

the middle of January, as was the case in the city. Nevertheless Mr. Robert T. Sterling, of Peaks Island, reported a flock of thirty or forty on February 19.

The food of the birds which I watched in Portland consisted mainly of mountain ash berries. The trees were heavily laden with fruit, this year, and there are at least fifteen of them in the Western Promenade section, which may be roughly estimated as covering fifty acres. A fine buckthorn hedge was soon stripped of an abundant crop of berries: in fact the Robins ate these with evident preference. They appeared not to like barberries, of which they might have had an ample supply; only once did I see any birds testing them, and then but a few. Suet and other contributions of sympathetic householders were untouched so far as I observed, and no attention was paid to nests of the brown-tail moth.

The sexes were about equally represented amongst the birds. No other species associated with them; but on January 9 I saw several of them attacked and vigorously chased about by English Sparrows. The large flocks were restless and noisy; the small flocks of later date were sluggish and usually silent.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine.*

Winter Ranges of Geese on the Gulf Coast; Notable Bird Records for the same Region.—The writer noted in the July, 1910, Auk, the fact that Blue Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) were very abundant in the Mississippi Delta and the vicinity of Vermillion Bay, La. Further field work under authorization of the Biological Survey during the present winter shows that this is the only part of the Gulf Coast that is visited by large numbers of this species. At Cameron, La., further west they were numerous November 28 to December 6, 1910, but over-shadowed in numbers by both Canada and Snow Geese, while at Gum Cove in the southwestern part of Cameron Parish, La., they were scarce, only a few being seen now and then among the Snow Geese. The writer saw two here January 2. One was seen at Lake Surprise near Galveston, Texas, December 12, 1910, and two at Matagorda, Texas, December 21.

These observations are in harmony with previous records of the occurrence of the Blue Goose, and point to the following conclusions: the center of abundance of the species is a narrow strip extending along the coast of Louisiana from the Delta of the Mississippi to a short distance west of Vermillion Bay. To the eastward the bird is known only as a straggler, and to the west it diminishes gradually in numbers, being scarce on the extreme western coast of Louisiana and rare on the Texas coast.

Passing to the Snow Goose (*Chen hyperboreus*) it was noted in 1910 that in the Mississippi Delta and Vermillion Bay regions, there was one Snow Goose to about each 25 Blue Geese, and that the Snow Geese formed no flocks of their own. At Cameron, La., during the present season (Nov. 28–Dec. 6, 1910) they were abundant, and at Gum Cove (Jan. 2–5, 1911) they were very abundant. Flocks containing many thousands were seen daily in this locality. The species was common at Lake Surprise (Dec.

8-16, 1910) and Matagorda, Texas (Dec. 20-23, 1910) but only one small flock was seen at Rockport (Dec. 25). Thus it appears that the center of abundance of Snow Goose on the Gulf Coast is southwestern Louisiana. Like the Blue Goose it decreases rapidly to the eastward (though not so abruptly) and diminishes more gradually westward and southward along the Texas coast. So far as the Louisiana coast is concerned, the ranges of these two species are complementary. The Blue Goose has its stronghold in the eastern section, the Snow Goose in the west, and they occupy the intervening territory in numbers inversely proportional to the distance from the center of abundance.

The same general law that appears to govern the distribution of these two species applies also to the White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons gambeli*). The only place on the Gulf Coast where this species is abundant is Gum Cove, La. Small numbers were seen at Cameron, and according to the testimony of hunters the species is rare at Vermillion Bay and the Delta. Only small numbers occur on the Texas coast.

