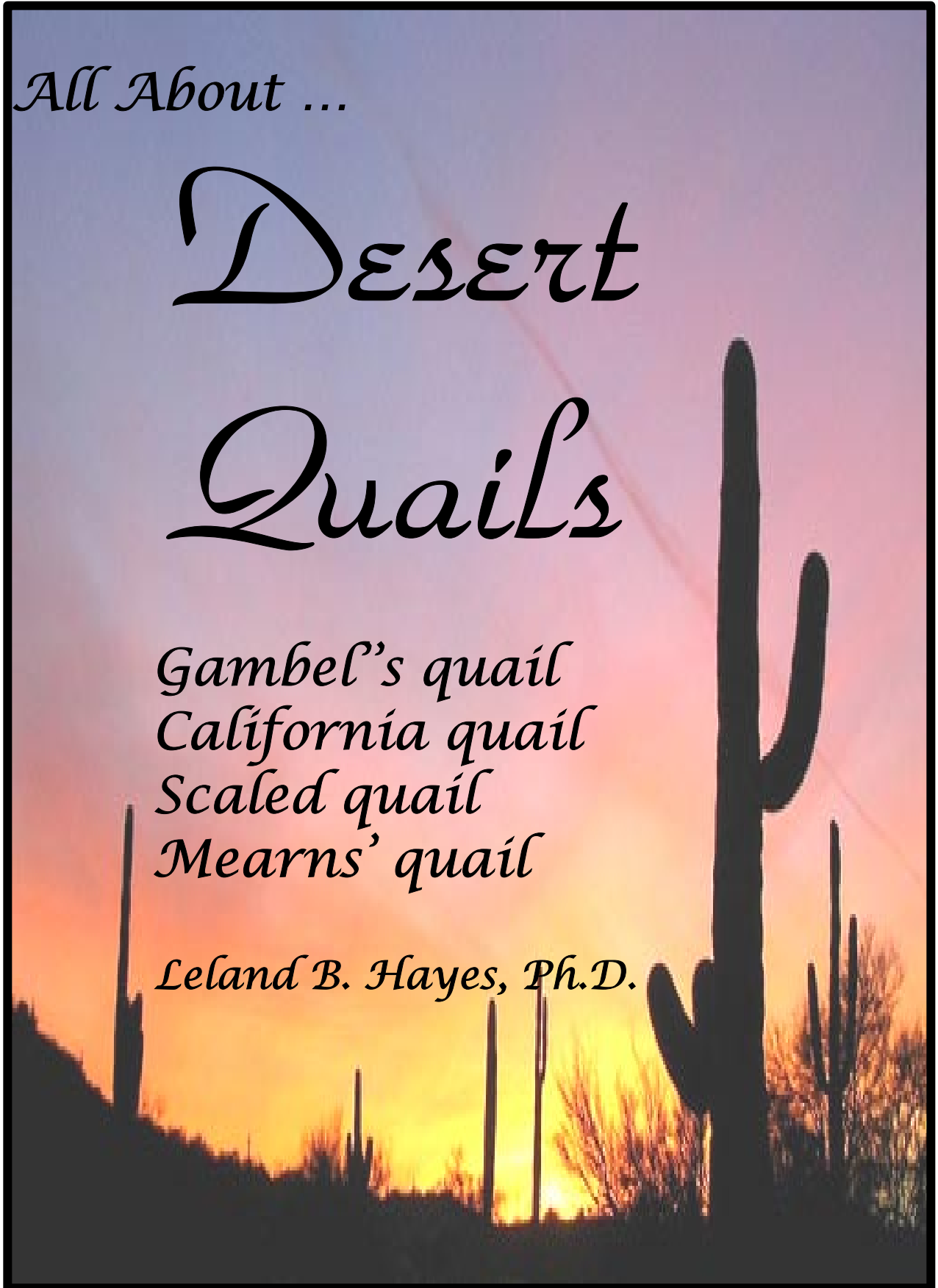


*All About ...*

# *DESERT Quails*

*Gambel's quail  
California quail  
Scaled quail  
Mearns' quail*

*Leland B. Hayes, Ph.D.*



# *All About ... The Desert Quail*

## *Preface*

It is no secret—I love gamebirds! It is especially true when it comes to the quail. I have often written for my readers that I have the “Quail in Blood” disease which has been with me most of my life. I cannot get rid of this affliction, but who would want to?

