

Dovekie on Little Diomed Island, Alaska.—Since the last (1957) A.O.U. Check-list of North American birds mentions only accidental occurrence at Point Barrow as constituting the Alaskan status of the Dovekie, *Plautus alle*, the following observations are of interest. James Kimball and I spent from 12 to 18 June 1965 on Little Diomed Island. On the night of 13–14 June, I was seated among the rocks part way up the side of the island, photographing the midnight sun. Least Auklets (*Aethia pusilla*), and Crested Auklets (*A. cristatella*) were alighting within a few feet of me when what I was sure was a Dovekie alighted about 40 feet away and after pausing a few moments disappeared among the huge boulders. I focused my camera on the area awaiting its reappearance but it did not return and it could not be flushed. Later, on the morning of 16 June, Tom Meadelook, an Eskimo who had been netting auklets for food, brought in a live Dovekie saying he considered it very rare but it was not the first one he had seen. Another Eskimo volunteered the information that he had taken three since 1949. Later that same day Orville Ahkinga brought in a second Dovekie he had netted. The first specimen is now no. 21107 in the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota collection. The second one was later given to Mr. John Burns of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Nome. From these bits of information it would appear that a very small population of Dovekies has been nesting on Little Diomed for some years.—W. J. BRECKENRIDGE, *Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

Wandering onto the eastern Pacific Ocean of an eastern North American land bird, the Bay-breasted Warbler.—The capture at sea off the west coast of México of a Bay-breasted Warbler, *Dendroica castanea*, prompts us to review and discuss the occasional wandering of this bird onto the eastern Pacific Ocean, far from its usual habitat and migration route on the eastern side of North America.

The vagrant in question suddenly appeared, vigorously flying, in the laboratory of the Research Vessel "Horizon" of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, at midday of 11 June 1965. The ship was rather slowly hauling a midwater trawl in deep water, on a course of 152° true north, and was then at 28° 47' N lat., 115° 39' W long., about 28 nautical miles north of West San Benito Island, and 45 miles southwest of Punta Canoas, the nearest location on the mainland of Baja California Norte. The ship was operating on a research cruise (MV 65-I) supported by National Science Foundation Grant GB-2602.

It is possible that the bird had come in from the northwest, since a strong wind was blowing from that direction. During 23 days at sea off Baja California on this trip very few land birds, and no other warblers, were seen.

The warbler was an adult male wearing the full breeding plumage. Its testes measured 6 × 5 mm. The stomach contained a few chitinous insect remains. The specimen is in the San Diego Natural History Museum (no. 35431).

When this bird was captured its pectoral muscles were flaccid and the keel of the sternum protruded sharply. It was promptly frozen and was kept in a deep freeze in a tight plastic bag in a glass jar until 8 July. When freshly thawed, although it showed no obvious fat, the bird did not appear to be notably emaciated. However, it weighed only 11.2 g, contrasting with the weights, 14 to 15.3 g, averaging 14.6 g, given by Hartman (1946: 55) for five specimens of the species. Other strays of the species have been reported as in "poor," "emaciated," or "weakened" condition.

The only published record we have found of a Bay-breasted Warbler taken at sea

on the Pacific Ocean is that of a considerably emaciated immature male that was obtained on 6 October 1956, 24 miles south-southeast of San Clemente Island, almost due west of San Diego, California, therefore not far from the Baja California border (Arvey, 1957).

These two records at sea help to explain the two otherwise anomalous reports of this eastern species from islands far off the west coast of Middle America. The first of these reports was based on an immature male, in weakened condition, that was caught alive on 18 November 1953 on the then volcano-devastated Isla San Benedicto of the Revilla Gigedo group (Brattstrom and Howell, 1956: 116), about 219 miles south and slightly west from Cabo San Lucas at the tip of the Baja California peninsula and 295 miles west and slightly south from Cabo Corrientes, the nearest location on the Mexican mainland. The second island record was based on an adult male that was collected between 21 and 26 October 1956 on Clipperton Island (Howell, 1959), even farther offshore (being some 780 miles south and slightly east of Cabo San Lucas and 585 miles southwest of the nearest point on the mainland of Middle America). These two island records also stemmed from expeditions of Scripps Institution.

Howell was impressed with the fact that two and probably all three of the land birds that he recorded from Clipperton Island are species of eastern North America that migrate in winter to Central and South America. He remarked that "the presence of these 'eastern' species (and other land birds) so far out in the Pacific is noteworthy." In dealing more comprehensively with the bird fauna of Clipperton Island, Stager (1964) made no similar comment, but of the three other warblers he reported as migratory waifs on the island two are eastern species and the third, unidentified to subspecies, has both eastern and western races.

The wandering propensity of the Bay-breasted Warbler is further indicated by records of "accidental" or "casual" occurrence in outlying areas east of its more usual breeding range and migration route such as Greenland, Labrador, eastern Quebec, the east coast of the United States, Bermuda, Cuba, Mona Island, St. Croix, and Curaçao (A.O.U., 1957: 500); also Cuba (Eisenmann, 1955). A female in weakened condition has been caught near the middle of the Gulf of Mexico (Lowery, 1946: 187). The species migrates regularly through eastern México and eastern Central America and winters from Panamá and northern Colombia to western Venezuela.

The new record from off Baja California appears to be the only valid one, except for the two island reports, attributable to western México, now that the old record for Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, has been shown to have been based on a specimen of another species. The status of the species in México has been reviewed recently (Eisenmann, 1955; Miller *et al.*, 1957: 254; A.O.U., 1957: 500).

The only published record of the species that we have found from the Pacific coast region of the United States, other than the report mentioned above from off southern California, and the only other summer record among the western waifs, is that of a male in nuptial plumage taken on 6 July 1963 at Upper Klamath Lake, Oregon (McCaskie and De Benedictis, 1964). Another fall specimen, an immature female taken at Point Reyes, Marin County, California, on 27 September 1964, is in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (R. G. McCaskie *et al.*, in press). The species is not included among the several eastern warblers that have recently been taken in surprising numbers in the Tia Juana River bottom in California near the Baja California border (McCaskie and Banks, 1964).

The possible role of such vagrant waifs in dispersal and in speciation has been discussed by a number of ornithologists, including notably Grinnell (1922).

It may be of some significance (other than being a result of increased observation) that all of the western records of *Dendroica castanea* herein listed date from the period of 1953-65.

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