

A List of Birds Observed in Cochise County, Arizona

BY WILFRED H. OSGOOD

FROM November 1, 1894, to June 1, 1895, I was located in Sulphur Spring Valley, near Willcox, Cochise County, Arizona. During this period of seven months I devoted as much time as could be spared from other duties to making a collection of the birds of the region. The following list is intended to give a condensed record of this work without attempting to detail special notes that were taken on the habits of many species and thus to render accessible whatever may be of interest in connection with the study of geographic distribution, migration, dates of nesting, etc. My headquarters was at the stock ranch of Mr. Thomas Allaire, a cattleman and a cultured gentleman, to whom I am indebted for exceptional courtesies. The Allaire house is situated in a rather dreary place about ten miles south of Willcox; on one side is a dry alkali 'lake' seven miles long and three miles wide and with no vestige of vegetation on its surface; on the other side, toward the east, a scattered growth of low mesquite stretching away for miles presents an outlook a trifle more inviting. About the house and corrals are a few clumps of cottonwoods which attracted wandering flocks of birds on many occasions. The elevation of Sulphur Spring Valley is about 4500 feet, but conditions of considerable aridity prevail and in a general way the fauna and flora is that of a desert region. The only natural water supply in the valley is the small spring called Sulphur Spring about seven miles south of Allaire's ranch. Several groups of low mountains are scattered along the sides of the valley and at either end are more extensive chains, the Graham mountains on the north and the lofty Chiricahuas on the south. Most of my collecting was done within a radius of five miles from Allaire's ranch, but occasional trips were made to Sulphur Springs and to the Dragoon and Chiricahua mountains. In the Dragoon mountains, which are about ten miles southwest of Allaire's ranch, I spent some little time in Cochise canyon and in the Chiricahua mountains, I collected in Hunt Canyon a few miles from the post-office of Rucker. Except where other localities are mentioned, records of specimens or observations apply to Allaire's ranch. Specimens were shot and preserved of all species included in the list, unless otherwise stated.

Anas boschas. Mallard. Common at Sulphur Spring in March.

Nettion carolinensis. Green-wing Teal. Taken at Sulphur Spring.

Querquedula discors. Blue-wing Teal. A pair taken April 13 near Allaire's ranch.

Querquedula cyanoptera. Cinnamon Teal. The most common duck about the mud-holes during the winter; often taken at Sulphur Spring.

Nycticorax nycticorax nævius. Black-crowned Night Heron. One specimen shot in the cottonwoods at the ranch May 14.

Fulica americana. American Coot. A large flock was found at Sulphur Spring in the early part of March.

Gallinago delicata. Wilson Snipe. Taken at Sulphur Spring in March and April.

Numenius sp. Curlew. A curlew was seen near Willcox about November 1.

Ægialitis vocifera. Killdeer. Quite common. A rancher's boy told me that he had found its eggs.

Ægialitis montana. Mountain Plover. Large flocks were seen in December and January.

Callipepla squamata. Scaled Quail. Very common throughout the valley. Females with large eggs in their oviducts were taken May 22. A flock of about sixty came for several weeks morning and night into the corral to drink.

Lophortyx gambeli. Gambel Quail. Seen in the Chiricahua mountains but not found in the Dragoons.

Cyrtonyx montezumæ mearnsi. Mearns Quail. The Mearns quail was not seen by me but was reported from Rucker in the foothills of the Chiricahua mountains and was said to have been abundant about the Dragoons in former years. It is well known to the ranchmen who commonly call it the 'fool quail.'

Meleagris gallopavo merriami. Merriam Turkey. Reported from the foothills of the Chiricahuas.

Zenaidura macroura. Mourning Dove. Very Common. They were our staple article of food in early summer.

Melopelia leucoptera. White-winged Dove. One specimen shot in the cottonwoods at the ranch.

Columbigallina passerina pallescens. Mexican Ground Dove. One seen near Sulphur Spring May 29.

Cathartes aura. Turkey Vulture. Quite common. Always seen soaring about the cliffs of Cochise Stronghold.