I am willing to do most anything to further the popularity of quail as I want every bird lover to have the fun I have had getting to know them.

The Desert quail are especially close to my heart as I have had them all from time to time and have really gotten to know them. They have given me many wonderful hours of pleasure, and I owe them something for this!

I also owe a huge debt to Jerry Harrell who provided most of the photos and of course his encouragement. If you need a webpage designer, you can get information about Jerry’s company, Applecore Media:

[\*\*jerryharrell@applecoremedia.com\*\*](mailto:jerryharrell@applecoremedia.com)

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## *Forward*

I hope that after you have read this 169 page (8x11) CD book, you will know more than you did about the

wonderful Desert quail. The Gambel's, California Valley, Scaled, and Mearn's quail all live in the desert Southwestern United States (Mostly in the Sonoran desert) and into northern Mexico. They are popular with aviculturists in most every country that has them in captivity. It is fortunate that they can be raised successfully in large numbers by most bird breeders that really puts their mind to it. This gives a ready supply to the gamebird fancy and also makes their prices stable.

While the Mearn's and the Elegant are considered to be the most difficult to raise, the other three species are good beginner birds. I encourage you to get a pair or two of one of the wonderful Desert quail.

There is no doubt that the four species of Desert quail that we are discussing in this book are closely related. Johnsgard (1973) lumps the genera *Lophortyx* and *Callipepla* into the single genus *Callipepla*. His proposal has not yet been accepted by the Nomenclature Committee of the American Ornithologist's Union. However, I will use Johnsgard's classification of calling the four species; Gambel's, California, Scale, and Elegant quails all "*Callipepla* (Leopold, 1977).

I have included in this book information that has been made available from several Universities and is good solid information gathered by creditable field scientists. I also quote reliable well-known authorities. Some of the information is new as some of it is through personal communication that has not been printed.

Please tell your bird breeder friends about this book and encourage them to get a copy for themselves. It prints out very beautifully on most any printer so you can have it to read wherever you go.

Last summer we had some Valley Quail come visit our wild bird feeding station located outside our kitchen door. We have fed birds in that location for several years. This was the first quail we had seen for several years thinking that they all had been wiped out by the numerous Cooper's hawks and other predators in our area. This, indeed, was a very pleasant surprise. This was shortly after the terrible fires that came within five miles or so from our house. This condition could have made the quail move about where they discovered our feeding station.

There were two very noticeable groups or coveys. There was a covey of 14 adult birds with the sexes about evenly divided. These would not come around if the other covey was present and visa versa. The second covey was made up of two mature males and twenty-two young birds about one-half grown. They were too young to see what sex they were. What a delight it was to watch every day. They came for about two months and then apparently moved on. It was sad to lose them. However, they now come nearly every day of the year which gives us no end of pleasure to watch their antics through the kitchen window.

There is no more delightful bird to have around the yard than any of the Desert quail. Many householders living in suburban or rural settings would like to attract a covey and keep it nearby, with no thought of hunting. Fortunately, the species adapts well and quickly to co-exist with people (all except the Mearn's) . It is entirely practical to maintain a backyard covey of Desert quail.

I often get many Questions sent to me via my **Game bird eZine** which I publish each week discussing a desire

to have a covey of quail around the backyard. This weekly publication can be subscribed to for free by going to my home page on the internet: <http://www.lelandhayes.com> .



**A beautiful painting of a California Quail  
by unknown artist.**

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