSTON, *Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, March 8, 1960.*