

LIMICOLAE OF THE STATE OF OREGON.

BY STANLEY G. JEWETT.

THE following notes are the result of the writer's experience in this state during the past twenty-five years together with a few references to the published records and several references to observations by Mr. I. N. Gabrielson.

It is fully realized that much more time should be spent both on the more important breeding areas as well as along the coast during the principal periods of migration before anything like a complete knowledge of this class of birds is well known.

Owing to drainage as well as the breaking up of much former nesting grounds by agriculturists, some of our large species, notably the Long-billed Curlew, no longer exist in anything like their former abundance. With the exception of the Wilson Snipe, few shore birds are shot for food by sportsmen in Oregon, the only possible exceptions being by some foreigners who persist in shooting anything and everything that has feathers. However, this practice is dying out as a result of efficient game warden service backed by educational work by the Biological Survey and Audubon Societies.

Phalaropus fulicarius. RED PHALAROPE.—This is an erratic migrant during both fall and spring on the Oregon coast. First noted by the writer on September 1, 1912, when a badly emaciated individual was picked up dead on the beach near the entrance to Netarts Bay. Between September 17 and 29, 1920, there was a great migration of these birds on the Tillamook coast. They did not flock in any considerable numbers but occurred singly and in twos to fours all along a stretch of beach for several miles. A number of specimens taken were all much emaciated. Young birds of the year predominated but a few adult individuals molting from the summer to winter plumage were taken. My earliest fall date is September 1, 1912 and the only spring record available is of two specimens taken on the coast of Lane County on March 27, 1916 by Overton Dowell, Jr.

Lobipes lobatus. NORTHERN PHALAROPE.—The most common and regular of the migrant Phalaropes in the state, occurring commonly along the coast and in no wise unusual in the interior. The vanguard of the southward migrants arrive during August and are usually common throughout September. The northward movement is in full swing during late

April and early May. Occurring regularly in the interior during May, once at Redmond, Deschutes County, on June 12, 1924 (Gabrielson—Condor, 26, p. 231), at Narrows, Harney County, July 2, 1925 (sp. No. 3878, Coll. S. G. J.). Other interior records from the writer's notes are: Gold Hill, Jackson County, May 17, 1922; Klamath Lake, September 19, 1923; Malheur Lake, July 30, 1923, and Strawberry Lake, Grant County, altitude 6600 feet, July 15, 1915. One midsummer record on the coast is: Bay Ocean, Tillamook County, July 6, 1914.

Steganopus tricolor. WILSON'S PHALAROPE.—Our only breeding Phalarope in Oregon. Common in the summer in the interior valleys east of the Cascade Mts. Breeds regularly in the wet meadows about all the larger alkaline lakes and sloughs, less common in the northeastern part of the state, but noted in the Wallowa Valley, July 27, 1921, when four were seen. Found most commonly from the first week in May to at least September 22, 1913, at the Alvord Ranch, Harney County. Nests with fresh eggs have been found at the Springer ranch, Harney County, during the first week of June and downy young just hatched were noted at the Shook ranch, Klamath County, on June 1, 1916.

Recurvirostra americana. AMERICAN AVOCET.—An abundant summer resident east of the Cascade Mts., especially about the shores of alkaline lakes. Arrives late in April and becomes well established in colonies on the breeding grounds by mid-May. On May 22, 1922, the writer visited a nesting colony of these birds on a small island in an irrigation sump in Klamath Valley. Some fifteen deserted nests with three or four eggs each were found close to the waterline, while about an equal number of occupied nests with four eggs each were found some twelve feet above the waterline. During a former rise of water caused by irrigationists, the original nesting effort of these birds was destroyed, so they simply moved above the water and successfully raised their young. When slowly-rising water endangers the nest and eggs of this species, they often build up a platform of grass stems under the eggs, sometimes raising them as much as eight inches above the ground. Nests of this character were seen at Springer's ranch, Harney County, during a rise of water during May, 1920. Some birds stay late in the fall until freezing weather drives them south. A few were noted at Jack Lake, Lake County, on October 3, 1913. The only coastwise record available is one taken by M. E. Peck on the ocean beach at Netarts, Tillamook County, on September 10, 1912.

Himantopus mexicanus. BLACK-NECKED STILT.—A regular summer resident at some of the alkaline lakes east of the Cascade Mts., especially in Klamath, Lake and Harney counties. Nests in colonies in limited numbers, eggs having been found near Klamath Falls May 22, 1922 and in Harney County, May 19, 1924.

