

The Brown Thrasher was reported in Altadena, California, by van Rossem (Condor, 35: 161, 1933); at Zion Canyon, Utah, by H. Grantham (Condor, 38: 85, 1936); and near Albuquerque, New Mexico, by A. E. Borell (Condor, 41: 259, 1939).—AARON C. BAGG, 72 *Fairfield Ave., Holyoke, Massachusetts.*

Two Yellow Warblers new to Massachusetts.—For years I have wondered whether the occasional Yellow Warblers seen on migration in September long after the breeding birds have departed would not prove to be the perfectly valid Newfoundland subspecies *ammicola* Batchelder, if collected and properly compared. Two late specimens most judiciously collected at Jackman, Maine, by Mr. Allan R. Phillips in 1937 validated the first record of this subspecies for New England. My own opportunity came on September 7, 1940. On Monomoy Peninsula, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, there is a small clump of poplars near a camp in a dune hollow about one-third of the way to the Point, known to local students as the 'oasis,' because of the astonishing number and variety of land-bird migrants that can be found there. On September 7, two Yellow Warblers appeared here, the first I had seen in three weeks. I accordingly looked at them with the greatest care, and the moment I noticed that one was obviously greener than the other it was promptly shot, and proved to be a most typical adult female *Dendroica aestiva ammicola*, the first recorded for the State. Continuing to beat the thicket, I was surprised to see two more Yellow Warblers. One of these was so much greener and duller than the one I had just shot, that I was strongly reminded of similar-looking birds in Nicaragua, that had proved to be the Alaskan *Dendroica aestiva rubiginosa*. So the second green Yellow Warbler was also shot, and proves to be an extremely dull and green immature Alaskan Yellow Warbler. This is apparently the first record of this race for the Atlantic seaboard, but others may be found when migrant specimens are critically determined in innumerable collections, instead of being assumed to belong to the local breeding form.

I am entirely aware that Oberholser (Birds of Louisiana, p. 530, 1938) has recently commented on the characters of *ammicola* and claims that all breeding birds of northern Canada belong here. He is probably correct in both taxonomy and nomenclature, but the subject still requires proper elucidation. This race is now reported from Maine, Massachusetts, the District of Columbia, Louisiana and New Mexico, and I recorded it from eastern Guatemala in 1932.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

Kentucky Warbler in Massachusetts.—On May 23, 1940, I went to the peninsula of Nahant in Essex County, Massachusetts, a natural trap for land-bird migrants. At the first stop the song of a Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*) burst on my astonished ear through the windows of the car, before I had had time to turn off the motor. The bird was immediately located and seen to excellent advantage, and as is often the case with this species, was almost incessantly in song. Well aware that there was no specimen from the State, I next sought corroboration. Advised by telephone, Mr. S. G. Emilio started from Salem and Mr. David L. Garrison from the Boston Society of Natural History, and both gentlemen saw the bird perfectly an hour later. In the meantime I called upon Chief of Police Lamphier, who very obligingly waived a fifty-year rule and gave me special permission to collect the bird for the Peabody Museum of Salem, where it is now mounted and on permanent exhibit. His courtesies is here warmly acknowledged.

There have been various reports of the Kentucky Warbler seen in this State,

always by a single observer, never previously acquainted with this species in life in its proper range. Of the reports given by Forbush, the first two can scarcely be questioned, as the observations are recorded in detail and were made by observers of known competence and experience. Messrs. Bagg and Eliot publish another (Birds of Connecticut Valley, p. 525, 1937) from Northampton, May 17, 1936, where the detailed account with a drawing was even more convincing than their summary of it. The other reports in both books can scarcely be regarded as certainties or real additions to scientific knowledge. One or more may be possible or even probable, but this is a matter for speculation only. At present the Kentucky Warbler is proved to be a very rare spring vagrant north of its breeding range. Sight records in New England by inexperienced observers in midsummer and fall require confirmation.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

Hooded Warbler flying backward.—In view of meager data hitherto presented regarding backward flight in birds, the fact is considered noteworthy that late in August 1940, the writer watched a male Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) in an act resorted to by very few avian species. The bird under observation, in a damp, shady thicket, was accompanied by a Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*), the latter being extremely sedentary in comparison. With tremulous wings and "flashing" tail-feathers, the hooded creature moved about restlessly. Presently, at a height of five or six feet, it was momentarily seen to float downward and backward at an approximate 50° angle, fluttering tail-first with its body parallel to the oblique direction of flight. It has not been determined whether a desired insect, an aberrant impulse, or merely pent-up energy was responsible for this unusual feat. The lighting and distance were favorable, and the only obstruction was a slight wisp of hanging vine.

Although this individual scarcely suggested the dexterity of a hummingbird, it is believed that the radical ability is there but is not realized since the warbler seldom has occasion to exercise it. Apparently, but one other recently published account has disproved the general belief of the hummingbird's sole ability in this respect (cf. Williams, Auk, 57: 255, 1940).—ROBERT NORRIS, *Fitzgerald, Georgia.*

Hooded Oriole again recorded in the United States.—During the course of field work in Texas this past spring (1939) a limited amount of collecting was carried on at the mouth of the Pecos River, approximately forty miles northwest of Del Rio, Val Verde County. Among the birds taken there on April 25 was a male Hooded Oriole, that was later found to represent the Mexican race, *Icterus cucullatus cucullatus* Swainson. Until taken by Dr. George M. Sutton near Marathon, Brewster County, Texas, on April 17, 1935 (J. Van Tyne and G. M. Sutton, *Miscell. Publ. Mus. Zool., Univ. Michigan*, no. 37: 92, 1937) this race had not heretofore been recorded from the United States. This appears, therefore, to be the second record for this subspecies north of the Rio Grande. It is possible that further field work will reveal this oriole as of more than casual occurrence within the United States.—THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, *Bureau of Biological Survey*, and GEORGE H. LOWERY, JR., *Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*

Cowbird on the Virginia and North Carolina coasts.—The breeding range of the Eastern Cowbird (*Molothrus ater ater*) as usually given does not include eastern