

County, Mississippi. The weather was very cold and unusual numbers of birds were coming to the feeder. This bird was an adult male and was feeding on the ground with Purple Finches and Brown-headed Cowbirds (Molothrus ater). It was very aggressive. Its plumage was the distinctive black and white of an adult male, unlike that of any other species possible for the area.

A Yellow-billed Fish Crow

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On 5 January 1980, I observed a Yellow-billed Fish Crow (Corvus ossifragus) at a dump near Whitehead Lake, Jackson County, Mississippi. The bird was identified by call. Both upper and lower mandibles were bright yellow - about the color of a breeding-plumaged Starling's (Sturnus vulgaris) bill. The unusual bill color did not seem to influence the behavior of the crow relative to other crows flocking with it.

Lohofener, Jackson, and Ramey (1979, Chat 43:30) recently reported a Common Crow (Corvus brachyrhynchus) with a similarly colored bill in South Carolina and commented on the significance of bill color in other corvids as a difference between closely related species.

Mountain Bluebird Near Grenada, Mississippi

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While participating in the Grenada Christmas Count, 26 December 1978, and accompanied by Lula C. Coffey, I drove along Mississippi Highway 333, parallel to and below Grenada Dam. A moderate width of the area below the dam is pasture-like and along the road is a fence with concrete posts. After crossing over the fence to work a damp area, our attention was drawn to a male Mountain Bluebird (Sialia currucoides) because of its unusual blue coloring. While observing it we were once as close as ten meters. We returned to a meeting place and brought back Ben B. Coffey, Jr. and H. Alice Smith and later Marvin Davis to see it. On each occasion the bird indulged in a hovering flight.

This western species occasionally wanders eastward. In the pages

of American Birds (1972-1978) we noted five records for New York and about the same for Ontario. A male, photographed in March of 1974, was "apparently" a new state record for Pennsylvania. Farther west, there are several reports from Minnesota. There are also "over-wintering" records for extreme northwest Missouri (March 1974) and northeast Oklahoma (January 1972). In central and east Texas the species has been seen in at least four localities. The Louisiana Ornithological Society News, No. 83:2, 25 January 1979, mentions a Mountain Bluebird seen 28 October 1978 at Cameron, as the third record for the species in Louisiana. We were unable to find records for the other states bordering Mississippi or for Mississippi itself.

An October Record for the Tree Sparrow in Hattiesburg, Mississippi

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We discovered a Tree Sparrow (Spizella arborea) on 28 October 1979 during the late afternoon near the edge of a levee road at the Sewage Ponds in Hattiesburg, Forrest County, Mississippi. During our first approach, within a half a meter, the behavior of the Tree Sparrow seemed to indicate sickness or injury. The bird occasionally stumbled during hopping and flew only a few meters during each flight. The general plumage condition of the bird appeared normal. The Tree Sparrow moved from the road down the slope of the levee facing a pond. The levee had been recently burned and the ground was nearly bare, the only standing vegetation being scattered bunches of brown dried grasses and some fresh grass growth. As we continued to observe and cautiously pursue, the sparrow showed increased vitality. Grass seeds were eaten from standing culms as the bird hopped a meter in front of us. Flights became more sustained and averaged five meters. Although Savannah Sparrows are present on the levees, no other species of bird was in association with the Tree Sparrow.

The Tree Sparrow was observed on two other occasions, on 1 November 1979 by Terrie Fairley and on 4 November 1979 by Larry Gates. These sightings were in the same general area as the first observation. Terrie Fairley photographed the bird and a copy of a recognizable photograph is on file at Mississippi State University.