Each of the three species above mentioned has its center of abundance, to the eastward and westward of which it becomes less numerous, the decrease in numbers being most abrupt to the eastward. This law does not apply to the Canada Geese, except perhaps to the smaller ones probably typical of the subspecies *hutchinsi*. These little geese equal their larger relatives in numbers at Gum Cove, La., and Galveston, Texas. They were not noted at Vermillion Bay or the Mississippi Delta, La., and occur in reduced numbers further south (than Galveston) along the Texas coast. The large Canada Goose is abundant in suitable places from Rockport, Texas, at least to Dickerson Bay, Fla. As it is rare along the Atlantic coast from South Carolina southward, practically all of the Gulf Coast birds must be of Mississippi valley origin. Other facts point to the inference that western Florida gets the bulk of its waterfowl via the Mississippi valley. One especially striking instance is the occurrence of *Marila collaris*, a rare bird on the south Atlantic Coast, as the most important game duck in certain parts (such as Micanopy) of northwestern peninsular Florida.

A wandering Blue Goose which the writer was fortunate enough to get on St. Vincent Id., Fla., November 1, 1910, was perhaps following this waterfowl trail. It has the distinction of being the second Florida specimen recorded.

Other noteworthy records are:

Mergus serrator. Two specimens taken at Rockport, Texas, Dec. 29, 1910.

Clangula clangula americana. Lake Surprise, Texas, Dec. 10, 1910; Rockport, Texas, Dec. 29, 1910.

Harelda hyemalis. Lake Surprise, Texas, Dec. 15, 1910. Second specimen from the State.

Branta bernicla glaucogastra. A specimen in Rockport, Texas, mounted by Andrew Sorenson, and said by him to be the only one ever known to be taken there, furnishes the first record of the species for the State.

Phænicopterus ruber. One was seen at Cameron, La., Dec. 6, 1910. Apparently the first definite record for Louisiana.

Querquedula cyanoptera. Dr. A. K. Fisher sends me notes on this and the following species. A Cinnamon Teal was killed by Mr. John Dymond at the Delta Duck Club, La., Jan. 15, 1911, and Mr. F. M. Miller, President of the Board of Game Commissioners, says that the species is not uncommon in Louisiana this year, he having reports of about 20 specimens taken.

Melopelia leucoptera. One of a pair was collected by Mr. Gus Smith at Venice, La., about Nov. 20, 1910.—W. L. McATEE, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

Enormous Death Rate among Water Fowl near Salt Lake City, Utah, Fall of 1910.—In reply to a letter of inquiry I am in receipt of some interesting information (dated Dec. 10, 1910) from the State Game and Fish Commissioner of Utah, Mr. Fred W. Chambers of Salt Lake City: “. . . will state that early in September, 1910, a malady came amongst the ducks and wild water fowl of this section, which has proven very disastrous, it being estimated that over two hundred thousand (200,000) have died from this disease. Mr. J. H. Mohler, Chief of Division of Pathology, Washington, D. C., who took the matter up, states that the disease is intestinal coccidiosis — which from appearances is a sort of cholera. On account of having scarcely any rain during the past season, the water was very low, and was to a great extent used for irrigation purposes. The ducks nested and hatched in the various sloughs, and the young being unable to fly, subsisted in the waters of said sloughs, which from long drought had become stagnant and filthy. The disease is supposed to have started in this way. Conditions have cleared up and very few sick ducks can now be found. The disease is not infectious to animals and people, as has been reported.” — HENRY K. COALE, *Highland Park, Ill.*

Notes on Some Species from Eastern Oregon.—The winter of 1909–1910 was perhaps the most severe that has been experienced in eastern Oregon during the past 20 years. The unusual amount of snow, as well as the long continued cold, caused the death of many birds and to some extent forced others to change their normal habits.

A flock of a dozen *Oreortyx* was several times seen feeding on stable refuse hauled out from the town of Vale, Malheur County. Just where these wanderers came from would be a problem, as the nearest body of timber, the natural home of the species, is about 75 miles to the westward, and so far as I can learn the species is not found there.

The unusually deep snow handicapped the jackrabbits, which were very abundant at this time, rendering their capture by the ever hungry coyote merely a matter of a moment's effort. Early in the winter I began to notice that a small company of Magpies accompanied each and every