Capella gallinago delicata. WILSON'S SNIFE.—Very common and to some extent a permanent resident throughout the State, nesting in all suitable localities east of the Cascade Mts. Nests with eggs have been

found along the shores of Upper Klamath Lake on May 28, 1916, and at the Shook ranch in Klamath County on May 17, 1917. The familiar mating call of this Snipe can be heard during the warm May and early June evenings about nearly every swamp in eastern Oregon. During late August or early September, they congregate on suitable feeding grounds where great numbers can sometimes be found. It is a common occurrence to flush one of these hardy birds from some creek bank or a warm spring far back in the mountains even in sub-zero weather during midwinter when snows are deep and most birds have moved to lower levels.

Limnodromus griseus scolopaceus. LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER.—A regular migrant both fall and spring coastwise and in the interior. On May 2, 1916, a number were seen on the ocean beach at Netarts, Tillamook County, and I. N. Gabrielson encountered a flock at Newport, Lincoln County, on May 3, 1922. The stomachs of the specimens taken by R. C. Steele on the tide flats about the south end of Tillamook Bay on April 30, 1923, were examined by the Biological Survey whose report is as follows: No. 166911, U. S. B. S. "Stomach half full. Animal matter 100%. Contents: Fragment of a small *Dytiscid* (probably *Coelambus* sp.), trace; 1 *Corinid*, 2%; *Isopods* (*Aselloidea*, 4 entire and remains of others), 98%; jaws of two small *Nereis* a trace. No. 166910 U. S. B. S.; stomach nearly empty. Contents: Too finely ground for accurate estimate of percentages. Items present are, 1 lead shot, a piece of gravel, jaws of four small *Nereis* sp.? fragments of *Isopods*, and a few bits of vegetable debris. No. 166911. Stomach half full. Animal matter 100%. Contents: Fragment of a small *Dytiscid* (probably *Coelambus* sp.), trace; 1 *Corixid* 2%; *Isopods* (*Aselloidea*), 4 entire and remains of others) 98%; jaws of two small *Nereis* sp., trace."

The writer saw a lone Dowitcher at Barton Lake, Harney County, on May 15, 1923, and encountered an immense flock on the shores of Malheur Lake on August 4, 1917.

Calidris canutus rufus. AMERICAN KNOT.—Evidently, of infrequent occurrence on the Oregon coast. B. J. Bretherton in Woodcock's "Birds of Oregon," 1902, p. 20, reports them as rare migrants at Yaquina Bay. My only definite record is of two specimens, one adult and one immature, both males, taken by M. E. Peck at Seal Rocks on the Lincoln County beach on August 19, 1914.

Arquatella maritima couesi. ALEUTIAN SANDPIPER.—First reported from the coast of Oregon (Jewett—Condor 16, p. 93) when specimens were collected from a rocky headland near Netarts Bay on December 31, 1912. On March 18, 1913, the species was again taken from the same rocks. The following year, April 13, 1914, two more were secured in the same location. The species was not noted again until December 31, 1926, when two more were found in company with a flock of Surf Birds.

Pisobia maculata. PECTORAL SANDPIPER.—A regular but not common fall migrant. Not noted in spring migration. On October 3, 1908, a

number were seen about a small lake on Government Island in the Columbia River near Portland. During September, 1923, they were very common in small flocks in Klamath County where they chose the wet or swampy fields as feeding grounds. I. N. Gabrielson reports them at Burns, Harney County, May 24, 1920.

Pisobia bairdi. BAIRD'S SANDPIPER.—A regular and fairly common coastwise migrant, the first individuals appearing on the Oregon coast late in July and becoming common by mid-August. On July 30, 1924, two were seen on the Lincoln County coast and by August 1 had increased to a fair-sized flock. The writer has not seen them on the beach later than September 29, 1920, and has never seen them during the spring migration.

Pisobia minutilla. LEAST SANDPIPER.—Common migrant spring and fall, both coastwise and in the interior. The first arrivals from the north appear in July, a number being seen and two collected by W. E. Sherwood at Salem on July 11, 1924. On July 18, 1914, a lone bird was collected at a small lake on the summit of the Cascade Mts. in Lane County. By the middle of August, they are common along the coast and a few remain to at least November 20 along the coast of southern Oregon. In spring, they are not uncommon around the alkaline lakes of southeastern Oregon. Two were seen at Barton Lake, Harney County, on May 15, 1923.

