

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

**Notes on the Distribution of Certain Icterids and Tanagers in California.**—The following species were unknown or were known only from a few reports in California when records of California birds were last assembled in 1944 (Grinnell and Miller, *Pacific Coast Avifauna*, No. 27, 1944).

*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. Bobolink. This species has been recorded breeding in California on the basis of flocks with singing males found near Eagleville, Modoc County, in late May and early June of different years; a female specimen with slightly enlarged ova was the only evidence of nesting (Dawson, *Condor*, 18:28, 1916; Malliard, *Condor*, 26:215, 1924). We have been unable to locate this species anywhere in northeastern California in recent years and doubt that it now breeds more than sporadically, if at all, in the state.

Two fall and one spring records from Monterey and San Mateo counties and a fall record from Mono County were available in 1944 (Grinnell and Miller, *op. cit.*, 420). Since then it has been collected on Santa Barbara Island on 12 September 1957 by Lowell Sumner (Museum of Vertebrate Zoology no. 139217) and seen at Death Valley, Inyo County, on 25 May 1959 (Wauer, *Condor*, 62:139, 1960) and at Malibu, Los Angeles County, on 5 June 1956 (Ross and Emery, *Condor*, 59:69, 1957). It has also been reported twice in the fall in Audubon Field Notes (hereafter cited as AFN): on Catalina Island (18:76, 1964) and at Dana Point, Orange County (19:81, 1965).

Stallcup and DeBenedictis collected an immature female (MVZ no. 150956) on Point Reyes, Marin County, on 3 October 1963. McCaskie saw a male near Niland, Imperial County, on 31 July 1965. McCaskie has detected this species in surprising numbers near Imperial Beach, San Diego County. In 1963 he collected an immature (?female) (San Diego Natural History Museum no. 30778) on 21 September, saw another bird on 27 September, collected an immature female (SDNHM no. 30779) from two present on 1 October, and saw as many as 23 together between 10 and 22 October. In 1964 he saw as many as 20 birds together between 29 September and 2 October and additional birds on 11, 17, and 22 October. These records support the suggestion of Hamilton (*Auk*, 79:209, 1962) that Bobolinks from the western breeding populations do not fly east before going south but migrate directly south along the Pacific Coast.

*Icterus spurius*. Orchard Oriole. In 1944 the only report of this species in California was of a female found dead in Eureka, Humboldt County, on 6 October 1932 (Davis, *Condor*, 35:119, 1933). Since then several records of adult males have been published. Sight records along the coast are from: Soquel, Santa Cruz County, 30 March 1956 (AFN, 10:280, 1956); Pacific Grove, Monterey County, 1 January to early May 1963 (Hurlbert, *Condor*, 65:536, 1963; V. L. Yadon, personal communication); Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County, 2 November 1963 to 5 April 1964 (AFN, 18:76, 488, 1964); Montecito, same county, 2 to 5 January 1965 (AFN, 19:418, 1965); Carpinteria, same county, 1 September 1964 to 3 March 1965 (AFN, 19:81, 418, 1965); Santa Ana, Orange County, 21 October to 30 November 1960 (AFN, 15:77, 1961); Laguna Beach, same county, 2 February 1957 (AFN, 11:211, 1957) and 1 December 1958 to 20 March 1959 (AFN, 13:325, 1959); Point Loma, San Diego County, 6 December 1964 (AFN, 19:418, 1965); and San Diego, same county, March 1958 (Johnson, *Condor*, 61:437, 1959). One was collected near Imperial Beach, San Diego County, on 19 October 1962 (McCaskie and Banks, *Auk*, 81:358, 1964). Inland, one was seen at Mecca, Riverside County, on 13 January 1954 (AFN, 8:272, 1954) and another was photographed at El Centro, Imperial County, on 25 March 1964 (Hubbard, *Condor*, 67:265, 1965).

McCaskie saw single adult males at Dana Point, Orange County, on 11 and 23 November 1963, from 12 August to 30 October 1964, and on 11 April 1965. He saw a young male, which showed some chestnut on the breast, on Point Loma, San Diego County, between 16 February and 3 April 1964. In addition we have seen a total of 14 small, yellowish orioles, some with extensive black bibs and (often in direct comparison with other orioles of known identity) with rather straight, short bills, along the coast between September and April of different years. We believe these are female or immature Orchard Orioles but have been unable to confirm this by taking a specimen.

