

GENERAL NOTES

First photographic record of the Brown Jay in the United States.—The Brown Jay, *Psilorhinus morio*, breeds from northeastern Mexico (Nuevo León and Tamaulipas) south through Central America to northwestern Panama, and is regarded as a permanent resident throughout its range (Selander 1959, Auk 76: 385). Gary Waggerman and Richard Jones, of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, saw three Brown Jays along the Rio Grande approximately 10 miles west of Roma, Texas on 7 June 1974. Donald Delnicki, Gary Waggerman, and I went there 8 June 1974 to confirm the sighting and to obtain pictures. We saw five Brown Jays with 7×35 binoculars at a distance of 30 feet. All identifying characters were seen in good light. Two individuals were presumably adults based on the dark colored bills, and three were immatures based on the yellow bills. Pictures I took of adult and immature birds and submitted to The Auk were confirmed by Eisenmann. This is the first authenticated record for this species in the United States. A prior uncorroborated sighting was made on 15 June 1972 at Falcon Dam, Texas by Wally Sumner (1973, Birding 5: 10).—WAYNE A. SHIFFLETT, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Alamo, Texas 78516. Accepted 9 Jul. 74.

Two specimen records of the Brown Jay from southern Texas.—The collection of the Delaware Museum of Natural History contains two specimen records of the Brown Jay (*Psilorhinus morio*) from southern Texas, a skin taken in 1897 and a set of six eggs taken in 1900. The skin (DMNH 7164) came to the attention of Hubbard several years ago in the H. H. Bailey Collection. Niles recently unearthed the egg set while arranging the J. G. Gordon Collection at the museum. Inasmuch as there are three recent sight or photographic records of this jay from the Rio Grande Valley in southern Texas (Webster 1972, Amer. Birds 26: 877; Shifflett, above), we felt the specimens should be recorded and evaluated.

The skin bears an original label of the small price tag type, on which most of the collector's pencilled notes have been inked over—apparently by Harold H. Bailey, who catalogued the specimen as his number 12068. The specimen was apparently sexed as a male, judging from the fact that the female symbol (♀) is lying on its side. The date is written as "Feb. 27-97" (= 27 February 1897) and the locality as "Bville (= Brownsville), Texas." The collector is given as "A. P. Smith," and the "make" of the skin and the handwriting and style of labelling do not differ from other skins Smith collected now at the Delaware Museum. In pencil is the notation "Moras?" or "Moros?", which may have been the collector's attempt at *morio*. The specimen itself is somewhat worn on the tips of the remiges and rectrices, but not unduly so; the absence of more worn (or broken) feathers, the undamaged bill and forehead, and the normal length (versus overgrown) claws suggest that the bird was wild. The pale bill and mottling of pale and dark in the legs and feet suggest immaturity. We have assigned the specimen to *P. m. morio*.

The data for the egg set are written in blue ink on the original slip as follows (punctuation added): "Set mark 24/6, Name Brown Jay ["Mexican" added before this in black ink and scientific name given above it as "*Psilorhinus morio morio*"]; Collected for F. B. Armstrong; Locality, Brownsville, Texas; Date, Apr. 25th, 1900; No. of eggs in set 6; Identity sure; Incubation fresh; Nest, of twigs on small tree in big woods near town, 14 ft. from ground." On the back of the label, also in Armstrong's writing but in a different blue ink, is the statement: "A Mexican Jay

which has extended its range across the Rio Grande into the United States. A well marked set." While the label appears to have been written by Armstrong, we have no idea as to who may have collected the egg set for him or where he might have been at the time.

The set of eggs show good agreement with three sets in the United States National Museum of Natural History, being whitish in ground color and heavily dotted and flecked with reddish brown. The eggs average 33.9 mm \times 24.6 mm, with the extremes being 31.7 to 35.9 mm in length and 24.0 to 25.3 mm in breadth. The series of Brown Jay eggs in the USNM (northeastern Mexico) averages 35.3 \times 25.0, with the extremes 32.8 to 36.7 and 24.4 to 25.8. From our comparisons we have no question as to the correct identity of the set.

Armstrong is known to have been somewhat vague about some of his collecting localities, but at this juncture we are inclined to accept data of the egg set as valid because of the details specifically stating that it was taken in the United States. Smith's reputation for accuracy and precision was excellent and we see no reason to query the data of the skin.

We are uncertain of the Brown Jay's present northern limits of regular occurrence in eastern Mexico, but Ridgway (1904, Bull. U.S. Natl. Mus. 50: 299) records the species in Nuevo León at Monterrey, Boquillo, and China and in Tamaulipas at Montemorelos and Altamira. Recently Webster (op. cit.) noted two birds seen on 28 April 1969 and two seen on 15 June 1972, both times below Falcon Dam on the Rio Grande. Shifflett (op. cit.) reported 3-5 photographed on 7-8 June 1974 10 miles west of Roma, Texas on the Rio Grande. These last three records are from about 100 miles west and slightly north of Brownsville and, more significantly, about 55 miles north of China, Nuevo León. The Rio Grande Valley would seem to be a likely region of attraction to a wandering jay (or flock), probably far more so than the arid northern portion of Tamaulipas.

Based on the evidence at hand, we suggest that both the egg set and the skin of *Psilorhinus morio* are acceptable evidence of the occurrence of this species in southern Texas. These would thus constitute the first valid records of the Brown Jay in the wild in the United States.

We thank Lloyd F. Kiff for commenting on these records.—JOHN P. HUBBARD and DAVID M. NILES, *Delaware Museum of Natural History, Greenville, Delaware 19807*. Present address of first author: *Game and Fish Department, State Capital, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501*. Accepted 3 Sep. 74.

Hunting behavior of Eastern Bluebirds.—In late spring and summer of 1973 I studied hunting by Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) in Franklin County, Ohio, concentrating on prey catching tactics, success of adults and young, prey selection, and hunting territories of a pair of bluebirds during different phases of nesting. In the semirural places the birds I watched hunted mostly around lawns and only occasionally foraged in other habitats.

The fly-down was the commonest tactic of adult and immature birds. Birds perched on lower tree limbs and scanned the ground. When a bird spotted a suitable prey item, it glided to the ground to try to seize the prey. Birds ate small items immediately, while they beat large prey against hard substrates. Fly-downs made up 444 of 508 hunting sequences witnessed. Fly-catching was the next most frequent tactic (45 sequences), while rarely (19 sequences) birds flew to pick prey