Circus hudsonius. Marsh Hawk. Seen at Sulphur Spring.

Accipiter velox. Sharp-shinned Hawk. One taken near the house at Allaire's ranch in early November.

Accipiter cooperi. Cooper Hawk. Not uncommon through the winter.

Buteo borealis calurus. Western Red-tail. Rather rare and not often seen. A pair had a nest a few miles east of the ranch.

Buteo swainsoni. Swainson Hawk. The most common hawk. Nests were found in the mesquites at elevations of from six to fifteen feet. Fresh eggs were taken May 12, 19, 23, 25 and 29.

Archibuteo ferrugineus. Ferruginous Rough-leg. A large hawk thought to be this species was seen once.

Aquila chrysaetos. Golden Eagle. Seen occasionally. One day I rode over a little sandhill and surprised one which was there feeding on a prairie dog.

Falco mexicanus. Prairie Falcon. One was shot near the ranch in November. A pair remained about an old deserted house for several weeks in December and January.

Falco sparverius phalæna. Desert Sparrow Hawk. Not common. Noticed a number on April 11th. Seen occasionally in January.

Asio wilsonianus. Long-eared Owl. One found dead near the house April 11.

Asio accipitrinus. Short-eared Owl. Common at Sulphur Spring in winter. No specimens taken.

Bubo v. pallescens. Western Horned Owl. A large owl made nightly visits to our pigeon boxes and with disastrous effect, but I failed to secure him although I watched for several nights.

Speotyto cunicularia hypogæa. Burrowing Owl. A large colony was located in a dogtown about 200 yards from the house at Allaire's ranch. A few were seen elsewhere in the valley.

Micropallas whitneyi. Elf Owl. One specimen taken in the Dragoons April 14. In brushing against a low bush I started this fellow up. He flew quickly and alighted in a thick bush where I could not see him distinctly. Not knowing what I was shooting, I fired, and was surprised when I picked him up to find an owl.

Geococcyx californianus. Road-runner. Quite common. Nests were often seen in the chollas and mesquites but no eggs were found.

Ceryle alcyon. Belted Kingfisher. One seen May 14, miles from water. It was amusing to watch it hopping about on the ground catching insects.

Dryobates scalaris bairdi. Baird Woodpecker. Common in the Dragoon mountains. Also frequently taken in the mesquite brush in the valley.

Dryobates arizonæ. Arizona Woodpecker. Not uncommon in the Dragoon mountains, but very shy and hard to secure. Female shot April 14 contained large eggs. Found also in the Chiricahuas. Seen rarely in the valley.

Melanerpes formicivorus. Ant-eating Woodpecker. Quite common in the Dragoon mountains.

Colaptes cafer collaris. Red-shafted Flicker. Common about old houses in the valley.

Chordeiles acutipennis texensis. Texan Nighthawk. They arrived about May 25 and were becoming very common June 1 when I left.

Trochilus alexandri. Black-chinned Hummer. Common.

Selasphorus platycercus. Broad-tailed Hummer. Several taken.

Tyrannus verticalis. Arkansas Kingbird. A few were taken. Not so common as the following.

Tyrannus vociferans. Cassin Kingbird. First seen April 4, after which it became common. A nest with fresh eggs was found in a cottonwood tree about thirty feet from the ground May 26.

Myiarchus cinerascens. Ash-throated Flycatcher. First taken April 14, after which it became very common both in the valley and in the Dragoon mountains. No specimens positively referable to the subspecies *nuttingi* were taken.

Sayornis saya (subsp. ?). Say Phœbe. Very common. Every suitable place was tenanted by a pair. Nests were found in sheds, tanks, windmills and old wells. First fresh eggs taken April 11.

Sayornis nigricans. Black Phœbe. One was seen at Sulphur Spring March 16.

Contopus borealis. Olive-sided Flycatcher. The only one seen in the valley was taken near the house at Allaire's ranch May 22.

Contopus richardsoni. Western Wood Pewee. Quite common. Its first appearance was May 17.

