

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Russian-banded Emperor Goose Killed in California.—On November 24, 1940, while stationed at Sacramento, California, I received from Mr. J. M. Williams of Gridley a band taken from a goose. The bird was killed six miles west of Gridley on November 21 and was described as a whitish goose "with sort of cream-colored spots on him," without black wing tips, weighing about five pounds, and unlike any other goose the hunter had ever seen. The notation on the band was: "510 H—Moskwa—13152 B."

Immediate efforts were made to trace the band, but since just about then Germany and Russia went to war, no reply was received. No further effort was made until late in 1946, when the central office of the Fish and Wildlife Service made further inquiries. Early in 1947 a reply from Mr. A. Tugarinov, Chief of the Ornithological Section, Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences, U.S.S.R., carried the following information. The band was one of a series issued to Captain G. Grinberg in 1938 and 1939 when he was working in the vicinity of Uellen (Welen), Tchuktchen (Chukche) Peninsula. Captain Grinberg was killed during the war and all of his papers were lost.

Mr. Tugarinov stated that "as far as I know, the only species of goose breeding in the vicinity of Uellen is *Philacte canagica*. Hence, most probably, it was that species that has been obtained in California." Combining this statement with the fact that the goose was unlike any other Mr. Williams had ever seen and that the Emperor Goose is so rare in the Sacramento Valley that few people there have ever seen one, there seems to be little doubt as to the identity and origin of the goose killed.—JOHNSON A. NEFF, *Univ. ed States Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, Colorado, September 30, 1948.*

Nesting Birds of the Ajo Mountains Region, Arizona.—The bird life of the Ajo Mountains of western Pima County, Arizona, remains poorly known. Huey and his assistants collected along their western side, entering lower Alamo Canyon in March, early May, and December, 1939; Huey is the only ornithologist who has written anything about this range. Unfortunately we cannot agree with him that the occurrence of "two or more species of oak trees" in Alamo Canyon "marks the only tendency in the [Organ Pipe Cactus National] Monument towards Upper Sonoran zonal conditions" (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 9, 1942:358). We found only a single species of oak tree (identified by Dr. C. H. Muller as *Quercus turbinella*, although its appearance is most unusual); but junipers (*Juniperus monosperma*) and Arizona rosewood (*Vauquelinia californica*) are also common in upper Alamo Canyon. Hackberries (*Celtis laevigata* var. *reticulata*) and mulberries (*Morus microphylla*) also grow in the canyon, although most of the mulberries are small. Other Upper Sonoran plants present are hop tree (*Ptelea angustifolia*) and holly-leaved buckthorn (*Rhamnus crocea* var. *ilicifolia*). For plant identifications, we are indebted to Dr. Robert A. Darrow of the University of Arizona.

At the very tops of the ridges (about 4500 feet altitude), the north-facing slopes are more nearly dilute Upper Sonoran than Lower Sonoran. Here are found bear grass (*Nolina microcarpa*), various true grasses, and a patch of true scrub oak. South-facing slopes are purely Lower Sonoran, as saguaros grow to their tops. Leafy trees are everywhere restricted to canyon bottoms and sheltered north-facing slopes.

On March 23, 1947, Phillips visited Alamo Canyon with A. J. van Rossem. Hiking up the canyon, he heard a song which he attributed to a Rufous-crowned Sparrow, but he failed to obtain the bird. Curious to know if birds of the Upper Sonoran Zone breed so far west in southern Arizona, we made camp at the mouth of Alamo Canyon on May 20, 1947. Next day we hiked up and across the canyon to the top of the ridge to the south, and on May 22 we left the region. We are indebted to William R. Supernauth, superintendent of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, for numerous courtesies, and to A. J. van Rossem for the loan of a series of *Aimophila ruficeps rupicola*.

Falco peregrinus. Duck Hawk. Although a pair of falcons was always much in evidence about a conspicuous cliff south of camp, it was not until our last day there that we were able to identify them as Duck Hawks. They had apparently replaced the Prairie Falcons (*Falco mexicanus*) reported by Huey in 1939. We saw none of the latter species.

Aëronautes saxatalis. White-throated Swift. A total of 16 or more was seen, and a pair was observed mating. There would thus seem to be little doubt of the species nesting here, although it is

rare or local as a breeding bird in the general region (see Sutton and Phillips, Condor, 44, 1942:60).

