

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Unusual Records for California.—The following records made by the writer during the winter of 1912-13 may be of interest.

Anhinga anhinga. I had a very good view of a Darter, or Water Turkey, through an eight power glass on February 9, 1913, at Potholes, on the California side of the Colorado river. When first seen the bird was flying, and looked for all the world like a small Goshawk with a slender stick projecting in front; the regular succession of wing beats and sailings was just that of a Goshawk, and when the Darter alighted on a tree it did so with the ease of a raptor. I watched it for half an hour through my glass about one hundred and forty yards away; but all efforts to get within shooting range resulted in failure, as a sea of liquid mud and water separated me from the tree it sat in. Herbert Brown has already recorded the species on the Arizona side of the Colorado; still I would not blame anyone for doubting this sight identification (though I have no doubt as to its correctness myself), and only record it in the hopes that some one will make it a point to go to this swamp and collect a specimen.

Sayornis phoebe. I collected a specimen of the Eastern Phoebe at Moss Beach near Pacific Grove on March 7, 1913. A rather notable fact was that both the other species of the genus—the Say and Black Phoebes—were in sight at the same time. The specimen is now No. 23461 in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley.

Passerculus sandwichensis bryanti. While collecting Marsh Sparrows at Carpinteria near Santa Barbara with Mr. W. Leon Dawson, the latter shot an undoubted specimen of the Bryant Marsh Sparrow, the others taken all being the Belding. The date was December 23, 1912, and this is probably the southernmost record for the subspecies. Mr. Joseph Grinnell has verified the identification of this specimen which is now in my collection. A few days later several others were seen in company with Belding Sparrows on the Estero at Santa Barbara.—ALLAN BROOKS.

Notes and Records from Brooks County, Texas.—All the following notes are based on observations made, in the vicinity of Falfurrias, Brooks County, Texas, situated approximately 125 miles northwest of Brownsville, Texas. The Los Olmos Creek is the only stream in the vicinity, and this contains water only after heavy rains; nevertheless it is fringed with a growth of oak, hackberry and huisache, which proved very attractive to numerous forms of bird life. The notes cover a period extending from November 23, 1912, to April 10, 1913.

Grus mexicana. Of common occurrence during December and January; its loud notes were often heard when the birds themselves were invisible. Six to eight individuals usually constituted a flock.

Callipepla squamata castanogastris. Not as common as the Texas Bobwhite and while both are occasionally found in the same flock, the Chestnut-bellied Quail shuns, as a rule, the cultivated fields, preferring the low chaparral so common as we proceed westward from Falfurrias. Their extreme indifference, at times, to the presence of man is comparable in my experience only to that of the Mearns Quail, although when once flushed they do not take such long flights as the latter species.

Melopelia asiatica trudeaui. Observed November 26, associated with Western Mourning Doves; also again several days later.

Asio wilsonianus. One observed March 4 perching in an oak tree growing near the Los Olmos Creek.

Otus asio mccalli. Found only along the Los Olmos creek, where an adult was secured December 17, and several others seen on later dates.

Colaptes cafer collaris. During several years collecting on the Lower Rio Grande, I observed but a single Red-shafted Flicker, whereas here it proved to be a fairly common winter visitant, certainly as numerous as the Northern Flicker, which occurs as a winter visitant throughout southern Texas. A Red-shafted Flicker, shot December 25, although undoubtedly a female, possessed all the sex markings of the male bird.

Phalaenoptilus nuttalli nitidus. A Poorwill, probably of this form, was heard in the early evening of November 29.

Muscivora forficata. The first Scissor-tailed Flycatchers appeared March 23, seemingly a very late date for this latitude.

Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos. No Crows were observed until March 8, when they appeared in numbers and were numerous during the balance of my stay. Crows are apparently of irregular occurrence in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, where I never was

fortunate enough to observe them; so I presume their normal southern extension in Texas must find its limit somewhere between the Los Olmos and the Rio Grande.

Icterus melanocephalus auduboni. Fully as abundant resident here as in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and observed frequently throughout my stay. The Los Olmos creek bottom was a favorite locality with them, where I would sometimes come across six or more in a single tramp.

Euphagus cyanocephalus. The prevailing "blackbird" during the winter months here. About Brownsville its numbers are insignificant at any season compared to the next species, Cowbirds or Red-winged Blackbirds.

Megaquiscalus major macrourus. Although this locality is fully forty miles inland, the Great-tailed Grackle proves not uncommon; however, it is seldom that I observed more than one pair at a time.

Passerherbulus lecontei. Noted only between December 5 and 14. During this period it was not uncommon in the only place I was able to find it in—a low damp spot of perhaps two acres extent, in a large meadow. This same locality was largely resorted to by Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows, making it somewhat difficult to determine the particular species as a bird flushed. However, the Leconte Sparrow is the weakest on the wing of any of the forms referred to; also when flushed in the late afternoon it would occasionally alight in one of the dwarf retamas (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) that fringed the wet area, when it could be easily distinguished by the rufous-brown nape. I was never able to record this bird from the Lower Rio Grande Valley, although this record points to the probability that the species is only a transient near Falfurrias.

Spizella pusilla arenacea. The Western Field Sparrow is a most abundant winter visitor about Falfurrias, being present in numbers when I arrived, and not disappearing until after March 15. It resorted to fence rows, weed grown roadways and gardens, associating with the numerous species of sparrows found here at that season, including the Clay-colored Sparrow.

Peucaea cassini. Found in limited numbers, usually confining its activities to the immediate vicinity of groups of pad-cactus that grow along the roadways, from which it was flushed with great difficulty.

Arremonops rufivirgatus. Confined to underbrush growing along the Los Olmos creek, where individuals were now and then to be seen, usually in the act of disappearing into the dense tangles of clematis.

Pyrrhuloxia sinuata texana. Is a common resident of this region, largely replacing the Gray-tailed Cardinal, the latter being mostly confined to the vicinity of the Los Olmos creek. With the advent of the nesting season the Texas Pyrrhuloxia loses much of its shyness and resorts to the neighborhood of human habitations, where along with the Western Mockingbird and Curve-billed Thrasher its song is a most striking feature in the advent of spring.

Calamospiza melanocorys. Winters in enormous numbers. Was still present in small flocks as late as April 8, when many of the males had assumed the nuptial plumage.

Vireo griseus micrus. The only vireo noted here. Quite abundant along the Los Olmos creek throughout the period of my stay.

Vermivora ruficapilla ruficapilla. One record: A bird taken December 19, near the Los Olmos creek. Was in the company of numerous Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

Oreoscoptes montanus. A lone bird, shot as it perched on a pad-cactus growing along a roadway was the only record. It was seemingly some distance from its normal habitat, as no sage brush is found in this section.

Toxostoma longirostre sennetti. Strictly confined to the vicinity of Los Olmos creek in this part of Brooks County, where specimens were secured on December 1 and others observed at various later dates.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH.

Mourning Dove in the Lower Yakima Valley, Washington.—In the lower Yakima Valley the Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*) appear to have made a blunder in migrating this year. Doves are more scarce than in the past four seasons, and so far I have located only one nesting pair in this neighborhood. Winter was steady, with the ground covered with snow until the last week in January, when the weather moderated. During this thaw doves appeared in small flocks. About February 1 winter weather returned, and no more doves were seen until May 5, since which time they have been seen daily, but not as numerous as usual.—CLARENCE HAMILTON KENNEDY.