

Notes on the Avifauna of the Atlin Region, British Columbia.¹—In the summer of 1929 I spent the period from June 17 to September 19 in and about the town of Atlin, collecting birds within a radius of thirty or forty miles. The observations herewith reported are supplementary or additional to the facts contained in my previously published report from the same region (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 30, 1926, pp. 51-162), which was based upon collections made by Major Allan Brooks and myself during the summer of 1924. My second visit was made on behalf of the California Academy of Sciences, and the catalogue numbers here cited pertain to the bird collection of the Academy.

Scotiaptex nebulosa nebulosa. An adult female (no. 13829) was shot on July 28 by Kenneth McCorkle, a member of our party, in some low hills about three miles northeast of Atlin. It was found in rather dense spruce woods, the owl's presence being revealed by a scolding red squirrel. That the squirrel had a right to feel perturbed was shown by the contents of the owl's stomach, an adult *Sciurus hudsonicus*, the animal's head bitten off, but swallowed otherwise entire. The owl was shot at 5 p. m., and as digestion had not begun upon the carcass the squirrel evidently had been killed and eaten in broad daylight, revealing diurnal activity on the part of this owl, which I had not suspected of it. The bird had apparently dismissed family cares for the year and was beginning the annual molt. New and old flight feathers appear in the wings. There are not many published records for this species in British Columbia, though it must occur over most of the province. Brooks and I did not find it about Atlin, but during the winter following our visit there, an acquaintance in the town shot one and had it mounted.

Picoides arcticus arcticus. *Picoides tridactylus fasciatus.* On our 1924 visit to Atlin we saw very few of *fasciatus* and none of *arcticus*. In 1929, while neither was common, both were seen at rather frequent intervals during the summer. Fire had swept through several miles of spruce and pine woods near Atlin subsequent to 1924, and the partly or entirely burned stands of timber were apparently the feature that attracted these woodpeckers. Young of *arcticus* were collected, recently from the nest. (For the use of the specific name *Picoides tridactylus*, see Bangs, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., vol. LXX, 1930, p. 235.)

Loxia curvirostra bendirei. In June, 1919, Mr. Joseph Dixon and I saw a few Red Crossbills near Telegraph Creek, on the upper Stikine River, and collected birds which were identified as *bendirei*. This was the northernmost point of record for the subspecies up to that time. I saw none around Atlin in 1924, but in June, 1929, I found this bird rather common thereabout and collected specimens (nos. 32340-46). The crossbills were in flocks, composed of adults in post-breeding condition about ready to begin the annual molt, accompanied by young birds in streaked juvenal plumage. Early in July the species disappeared from sight, to be seen again on but one occasion, a solitary bird, a young male, being shot on September 1. This last mentioned specimen is notable in that finishing the post-juvenal molt, it is passing from the juvenal plumage directly into the bright red of the fully mature male. It is not uncommon to find male Red Crossbills with a greater or less admixture of the female plumage, but evidently this is not a stage that is regularly passed through between the streaked and the red plumages.

The Red Crossbills that we saw near Telegraph Creek were in a grove of jack pine (*Pinus contorta*), and about Atlin, too, the species was confined to the neighborhood of this pine. The White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*), which is common in the region, was just as closely restricted to stands of white spruce (*Picea canadensis*).

Acanthis linaria linaria. This Redpoll will probably be found to breed as far south as Telegraph Creek, where I thought that I saw some in May, 1919, though unable to shoot any. None was seen about Atlin in 1924, but it was nesting, probably in fair abundance, in that region in 1929. A few appeared in the vicinity of the town about the middle of July, and many were seen some twenty miles to the eastward, at Blue Cañon, early in August. A young bird collected August 2 had evidently been out of the nest only a day or two, and other more fully grown juveniles were collected thereafter. Most of these birds were shot in dense birch

¹Contribution from the Museum of the California Academy of Sciences.

brush on dry upland slopes, in company with *Spizella monticola ochracea* and *Spizella taverneri*, and were not recognized as Redpolls until in the hand. Seven specimens were taken (nos. 32350-56).

Melospiza melodia morphna. A song sparrow, presumably of this subspecies, was seen at Ben-my-Chree (the head of West Arm, Tagish Lake) on August 27, 1929, the first to be recorded from the Atlin region. The locality lies at the east base of the Coast Range, perhaps fifty miles inland from Skagway (within the normal coastal habitat of the bird), but with the intervening territory a mass of rugged and glacier-covered mountains unsuited to song sparrows.

Geothlypis trichas occidentalis. An immature male (no. 32507) shot near Atlin on September 4, 1929, is the only one that I have seen thereabout. On September 10, 1924, I saw the species at Fat Creek, some seventy miles northeast of Atlin, and in September, 1909, on the Taku River, about one hundred miles south of Atlin. These several occurrences mark the northwestern limits of the species, so far as known.

Hyalocichla minima aliciae. An adult female (no. 32533) was shot at the base of Munro Mountain, about five miles northeast of Atlin, September 1, 1929. There are two other records of specimens taken in northern British Columbia, one in the Atlin region and one near Telegraph Creek (see Brooks and Swarth, A Distributional List of the Birds of British Columbia, 1925, p. 119).—HARRY S. SWARTH, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, April 1, 1930.*

A Record of the Scarlet Tanager for California.—On October 30, 1929, while on San Nicolas Island with Mr. J. R. Pemberton, the senior author had the good fortune to find the dried remains of a tanager which later proved to belong to the species *Piranga erythromelas*. The specimen was sent to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology in view of the better facilities for comparison there available.

The remains consist of one complete wing and foot, the tail, portions of the breast and flank feathers, the dorsal surface of the neck and a large part of the back and scapular tracts. The other wing is present but lacks the greater secondary coverts and several of the inner secondaries. The body is dried and the ribs and sternum somewhat crushed. The scapula, coracoid and limb bones are intact but have not been extracted from the remains. The feathers are unstained and in perfect condition for comparison in so far as they are present.

The specimen, now no. 54485, Mus. Vert. Zool., was picked up just back of the beach on the dry eastern slope of the island and was not covered by the wind-driven sand that drifts across the island during a large part of the year. We believe that the bird could not have been killed earlier than September, whereas it is probable that it had not been dead for more than two or three weeks at the time of discovery. No trace of any molt remains. San Nicolas, the most barren of the Santa Barbara Islands, lies fifty-three miles off the coast of southern California. People do not inhabit the island at the present time and it is extremely unusual for any one to visit its shores.

The plumage of the bird is that of a first fall male, the remiges being juvenal but the coverts black with yellowish green margins such as are grown in the fall molt of immature birds. The border of the wing is black, the under wing coverts are white and the dorsal wing coverts entirely without barring. A complete comparison with a first fall male *Piranga erythromelas*, no. ex. 161, collection of J. and J. W. Mailliard, from Wisconsin, taken September 29, 1895, has been made which demonstrates a complete correspondence between the remains of the San Nicolas bird and the Mailliard specimen. Several other Scarlet Tanagers in the collections of the California Academy of Sciences and the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology have provided close comparisons in so far as they were in comparable plumages. Measurements of the wing, tail, and foot of the San Nicolas bird fall within the limits of variability of the Scarlet Tanager.

To the authors' knowledge this species has not been recorded previously west of the Rocky Mountains. The Scarlet Tanager seems prone to wander outside of its normal range during the fall season, yet its appearance at such a distant point as the well isolated island of San Nicolas is remarkable.—LOYE MILLER and ALDEN H. MILLER, *University of California, April 23, 1930.*