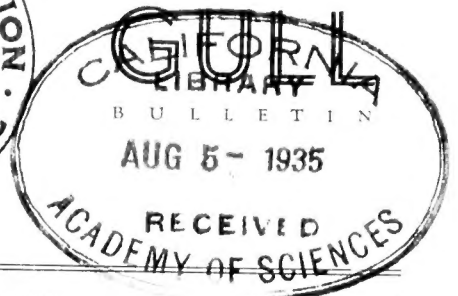


M&O  
Serials  
QL 671  
.G84

THE  
MONTHLY



VOLUME 17

SAN FRANCISCO, AUGUST, 1935

NUMBER 8

### The Texas Night Hawk

Mr. Cranson Hopkins and the writer are indebted to Mr. Charles H. Feltes, of Modesto, for a very interesting and instructive day with the Texas Night Hawk as the object of our observation and investigation.

On Sunday, June 16, 1935, the three of us visited what is commonly known as Lone Tree Canyon, situated in the foot-hills about thirty miles west of Modesto. As you approach the mouth of this canyon you come to a dry creek or river bed which is quite rocky and affords little or no shelter of any kind. Here we commenced our search for the birds as well as their nests. Within a distance of half a mile twenty odd birds, both male and female, were flushed, some from the nests and some apparently resting in the shade of small shrubs or bushes.

It is hardly proper to say that these birds have nests, such as we ordinarily understand and use that term, for their eggs, two in number, are laid upon the bare ground without any nesting material. The five nests located were not in the stream bed proper, but upon small benches or shelves a foot or two above the bed of the creek. We noted that the eggs were laid close to the roots of small bushes or shrubs, which afforded some slight protection from the sun, and also owing to the shadows cast, some additional protection might be given, as such shadows and the blending of colors make it more difficult to observe the bird when incubating. In addition thereto it might be that these shrubs protect, to some extent, the birds from being crushed by horses, cows or sheep that pasture in the vicinity. In two nests were found two eggs each, in one nest one young bird and in two nests, two young birds. It was interesting to observe the young birds "freeze" when we approached them. Their protective coloring is excellent and only by flushing the adult bird can one ordinarily discover the young. The adult would likewise "freeze" and only from the slight opening of the eye could one note any observation on its part; nevertheless, as we approached more closely, it would suddenly dart away and then drop as if wounded. Whether it observed or heard us approaching, we cannot say, but it was evidently aware of our close proximity. In three instances we found the female upon the nest and in two the male.

It is not difficult to distinguish between a bird flushed from a nest and one not nesting but merely resting in the shade of a bush. If flushed from a nest, the bird attempted the usual ruse of decoying the molester from the nesting site by rising quickly and then dropping to the ground with wings and tail outstretched apparently in distress. On one occasion a female in addition to dropping to the ground with wings and tail outstretched, turned toward us and widely opened its mouth showing a very large red throat. The mouth and throat are exceedingly large for a bird of its size.

The authorities speak of this bird as being most active in the early morning or late evening, but it was noted that when disturbed by us it flew away without any apparent confusion, seemingly unaffected by the light. When away from the nest its eyes were wide open. One female bird when flushed from the nest sought the shadow of a fence post, where it remained for some time.

The authorities also state that this bird does not rise in the air as high as the Pacific Night Hawk, but while we were lurching in a grove of eucalyptus trees, some probably seventy-five to one hundred feet in height, we watched two males obviously enjoying themselves darting in and out through the trees, and in several instances, it was judged they were flying higher than fifty feet, although when they alighted they did so upon branches within twenty to forty feet from the ground. Likewise it was observed that they perched length-wise upon the branches, and not cross-wise as most birds rest.

From Lone Tree Canyon we visited Hospital Canyon about two miles away, where a similar rocky stream bed was searched, but here only one nest was found with two young birds but a few days old. With this exception, all the birds were found in Lone Tree Canyon, and most of them frequented the upper part of that canyon where a plant known as the tobacco tree or bush is very abundant. Mr. Hopkins took several photographs—adult birds upon the nests, eggs and young birds.

Joseph J. Webb, San Francisco, California. June 20, 1935.



