

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**The Texas Kingfisher at New Braunfels, Texas.**—While spending a Sunday at Landa's Park, New Braunfels last June I observed a pair of these rare kingfishers (*Ceryle americana septentrionalis*) flying about in search of food. While enjoying a boat ride on the lake, I had a good opportunity to observe them. They were always in sight and were constantly uttering their curious call-note, which somewhat resembles the notes of the common kingfisher. Presently one alighted on a dead pecan tree on the margin of the lake and I cautiously approached so as to get a better view, but before I had gotten within viewing distance it was off, and soon again was seen flying down the lake with its mate. This species is considerably smaller than the common kingfisher and is very rare in this locality except at New Braunfels near the springs in Landa's Park. I have never found this species breeding but I am inclined to believe that it still breeds in Comal county, Texas.—A. E. SCHUTZE, *Austin, Texas.*

**The Inca Dove in Central Texas.**—On account of the long droughts that have occurred throughout southwest Texas for the past few years, many birds have suffered considerably from scarcity of food and water. For long years the Inca dove (*Scardafella inca*) or Mexican dove, as it is often called, was confined to a region between San Antonio and the Rio Grande and south ward into Mexico. Bexar county was perhaps the northern limit in Texas.

On account of the continued droughts, this dove, as well as many other species of birds moved north and eastward to a country where they found food and water in abundance. In Comal county, especially at New Braunfels, they are now plentiful, where but a few years ago they had never been seen. They are also quite common in Travis county. The first birds that I observed near Austin, were seen in the fall of 1902 when I unexpectedly came upon a flock of five. They were feeding together on the side of a hill and showed no fear at my presence. Only one nest has so far been found north of Comal county. This was found in a small bush in Caldwell county and contained two fresh eggs. Last summer I made several trips to New Braunfels, Comal county where I found this diminutive dove in abundance. They were confined to the city and not a single individual was seen in the immediate vicinity. No nests were discovered, but I was told by a resident that they had nested abundantly the previous spring.

Like the common dove, they are residents. After the breeding season they form small flocks and can usually be found feeding together in a shady ravine or grove. They are rapidly increasing in numbers and probably in a few years they will be as abundant as the common dove. They are slowly moving northward and have also been observed as far east as College Station.—A. E. SCHUTZE, *Austin, Texas.*

**Northern Flicker at Auburn, California.**—Dr. R. F. Rooney has sent the writer a wing of *Colaptes auratus luteus*. The bird was taken by his son on the outskirts of Auburn, California, October 3, 1904. Dr. Rooney says it is the first specimen he has seen on the Pacific coast during a residence of twenty-seven years. Auburn is a rather southern station although, as stated in Grinnell's check-list, "*auratus*" has been recorded as far south as Warm Springs, San Diego county.—WALTER K. FISHER.

**The Destruction of Bird Life by Light Towers.**—Hundreds if not thousands of birds lose their lives yearly, by coming in contact with the light towers of the city of Austin. There are thirty-four of these towers, 150 feet in height, built entirely of steel, and held in place by stout wires or iron ropes. At the top of each are suspended six large globes or arc lamps which make a very brilliant light. During the fall and spring migrations the birds encounter a great difficulty when passing over this city at night. They are attracted by the lights from the towers and begin to fly about in great confusion. The light is so strong that when they come within a certain distance they are temporarily blinded at which time so many lose their lives. They begin to fly about in all directions and not being able to see they strike the steel tower with such great force that they fall to the ground, with perhaps a broken wing, crushed body or shattered head. Warblers, sparrows, thrushes and other small birds that fly at night are the principal victims. Ducks, geese, plover and other water fowl suffer considerably. I have often been awakened at night by the screaming geese that had been betrayed by the light. In some instances the birds were so stupefied that they flew around the light for hours in great confusion. During storms the birds are more easily attracted. Martins have also suffered since the towers were erected. When they arrive from the south their first stopping place is invariably the light tower, where after a few days of noisy courtship they begin to build their homes in the suspended globes. The towers are cleaned daily and consequently the nests are destroyed. After the great dam and power house was destroyed at Austin, in April 1900, the towers were neglected for several months. The martins became aware of this fact and many built their nests in the globes. The