

NORTHERN GOSHAWK BREEDING RECORDS FROM SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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The egg collection at the Slater Museum of Natural History, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, contains a set (PSM 13196) of three eggs of the Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) collected on 7 May 1937 at an elevation of 5000 ft in the Cuyamaca Mountains, San Diego County, California, by E. E. Sechrist. These specimens document a significant southerly extension of the known historical breeding range of this species along the Pacific Coast.

The eggs measure 57.47×45.25 , 55.95×45.10 , and 57.40×45.46 mm, are elliptical in shape (Preston in Palmer 1962), white with no superficial markings, and not glossy. In these details they agree with standard published descriptions of Northern Goshawk eggs, including the measurements given by Bent (1937), $59.3 (55-65.5) \times 45.6 (43.2-50.1)$ mm; ($n = 27$), and Palmer (1988), $57.76 \pm 2.05 \times 44.73 \pm 1.67$ mm ($n = 20$). Sechrist's eggs do not overlap in size with those of the congeneric Cooper's Hawk (*A. cooperii*), the most likely species with which the goshawk could be confused in San Diego County. The sizes of Cooper's Hawk eggs are given by Bent (op. cit.) as $49 (43-54) \times 38.5 (34-42)$ mm ($n = 62$), and Palmer (op. cit.), $48.17 \pm 2.32 \times 38.01 \pm 1.47$ mm ($n = 21$). Incubation of the clutch was reported as "heavy," and the eggs were prepared with unusually large blowholes (mean = 5.6 mm).

Sechrist noted on the back of the egg data card that he saw two young birds, presumably recent fledglings, at the same locality in June 1938. There is no apparent reason to doubt the authenticity of these records. Although he was an amateur naturalist, Sechrist was active in the Cooper Ornithological Society throughout his lifetime and was regarded by southern California ornithologists as a highly reliable egg collector thoroughly familiar with California birds (R. Quigley pers. comm.). Sechrist's collection was deposited at the San Bernardino County Museum, but it does not contain additional Northern Goshawk sets or additional notes on San Diego County goshawk records (R. McKernan pers. comm.). The Sechrist set came to the Slater Museum as a part of the collection of John B. Hurley, another highly reliable collector who was familiar with goshawk eggs.

Although there have been numerous summer observations of Northern Goshawks in southern California mountains over the years south to the San Jacinto Mountains, Riverside County (e.g., Garrett and Dunn 1981, McCaskie 1987, Lentz 1993), the southernmost confirmed breeding records are from northern Ventura County. Garrett and Dunn (op. cit.) reported a set of three Northern Goshawk eggs (Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology no. 45,214) taken at "San Jacinto" (= Mt. Pinos), Ventura County on 6 May 1904 by Elmer Bowen. More recently, two nests were found active at the same time (June 1989) on Mt. Abel and Mt. Pinos, Ventura County, respectively (McCaskie 1989), and the Mt. Abel nest was active again in the following year (McCaskie 1990, Lentz 1993). Although there have been a few subsequent summer records for this species in southern California mountain ranges, including the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains, no other actual nests have been confirmed.

The only previously published San Diego County records of this species were of two birds collected during the nonbreeding season in November and January,

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respectively (Unitt 1984), and one seen on Palomar Mountain on 22 March 1984 (McCaskie 1984).

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