### Casual Observation of Nesting Sharp-shinned Hawks

A pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks established a nesting territory on a knoll covered with Monterey cypress and pine trees in the Oakland Boy Scout Camp early this spring. The male bird was first seen in the territory on March 23, 1935; however, it had been calling from this area previous to this date. For several days after he was first seen, he was heard daily for the most part calling from the tops of the highest trees. On March 27, a female Sharp-shinned Hawk was noticed for the first time.

On March 28, I visited the area and discovered the nest, a loosely placed pile of sticks, about 35 feet from the ground and close to the trunk of a Monterey cypress. The male bird was present and no amount of harassing could drive him from an area of approximately 60 by 80 yards. The nest was almost in the center of this area. After walking around for several minutes with the hawk darting about overhead and uttering the characteristic *kak, kak, kak* when the nesting area is disturbed, I decided to procure a gun and shoot this little bird-killing hawk. Getting him in position for a shot was considerably more of a job than might be expected, but I finally managed to do so. The female was not seen or heard during the entire affair.

Two days after the killing of the male, the female was again noticed in the area; however, she was extremely cautious and silent. During the next few days I approached the area several times in hope of obtaining a shot, but she would remain concealed until I was very near and would then suddenly, but silently, leave the area. I noticed that she left in practically the same direction each time and so for an experiment I once approached the area from that side. In this instance she flew the other way, but circled around me and disappeared down the canyon as she had always done on previous occasions.

On April 19, 1935, another male was present. The two birds were then observed to circle high into the air, the male remaining slightly higher and occasionally darting towards the female, who paid little or no attention to him. After reaching a considerable height, they flew away and have not returned to date.

Robert Taylor, Oakland, California. April 29, 1935.



**July Field Trip** was taken on Sunday, the 14th. Starting from Sea Cliff, we followed the trail above the water to Land's End and the Cliff House, and then continued on through Golden Gate Park.

The weather, at the beginning of the trip, was that of an ideal San Francisco day. Later ominous black clouds appeared over the Berkeley Hills and moved toward San Francisco. A few rain drops fell, but the wind soon changed and the clouds moved toward the northeast. The rest of the day was perfect for birding.

The water birds which one expects to find at this season of the year were present. Pigeon Guillemots furnished the most interest. We were able to see them in flight, resting on the water, perching on the rocks and feeding their young. A group of four Gulls was the cause of much speculation, one individual which was noticeably different from the other three proved to be a Herring Gull. The lighter-colored mantel, yellow eye-ring, lighter yellow bill and less black in the wing tips furnished the identifying marks.

Heermann Gulls were present in numbers on the Seal Rocks, as were Brown Pelicans and Cormorants.

The trip through the park was disappointing in the numbers of individuals noted, though we were able to find twenty-one of the thirty-seven species which are recorded as residents in Mailliard's, "The Birds of Golden Gate Park." Of the twenty summer visitants recorded in this same volume we were able to find only seven.

Mallards, Coots, Robins, Hutton Vireos, Pine Siskins, Quail, Willow Goldfinches and Pileolated Warblers were still feeding their young, which had left the nest. A Pileolated Warbler's nest containing three half-grown young was found in a growth of myrica about a foot above the ground.

Two Canvasback Ducks were noted on Spreckels Lake and one Redhead on Stow Lake. Their presence here at this season of the year is no doubt due to their physical inability to leave the lakes so they are not included in our list.

Following is the list of species, thirty-seven in number, recorded for the day. In Golden Gate Park:

Mallard	Barlow Chickadee	Purple Finch
Ruddy Duck	Coast Bush-tit	Common House Finch
California Quail	Vigors Wren	Pine Siskin
American Coot	Western Robin	Willow Goldfinch
Mourning Dove	Russet-backed Thrush	Green-backed Goldfinch
Anna Hummingbird	Hutton Vireo	San Francisco Towhee
Allen Hummingbird	Yellow Warbler	Point Pinos Junco
Red-shafted Flicker	Pileolated Warbler	Nuttall Sparrow
Black Phoebe	English Sparrow	Song Sparrow
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Brewer Blackbird	

Found along the water only:

Brown Pelican	Western Gull	Heermann Gull
Farallon Cormorant	Herring Gull	Pigeon Guillemot
Brandt Cormorant	California Gull	

Members present: Mr. and Mrs. Millard; Mrs. Ruby H. Thomas; Misses Berg, Sterne, Walker; Mr. Bryant and Master Lippman.