Empidonax wrighti. Wright Flycatcher. Fairly common after May 3 when it was first seen.

Pyrocephalus rubineus mexicanus. Vermilion Flycatcher. One remained about the house at Allaire's ranch for several days in the latter part of April. One was taken in the Dragoon mountains May 3. Also seen in the Chiricahua mountains.

Otocoris alpestris subsp. ? Horned Lark. Very abundant; probably exceeding in number all other species. Young birds able to fly were seen May 26. At least three forms of horned larks were taken which when first collected were identified as *pallida*, *arenicola*, and *adusta*, but as the specimens are not accessible at present, I prefer not to publish these names as positive identifications.

Cyanocitta stelleri diademata. Long-crested Jay. Common in the Dragoon and in the Chiricahua mountains. Seen in the valley on one occasion only.

Aphelocoma woodhousei. Woodhouse Jay. Common in the mountains. In the latter part of April several troops of forty or fifty of these birds were seen in the valley.

Aphelocoma s. arizonæ. Arizona Jay. In the Dragoon and the Chiricahua mountains this species was more common than either of the preceding. Several

sets of slightly incubated eggs were taken in the Dragoons April 14. The nests were large coarse affairs placed from ten feet to twenty feet from the ground in white oaks.

Corvus cryptoleucus. White-necked Raven. Abundant all over the valley. First fresh eggs taken May 22.

Molothrus ater obscurus. Dwarf Cowbird. Common about the corrals and cattle-yards. No specimens taken.

Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus. Yellow-headed Blackbird. Seen about the corrals in company with the preceding species.

Agelaius phoeniceus subsp.? Red-winged Blackbird. Often seen at Sulphur Spring. No specimens taken.

Sturnella magna neglecta. Western Meadowlark. Several pairs were generally seen about Sulphur Spring.

Icterus parisorum. Scott Oriole. First seen in the Dragoon mountains April 14. Not seen in the valley. Several specimens taken.

Icterus cucullatus nelsoni. Arizona Hooded Oriole. First arrival was taken in the cottonwoods near Allaire's house April 8. Afterwards it became common.

Scolecophagus cyanocephalus. Brewer Blackbird. Very common; large flocks seen about the corrals.

Icterus bullocki. Bullock Oriole. Very common throughout the mesquite brush in May.

Carpodacus cassini. Cassin Purple Finch. A young male was taken in the Dragoon mountains in winter.

Carpodacus m. frontalis. House Finch. Abundant. Large flocks frequently stopped for a brief visit in the cottonwoods about the house at Allaire's.

Calcarius ornatus. Chestnut-collared Longspur. In February and March the chestnut-collared longspur was exceedingly abundant. They were seen flying over at all times and at nightfall clouds of them would sweep over the house and on down to the grass at the edge of the alkali lake, whence they straggled out at daybreak.

Rhynchophanes mccowni. McCown Longspur. Found in company with the preceding species but not in quite such large numbers. They were most common at Sulphur Spring where they fairly swarmed. They were last seen April 6 at which time the great majority had already left.

Poœcetes g. confinis. Western Vesper Sparrow. First seen March 16 when one specimen was taken at Sulphur Spring. A few weeks later they were quite common all over the valley.

Ammodramus s. alaudinus. Western Savanna Sparrow. Very common after the middle of January; most numerous about Sulphur Spring.

Chondestes g. strigatus. Western Lark Sparrow. A few were noticed in the cottonwoods at Allaire's April 15. They soon became very common and large flocks were frequently seen in the opens.

Zonotrichia leucophrys. White-crowned Sparrow. A small flock containing several adults and a larger number of hornotines remained about the mesquite in the immediate vicinity of the ranch house during most of my stay. They were never seen more than 100 yards from the house and the country for several miles around was pretty thoroughly worked. When I left on June 1st a few still remained about the house.

Spizella s. arizonæ. Western Chipping Sparrow. Abundant at all points visited. Large flocks were seen in the oaks of the Dragoon mountains.

(To be concluded)