Salpinctes obsoletus. Rock Wren. Ten birds seen, one pair of which was accompanied by full-grown young, establish the breeding of this wren.

Poliottila caerulea. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Rather common, not only on the ridges, but down almost to the very mouth of Alamo Canyon, where one was taken near the windmill and corral. A family of young, not long out of the nest, was encountered a little farther up the canyon, but still in Lower Sonoran Zone surroundings. We saw a total of seven pairs.

Phainopepla nitens. Phainopepla. Although "abundant" and breeding earlier in the spring (Huey), these birds had largely left by late May. We saw but few (total three to five individuals), and these mostly on our first day in camp.

Aimophila ruficeps. Rufous-crowned Sparrow. We found at least a dozen singing males and four or five females, all well up in the mountains. This, with the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, was the only definite Upper Sonoran Zone indicator species of bird that we noted.

Three males collected on our trip, with seven specimens collected by Phillips and E. R. Tinkham in late October, 1947, show that the birds of the Ajo Mountains are darker both above and below than *A. r. scottii*. Although their bills average larger, they are otherwise identical with *A. r. rupicola* van Rossem (Auk, 63, 1946:562) of the Harquahala Mountains, from which the Ajos are separated by some 125 miles of low, hot desert. This is particularly interesting in view of van Rossem's finding that the birds of the Baboquivari Mountains (only 60 miles east of the Ajos) are slightly paler than typical *scottii*. Our one June male from the Baboquivaris appears darker than average *scottii*, but is probably not representative of its population.

Amphispiza bilineata. Black-throated Sparrow. By no means common; a single bird was heard singing at camp. They were more numerous, but wild, near San Simon, a little farther northeast. A pair taken here, like three birds taken by Tinkham and Phillips on the hillside above the mouth of Alamo Canyon, October 21, 1947, are more purely (grayer) brown on the back, less reddish brown, than *A. b. deserticola*, which Huey found in winter at Bates Well to the west. Curiously, the birds of the Ajo Mountains and San Simon do not appear separable from *A. b. confinis* of the north Mexican plateau, although they occur far to the west of that region and apparently are completely isolated from other populations of *confinis*. Even more puzzling is the fact that several specimens from near Ventana Ranch are good *deserticola*, including one from seven miles south-southwest of Ventana Ranch. This last locality is less than 15 miles, air-line, north of where our San Simon pair was taken, and with no apparent barrier intervening! Our only conclusion is that much remains to be learned about these sparrows in southwestern Arizona.

It seems worth recording that the Arkansas Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), Lucy Warbler (*Vermivora luciae*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), and Chipping and Black-chinned Sparrows (*Spizella passerina* and *S. atrogularis*) were not found in the Ajos on our trip.

Most of the transients seen were of common species. On May 20, while Phillips was making camp just after our arrival, he was surprised to see a Ground Dove (*Columbigallina passerina*) fly through, very low, going west out of the canyon. An Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis borealis*) was seen on May 21 a little above the mouth of Alamo Canyon. The same day, in the upper part of the canyon, we found a flock of about eight Pine Siskins (*Spinus pinus*) feeding in the composite shrubbery just above the canyon bottoms. A young Green-backed Goldfinch (*S. psaltria*) was taken from this flock. Siskins were also heard twice at camp on May 22.—ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, Tucson, Arizona, and WARREN M. PULICH, Phoenix, Arizona, July 1, 1948.

Attempted Coition of Rock Dove with Mallard.—Covel's observations of a female California Quail (*Lophortyx californica*) courting certain male Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) at Lakeside Park, Oakland, California (Condor, 50, 1948:165), has prompted the following note: During the month of February, 1948, Mr. Walter H. Boyce of the Westchester County Park Commission and I observed a Rock Dove (*Columba livia*), obviously a male, actively courting certain female Mallards by the Bronx River in Scarsdale, New York. The Rock Dove strutted and cooed in typical courtship fashion, even pecking at the Mallard drakes. The female duck being courted paid no attention to the courtship antics other than to move out of the way when the dove became too excited, whereupon he would divert his attentions to another female Mallard. Many times the dove mounted a female Mallard