

obtained of another Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Fish Springs. A third specimen turned up at Zion National Park in central southern Utah and is being reported on by Roland Wauer.—WILLIAM H. BEHLE, *Department of Zoology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, 20 December 1965.*

An Addition to the Bird Fauna of the Barstow Miocene.—In Condor of September 1952 I published a paper on the birds of the Barstow Syncline, listing the orders and the species so far as determinable. This list recorded the following: Ciconiiformes—1 specimen; Anseriformes—7 specimens, probably 5 species; Falconiformes—3 specimens (one species?); Galliformes—1 specimen; Charadriiformes—1 specimen.

On the basis of this fauna, with aid of the copious field notes of Richard Tedford, now Assistant Professor of Geology at the University of California at Riverside, a reconstruction of the local ecology was ventured. The picture included broad and shallow ponds of perhaps ephemeral nature, the waters of which might become highly mineralized in certain seasons. Since that publication in 1952 there has come to my attention only one bird specimen from the Barstow beds. Many amateurs and some professionals have visited the locality, but I have seen no record of bird remains collected until this summer (1965).

Dennis Bramble spent some weeks collecting mammals from the Barstow beds in the early summer (1965) and while there contacted an amateur, Chas. Rader, who had picked up from the surface two fragments of bird bone, one of which, a scapula, I ascribe to a grebe approximately the size of our living Western Grebe, *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (Lawrence), although it cannot be assigned to that species. Mr. Rader generously presented the specimen to me and it has been deposited in the Museum of Paleontology, University of California at Berkeley (specimen no. 71478).

The value of the specimen lies in that it adds a significant chip to the mosaic picture of the Miocene landscape (Merriam, Univ. Calif. Publ., Bull. Dept. Geol. Sci., 11:437, 1919 and Miller, Condor, 54:296, 1952). The grebe bone is from an adult bird so we are uncertain as to its resident status. The larger grebes prefer rather deeper and more permanent waters than do the smaller species, although a migrant might drop down anywhere to rest.

The "Cup of Tantalus" is so often presented to the paleontologist's lip.—LOVE MILLER, *Department of Zoology, University of California, Davis, California, 28 October 1965.*

Confused Nocturnal Behavior of (? California) Gulls.—Following the San Diego meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society, I spent several days at the Holiday Lodge, four miles west of Reno, Nevada, with E. Eisenmann and G. E. Petersen. Tuesday, 21 April 1964, was fine and warm. The early part of the following day was sunny, but a strong wind soon sprang up and reached almost gale proportions. Gray clouds appeared, and by midafternoon there were snow squalls often mixed with driving dust. The wind began to decrease at sundown, and shortly before dark it was quiet but with a heavy wet snowfall.

As I was about to leave the motel dining room well after dark at 2000, one of the employees summoned two other men outside to hear "the strangest thing he had ever heard . . . thousands of 'mountain' gulls." I stepped out, and indeed a screeching flock of gulls was milling about overhead so close that one strained to see them amidst the densely falling snow. But they remained invisible. The flock would be in full cry, then recede until barely audible, then return in full cry. Near the Lodge and adjoining buildings and also at the turnoff from the main highway, there are bright lights, including a big neon sign. Presumably the gulls were confused by the glare; but with the lights of Reno a few miles away, why they should have remained milling about for what eventually amounted to two and a half hours after I first heard them is beyond comprehension. Also why should these birds start migrating on a miserable night following an even more inclement day? That very morning we had driven for 30 miles along the northern

shores of Lake Tahoe 30 or 40 miles away and had remarked on the fact that we saw no gulls. Yet gulls these night fliers seemed surely to be. The gull-like screeching of the flock chorus ruled out anything else. It seems probable that they were California Gulls (*Larus californicus*). Could it have been flock after flock instead of just one group circling about? Almost certainly not. The gulls were heard off and on thereafter until 2230, when they had finally left or settled.

The next morning Mr. Petersen of our party saw "two white gulls with blackish wing tips" along the Truckee River immediately behind the Lodge. We noticed two or three gulls in the distance as we drove to the Reno Airport.—D. AMADON, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York, 12 November 1965.*

A Specimen of the Vermilion Flycatcher from Oklahoma.—On 1 July 1965, about 30 minutes before dusk, I saw a Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) four miles southeast of Kenton, Cimarron County, Oklahoma. In this area the Texakeet Creek has cut a valley about a quarter-mile wide between rocky mesas that rise perhaps 200 feet above the valley floor. The valley is sparsely covered with mesquite, cholla, yucca, and grasses, and a grove of 50-foot walnut trees borders the creek. I first saw the flycatcher hawking insects from yucca stalks and from the lower branches of the walnuts, and it stayed within 50 yards of these trees.

The bird was collected, and proved to be a male (testes, 7×5 mm; skull completely ossified) in mixed first-year plumage. The plumage is quite faded and bleached, unfortunately rendering the specimen subspecifically unidentifiable (K. C. Parkes, personal communication). Measurements of the specimen are as follows: wing, 79.0 mm; tail, 60.0 mm. It has been deposited in the University of Oklahoma Museum of Zoology (UOMZ 5738).

Although this is the first specimen of this species for Oklahoma, it has previously been seen several times in the state, and breeding pairs have been observed in Major, Lincoln, and Cimarron counties (G. M. Sutton, ms).—JOHN A. WIENS, *Department of Zoology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 8 November 1965.*

Additional Records of Whistling Swans Feeding in Dry Fields.—In two recent reports, one by Innis (*Audubon Mag.*, 66:304, 1964) and the other by Nagel (*Condor*, 67:446, 1965), Whistling Swans (*Olor columbianus*) were described as feeding in dry corn stubble. Both authors regarded this as an unusual occurrence, and Nagel indicated that it was an atypical response to the prolonged winter freeze in the spring of 1964 in Utah. These reports prompt us to record several other such instances. During the winters of 1962–1963 and 1963–1964 several observations of swans feeding in partially dry fields were made in the vicinity of Stockton, California. Four of these instances were specifically recorded in our notes and are reported here.

A group of seven swans was watched walking on muddy ground in a partially flooded corn stubble field on 25 February 1964. Although the birds were more than one-quarter mile away, it could be seen with binoculars that they were feeding, apparently picking up kernels of corn left by the harvesting operation. Near them, in the flooded part of the field, were 45 more swans feeding in the muddy water. This was a group of birds that had been present for several days on this particular field.

Soon after daylight on 14 November 1963, we observed a group of 27 birds standing on bare ground in a newly plowed field. There was no standing water nearby, suggesting that the birds had landed on the dry field sometime during the night. The birds, probably newly arrived migrants, were mostly sleeping and stretching their wings. Some of the birds were searching the ground, but as far as we could determine there was no suitable food present.

On the morning of 11 February 1964, a flock of 150 birds was observed in flooded corn stubble. Five birds were feeding on scattered corn grains near the flooded portion of the field. Just after noon, we watched a group of 30 birds in a flooded potato field. Most of the birds