Pelidna alpina sakhalina. RED-BACK SANDPIPER.—One of our most abundant spring and fall migrants and a few at least remain on the coast all winter. On February 1, 1915, the writer saw a small flock on the Netarts sandspit and collected two specimens, in full winter plumage. The spring flocks bedecked in full summer plumage make their appearance early in May and continue in abundance up to about the 20th. On August 10, 1925, they began coming south in small flocks and by the 15th were on the Tillamook coast in large numbers. Willett (Condor, 21, p. 202) saw several at Malheur Lake, Harney County, and Walker (Condor, 19, p. 134) noted them at Silver Lake, Lake County.

Ereunetes mauri. WESTERN SANDPIPER.—This is the most abundant migrant of all our shore birds, occurring both coastwise and in the interior with great regularity annually. Flocks often numbering hundreds frequent the beaches in May and September. The first stragglers from the north usually occur in July, gradually increasing in numbers until the peak of the migration is reached, usually about the first week in September. A few were seen about a small pond east of Portland on July 3, 1923, and numbers were on the beach of Curry County on November 20, 1917.

Crocethia alba. SANDERLING.—A regular but not abundant spring and fall migrant, mainly coastwise. A few at least remain on the beaches through the winter. The earliest southward migrant noted by the writer was on the Tillamook coast on August 16, 1914, becoming more common thru September. They were noted in numbers at Netarts on November 27, 1914 and again in the same locality on December 29, 1926. A flock

of about twenty-five were seen on January 29, 1915, and again on February 26, 1916. A few have been noted through March and April and the last date is May 16, 1913, when a fine female in summer plumage was taken.

Limosa fedoa. MARBLED GODWIT.—This must be considered a rare and unusual visitor on our Oregon coast. In Woodcock's "Birds of Oregon," 1902, p. 21, it is reported as occurring on our coast by A. W. Anthony but no mention of specimens or dates of occurrence are given. The one positive record available at this time is given by Gabrielson (Condor, 25, p. 109) of a specimen taken at Netarts, Tillamook County, on September 12, 1922.

Totanus melanoleucus. GREATER YELLOW-LEGS.—This fine bird is a common migrant arriving from the north during July and staying with us until late in the fall. It has been noted by the writer in Deschutes County, July 26, 1914; in Wallowa County July 21, 1926 and August to October citations are common. Seen once on November 9, 1912, at Klamath Lakes and the one winter record is of a specimen taken by the writer on December 14, 1926, at Ontario, Malheur County. Spring records of occurrence are from April 14, 1925, in Harney County, to May 12, 1918, in Lake County. Taken on the ocean beach of Tillamook County once in September by M. E. Peck and by Gabrielson at Yaquina Bay on July 20, 1922.

Totanus flavipes. LESSER YELLOW-LEGS.—A not common migrant in Oregon. Woodcock in "Birds of Oregon," 1902, p. 20, records taking a specimen on a gravel bar in the Willamette River on July 10, 1899. Evidence that it visits Malheur Lake is presented by Willett (Condor, 21, p. 202) who records it there on August 18 and 24, 1917; Hoffmann (Condor, 28, p. 48) saw three birds at Netarts Bay, Tillamook County, on September 10, 1925, and took a specimen. The writer's notes mention it seen at Keno, Klamath County, on September 21, 1925, and again along the Grande Ronde River in Union County on July 21, 1926.

Tringa solitaria cinnamomea. WESTERN SOLITARY SANDPIPER.—A tolerably common migrant, mainly east of the Cascade Mts. Specimens have been taken on the Klamath Indian Reservation August 20, 1924, and at Lehman Springs, Umatilla County, August 24, 1919. The earliest fall sight record in the writer's notes is of one seen near Mt. Vernon, Grant County, August 13, 1924. It was seen during spring migration on East Eagle Creek, Baker County, on April 16, 1906, and again on Fall River, Deschutes County, on April 29, 1924. As the name implies, this species is found singly and from choice frequents the smaller mountain streams rather than the open, alkaline lake shores, although Willett (Condor 21, p. 202) records it at Malheur Lake on May 10, and August 24, 1917.

Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus. WESTERN WILLET.—This is one of our common breeding shorebirds about the alkaline lakes of eastern Oregon. They are found commonly in suitable localities in Klamath, Lake and Harney counties, less so in Malheur County. The Willet often utilizes fence posts as perches and it is a common sight to

see several in such positions along the fences across some of the wet alkaline flats. It has been noted along Snake River in Malheur County on May 15, 1925, and west to Klamath Valley on June 13, 1926.