However, the number of records of adult males alone clearly indicates the Orchard Oriole is at least a rare winter visitor to California.

*Icterus galbula*. Baltimore Oriole. This species has been shown to hybridize extensively with the Bullock's Oriole, *Icterus bullockii* (Sibley and Short, Condor, 66:130, 1964), and records published in Audubon Field Notes without details must be suspect. An injured bird found in Martinez, Contra Costa County, on 21 February 1954 (Roth, Gull, 36:22, 1954) appears to be the first specimen from California.

Stallcup saw a nearly adult male on Point Reyes, Marin County, on 16 June 1963. DeBenedictis saw a "female" at Pacific Grove, Monterey County, on 12 January 1963. V. L. Yadon found at least five "females" there on 21 December 1963; these remained through February 1964 and were seen by McCaskie and Stallcup on several occasions. In Montecito, Santa Barbara County, Mrs. Russell Kriger has had an adult male frequenting her feeder each winter since 1961 and "a female" has accompanied it most winters; the birds have arrived as early as 22 September and remained as late as 14 April. Photographs of an adult male have been obtained (Abbott, Condor, 64:441, 1962), and we have seen these orioles in each of these winters. McCaskie saw three "females" and an adult male that were wintering in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, on 15 March 1964 and a "female" at a feeder in Santa Ana, Orange County, on 30 December 1963. In San Diego County McCaskie saw two "females," one of which attained adult male plumage before departing, on Point Loma between 27 November 1963 and 6 March 1964, a "female" in San Diego on 4 February 1963, a "female" near Imperial Beach on 5 November 1964, and he and Larry Sansone collected an immature male (SDNHM no. 35512) there on 10 October 1965. An adult male was present near Calipatria, Imperial County, between 27 and 30 November 1964; it was photographed (copy in SDNHM) by Robert Prather and seen by McCaskie. Birds listed above as "females" doubtlessly include immature males. These birds are richer orange ventrally from chin to under tail coverts than the western orioles, their back is brownish with faint streakings, and their face is uniformly dusky without trace of a superciliary line. Sibley and Short (*op. cit.*, 135) used these same criteria to characterize *galbula*.

Baltimore Orioles are usually found at feeding stations or at flowering eucalyptus trees, commonly associated with wintering Bullock's Orioles and Hooded Orioles (*Icterus cucullatus*). Their presumably regular occurrence in small numbers on the Pacific Coast is particularly interesting since the closely related Bullock's Oriole now appears regularly to make similar appearances in small numbers on the Atlantic Coast (Snyder, Auk, 80:92, 1963; and numerous records in Audubon Field Notes).

*Euphagus carolinus*. Rusty Blackbird. Five specimens have been taken in California (Grinnell and Miller, *op. cit.*, 435). On 31 December 1962 McCaskie located a bird with extensive rusty feather edging near Santa Ana, Orange County; it was seen by numerous people before 26 January 1963 when McCaskie and DeBenedictis were the last to see it. The bird remained in a canal where there were shallow grassy pools and patches of bullrushes; it did not associate with other blackbirds.

*Cassidix mexicanus*. Boat-tailed Grackle. On 6 June 1964 McCaskie and DeBenedictis collected an adult female (SDNHM no. 35077) near Imperial Dam, Imperial County. It was identified as *C. m. nelsoni*. On 18 July 1964 McCaskie and others saw an adult male along the southern shore of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. This is the first time the species has been found in California, but additional records doubtlessly will be obtained as it is apparently expanding its range northwestward in Arizona.

*Tangavivus aeneus*. Bronzed Cowbird. This species has been observed in small numbers in April and May along the Colorado River between Parker, Arizona, and Bard, Imperial County, where a specimen was taken in 1955 (Monson, Condor, 60:191, 1958). West of the Colorado River one was collected near Westmoreland, Imperial County, on 22 April 1956 (Cardiff, Condor, 63:183, 1961).

We have seen these cowbirds at Bard in early June 1963 and 1964; a pair seen copulating near Laguna Dam, Imperial County, on 2 June 1962 by McCaskie provides the best evidence to date that this species breeds along the lower Colorado River.