Chas. A. Bryant, Leader and Historian.



## Burrowing Owl

Recently I had a very amusing time with a bird I called my "clown owl." He was a small Burrowing Owl and alongside of his hole he had a small mound of earth about a foot high. Here he perched about fifty feet from the automobile road, and passing cars did not disturb him. However, if you approached on foot walking along the road, when about 100 yards off, he hopped off his perch and lower and lower he crouched behind his little hill until he was flat on the ground with only one eye showing.

If you walked steadily along pretending you did not see him he would wait until you had passed and then slowly straighten up and then hop onto his hill but if you went back the same performance was repeated. Frequently I took friends to see him and he performed quite regularly but if you left the road and approached him, he would fly off to some oak trees a short distance away.

M. Hall McAllister, Redlands, California. January 2, 1935.

## Audubon Notes

**August Meeting:** The regular meeting will be held on Thursday, the 8th, at 8 p. m., room 19, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be Mr. Laidlaw O. Williams, of Carmel, whose subject will be "Birds of the Monterey County Peninsula." The lecture will be illustrated.



**August Field Trip** will be taken Sunday, the 11th, to Tennessee Cove, Marin County. Purchase round-trip ticket to Manzanita, 45c and take 8:45 Sausalito Ferry. Bring luncheon. Leader Chas. A. Bryant.



"Birds of Marin County," published by the Audubon Association of the Pacific, giving a complete list of the birds found in Marin County, may be obtained from the leader. Price 25c.



**July Meeting:** The 216th regular meeting was held on July 11, room 19, Ferry Building, with twenty-seven members and guests present. 1st Vice-President B. K. Dunshee presiding.

Laidlaw O. Williams of Carmel was elected to membership.

Observations were reported by Commander Parmenter as follows: June 27, Cliff House, Heermann Gulls; July 2, Alvarado salt ponds, 200± Western Willets and 300± Avocets.

Miss Barbara D. Blanchard gave a very interesting account of her observations of the Nuttall and Puget Sound White-crowned Sparrows on the Berke-

ley campus. By banding eight pairs with colored celluloid bands of various combinations she was able to obtain accurate data regarding their life histories. The two species feed together but flock separately. The song of the Puget Sound is similar to that of the Nuttall yet it differs enough to attract attention.

The Nuttall remains on the campus throughout the year and pairs stay mated. The female Nuttall sings the same as the male especially in winter or under provocative conditions. It breeds in March, selects its perch and defends its territory. The Puget Sound breeds in April but has no habitual perch. Two broods a season of from two to four young is the rule. Incubation begins after the last egg is laid and continues for twelve days.

Miss Blanchard weighed five broods each day for eight consecutive days, obtaining the logical and expected result: the first-hatched being the heaviest; the second next and so on, though this rule does not always hold constant. On the eleventh day the young begin to leave the nest and soon all are out. Sometimes young return temporarily to the nest. From the thirty-first to the thirty-fourth day the young leave and join flocks of immature birds. If they don't do this voluntarily they are driven from the territory by their parents.

Miss Blanchard's suggestion to the bird student is to band a few individual birds and study them in detail in order to get an annual pattern of their behavior.

## Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

### For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....Mrs. G. Earle Kelly.....1311 Grand Ave., Alameda, Calif.  
 Corresponding Secretary.....C. B. Lastreto.....260 California St., San Francisco  
 Treasurer.....Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....1695 Filbert St., San Francisco

Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 P. M., Room 19, Ferry Building.

Address Bulletin correspondence to Mrs. A. B. Stephens, Editor, 1695 Filbert St., San Francisco.

Subscription to monthly Bulletin, \$1.00 per year. Single copies, 15c.

Membership dues, payable January 1st, \$3.00 per year.

Student memberships, \$1.50 per year.

Life memberships, \$50.00.

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.