Heteroscelus incanus. WANDERING TATTLER.—A common coast-wise migrant frequenting rocky stretches of mussel-covered, rocky headlands. Fairly common from early August (Barview, Tillamook County, August 4, 1923) to late November (Port Orford, Curry County, November 2, 1926). During August, 1925, these birds were very common on the Tillamook coast. Many of those seen were in fine summer plumage and those collected were exceedingly fat. During the spring migration, they have been noted on the rocks at Cape Mears, Tillamook County, on May 1, 1916, and as late as May 20, 1913, at Short Beach in the same county.

Bartramia longicauda. UPLAND PLOVER.—This Plover has not been recorded in the state since the late J. C. Merrill (Auk 5, p. 145) reported a male collected on June 4, 1887, and others seen near Fort Klamath. On March 11, 1928, I wrote Dr. Chas. W. Richmond at the U. S. National Museum regarding this record and his reply is as follows: "In reply will say that we have no specimen of *Bartramia* collected at or near Fort Klamath. At that time, Dr. Merrill was sending his bird skins to Mr. Brewster, whose collection is now in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass., and if you will write Mr. Outram Bangs at that museum I think you will get the definite records you want. In 'The Auk,' for April, 1888, there is a paper on the birds of Fort Klamath by Merrill, who says of *Bartramia* (p. 145): 'A pair seen near the marsh, and the male shot, June 4. A pair with three nearly grown young were seen in the same locality on July 18, and Captain Bendire informs me that he also observed this species at Fort Klamath. The recognized range of the Bartramian Sandpiper is considerably extended by these records.' A footnote on p. 139 says: 'The collection—some two hundred and fifty skins—which I made at Fort Klamath is now in the possession of Mr. William Brewster, whose comments on technical points of especial interest are included in the present paper.' An earlier paper on the birds of Fort Klamath by Dr. Mearns (Bull. Nuttall Orn. Club, 1879, pp. 161-166, 194-199) does not mention the *Bartramia*."

On inquiry to Mr. Outram Bangs, his statement is as follows: "About *Bartramia longicauda*, I can tell you only that the late J. C. Merrill did not send Mr. Brewster any skins of that species from Fort Klamath, or in fact from anywhere. Of course, Merrill sent a lot of his birds elsewhere, and I think Mr. Brewster had, perhaps, only a few of what he collected. I looked through our series and Mr. Brewster's catalogue and all his skins and we have no Upland Plover from Oregon."

In view of the fact that the bird life of the Klamath Basin has been studied carefully of recent years and no *Bartramia* records found, this species should be placed on the hypothetical list in the future.

Actitis macularia. SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—This is the most commonly distributed Sandpiper in the state and to some extent is a permanent

resident. It nests from near sea level on the rocky bars of all the coastal streams to the alpine meadows of the Cascade and Blue Mts. in the Hudsonian zone; after the breeding season, it wanders to the lakes at and near timber line, as well as to the ocean beaches. Nests with eggs have been found along Powder River in Baker County on June 19, 1906, and at 5,000 feet altitude in the Blue Mts. of Umatilla County on July 18, 1923. Young birds have been collected by W. E. Sherwood near Salem that were just changing from the natal down into first fall plumage on July 11, 1924. Migrant birds appear singly along the ocean beach during late August and were common along the Rogue River in Curry County on November 29, 1916.

Numenius americanus. LONG-BILLED CURLEW.—Formerly an abundant summer resident, mainly east of the Cascade Mts. but now restricted to a few localities only. Thirty years ago, they were reported as a common summer resident in the Grande Ronde Valley but now nearly or entirely absent there. A considerable number summer in Lake, Harney and Umatilla counties at the present time. Nests with eggs have been found in Harney Valley on May 19, 1925 and June 4, 1926. On August 22, 1926, Dr. A. G. Prill collected two of these birds near Scio, Linn County, and Gabrielson reports an adult male taken at Yachats, Lincoln County, on July 24, 1922. The long-billed Curlew arrives from the south early in April, nests in May and June, after which they congregate in small flocks to spend the summer in the wide-open valleys of eastern Oregon.

Phaeopus hudsonicus. HUDSONIAN CURLEW.—Occurs on the salt-water bay shores and ocean beaches only as a migrant. Found more or less common on the Tillamook coast May 1, 1921 and May 17, 1913, and again in the fall on September 6, 1913, and during October. A flock was reported by I. N. Gabrielson on July 24, 1922 at Yachats, Lincoln County.

Squatarola squatarola cynosurae. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER.—So far as our observations go, this must be considered as only an occasional transient on the Oregon Coast. Gabrielson (Condor 25, p. 109) reports meeting the species and collecting a specimen near Newport, Lincoln County, on January 21, 1923. Mr. M. E. Peck took a beautiful male in summer plumage at Seal Rocks, Lincoln County, on August 20, 1914, and the writer saw a flock of nine on the Tillamook coast on May 1, 1921.