*Piranga olivacea*. Scarlet Tanager. A single bird found dead on San Nicolas Island on 30

October 1929 (Miller and Miller, Condor, 32:217, 1930) is apparently the only published record from California.

A group of about 20 people including McCaskie studied a male in breeding plumage which sang continuously for over three hours from a small clump of willows at Squaw Flat, Sespe Canyon, Ventura County, on 31 May 1958. McCaskie saw a bird in fall plumage at Dana Point, Orange County, on 23 August 1964.

*Piranga flava*. Hepatic Tanager. In coastal California this species has been collected near Shandon, San Luis Obispo County, on 8 November 1959 (Miller and McMillen, Condor, 66:308, 1964) and at Poway, San Diego County, on 30 December 1960 (Huey, Auk, 78:426, 1961); one was seen in Live Oak Canyon near Claremont, Los Angeles County, between 21 and 27 March 1964 (AFN, 18:488, 1964). One was collected along the Colorado River near Imperial Dam on 18 November 1960 (Phillips, Marshall, and Monson, The Birds of Arizona, 1964, p. 175).

David Gains and Larry Sansone discovered an adult male and an (?immature male) coming to roost in a clump of eucalyptus trees in the Rancho Park Golf Course, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, on 4 February 1964. McCaskie and Stallcup saw both birds before they departed on 13 March 1964. An adult male was present at the same spot from 4 November 1964 to 28 February 1965. Apparently small numbers of this species winter in coastal southern California.—GUY McCASKIE, *Tahoe City, California*, RICHARD STALLCUP, *Oakland, California*, and PAUL DeBENEDICTIS, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 31 March 1966*.

**The Occurrence of Longspurs and Snow Buntings in California.**—Longspurs and Snow Buntings prefer to associate with Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) feeding in large open areas of short, dry grass or bare ground. Few observers in California appear to have carefully checked through the many wintering flocks of Horned Larks for these species, and consequently their status here is somewhat uncertain. Recent observations by careful observers have indicated that longspurs are much commoner in California than previously suspected, and that the Snow Bunting may occur in limited numbers in the northern part of the state.

*Rhynchophanes mccownii*. McCown's Longspur. There appears to be no published record of this species occurring in California; however, a specimen in the McLean Collection was taken at Deep Springs, Inyo County, on 16 October 1949 by Don McLean. On 20 December 1964 Paul DeBenedictis, Art Wang, David De Sante, and I saw a minimum of seven individuals with a mixed flock of longspurs and Horned Larks feeding in a stubble field on the Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge, Siskiyou County; the birds were seen again in the same field the following day. On 30 and 31 January 1965 Alan Craig, Eugene Cardiff, and I unsuccessfully attempted to collect two individuals we found feeding with other longspurs and Horned Larks near Westmoreland, Imperial County. On 6 November 1965 I collected an immature male (no. 35525, San Diego Natural History Museum [SDNHM]) near Imperial Beach, San Diego County; the bird was feeding in a bare, cultivated field with Horned Larks and other longspurs. It now appears that this species is an occasional fall migrant and winter visitor to California; it is the rarest of the three longspurs occurring.

*Calcarius lapponicus*. Lapland Longspur. This species has been considered a rare and sporadic winter visitant to the northeastern plateau region of California; in addition there are two October records for the coast of California (Grinnell and Miller, Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 27, 1944). One was taken in Death Valley, Inyo County, on 18 October 1961 (Wauer, Condor, 64:220, 1962).

I have found this species to be a regular winter visitor to the northeastern plateau; the birds occur most commonly in stubble fields, either with flocks of Horned Larks or by themselves. In the Lower Klamath Basin, Siskiyou County, I have seen these birds every winter since my first visit there during November of 1959; flocks of between 50 and 100 are regular, but on 19 December 1961 I saw more than 650 birds together. Along the northern edge of Honey Lake, Lassen County, they also appear to be regular, and I have seen as many as 250 birds in a flock. I saw 10 at Doyle, Lassen County, on 22 January 1962, and one at Deep Springs, Inyo County, on 24 October 1964.

Along the coast they are noted regularly at Point Reyes, Marin County, where observers now look for them; Dean Fisher saw one on 16 September 1956; Richard Stallcup and Paul DeBene-