Pluvialis dominica dominica. AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER.—An irregular and rare visiting transient. The writer recorded one taken (Condor 16, p. 114) at Netarts Bay, Tillamook County on September 12, 1912. It was alone at the time. No other occurrence of these birds was noted until September 12, 1926, when two were encountered on the Curry County coast.

Oxyechus vociferus vociferus. NORTHERN KILLDEER.—This is the most abundant and well distributed of all our shorebirds. Equally common both east and west of the Cascade Mts. where a few remain all winter despite cold and snow. It winters commonly in western Oregon,

both coastwise and in the interior. Nests with eggs have been noted between April 15 and June 10. Downy young have been noted in Jackson County as early as April 22, 1922. During late summer, Killdeer often wander into the Cascade and Blue Mts. to an altitude of at least 6,000 feet.

Charadrius semipalmatus. SEMIPALMATED PLOVER.—A fairly common coastwise migrant, both fall and spring. Noted on the Tillamook coast on May 1, 1916, and found common by May 20. During the fall migration, they begin coming in by August 9 and are common through September. One was noted on the Curry County coast on July 25, 1927. They frequent both the muddy tide flats and the ocean beach.

Charadrius nivosus nivosus. WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER.—A fairly common resident in suitable localities along the coast and a summer resident at Harney Lake in the interior, frequenting by choice the open, wind-swept sand dunes. On May 16, 1923, a pair was noted on the wide, open alkaline flats at Harney Lake. Noting their actions, a search was made and the characteristic scooped-out nesting hollow was soon discovered. No eggs had been laid but both birds stayed close about and showed every evidence of nesting birds. Mr. E. S. Currier has taken full sets of eggs on the Tillamook County coast on July 13-14, 1921. Noted on the ocean beaches commonly in December, 1912, and January, 1913.

Aphriza virgata. SURF BIRD.—If one has the hardihood and necessary enthusiasm to visit the rocky, windswept headlands on the Oregon coast on some stormy midwinter day, he is fairly apt to be rewarded with a sight of these plump arctic visitors feeding calmly among the mussels and barnacles amid howling winds and salty spray. My earliest fall records were made on September 11, 1926, when, after a heavy inshore wind, a number of these birds were found feeding with a flock of Black Turnstones on the Curry County coast. November to February records appear regularly among my notes and one lone bird was collected on the Tillamook coast on April 15, 1914, and Gabrielson took two males out of a flock on April 27, 1922, at Cannon Beach. The earliest fall record available is of two specimens taken by Mr. M. E. Peck on the Lincoln County coast on August 17, 1914.

Arenaria interpres morinella. RUDDY TURNSTONE.—A rare and irregular transient in Oregon. My only records are for an adult female taken by M. E. Peck on the Lincoln County coast on August 28, 1914, and a flock encountered on the Tillamook coast by I. N. Gabrielson and the writer on August 26, 1921. Several immature specimens were taken at that time. Woodcock "Birds of Oregon," 1902, mentions *interpres* as a "migrant." No specimens of this race are extant from Oregon and until taken should be eliminated from the state list.

Arenaria melanocephala. BLACK TURNSTONE.—This is a common and regular winter resident, frequenting by choice the rocky coast line where they are at home just above the breakers on the mussel-covered

rocks. Flocks are commonly seen from September 14 to late in April, and occasionally in early May. At Short Beach on the Tillamook coast, a fair-sized flock was seen on May 2, 1916. The only inland record known (Condor 26, p. 35) and reported by the writer was of a bird killed by George Russell at Wapato Lake, Washington County, on November 13, 1913.

Haematopus bachmani. BLACK OYSTERCATCHER.—A permanent resident on rocky headlands and offshore rocks and islets. Nesting regularly on Three Arch Rocks bird reservation. On July 2, 1914, one pair occupied the outer rock, where the nest containing one egg was found on a bare shelf of rock above high tide. Flocks are frequently seen on the rocks near Cape Mears in Tillamook County and they were fairly common on the Curry County coast on September 11, 1926. Mr. I. N. Gabrielson noted nearly full-grown young, accompanied by their parents on the coast of Lincoln County on July 4, 1926. Woodcock "Birds of Oregon," 1902, mentions *palliatu*s at Yaquina Bay, Lincoln County. No specimens are reported and in the writer's opinion this species is not entitled to a place on the Oregon list.

Portland, Oregon.