

to in 1928, and just now (June, 1932) I have again been accorded the privilege of examining it.

This specimen is now no. 237986 in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge. It was collected by Mr. Griscom himself, on September 14, 1927, near Cameron in Madison County, Montana, where it was one of a small company which had been seen almost daily since the 4th of September in a growth of rose bushes and willows within, I judge from the account, the Transition life-zone not far from the nearest tongue of Canadian.

After repeated comparisons of this bird with considerable series of *Spizella* of wide geographic representation in western North America, I conclude, first, that it is not an "immature" but an adult in the sense of being more than one year old. This is shown by the un-sheathing remiges. I would thus be inclined to think that all the birds Griscom saw, September 4 to 16, were still on or very near to their breeding grounds. Then, as to subspecies it is certainly not good *taverneri* but, rather, essentially *breweri* in the features of the population occurring in northern parts of the United States. An almost duplicate of Griscom's bird is no. 228731, Biol. Surv. coll., U. S. Nat. Mus., an adult female taken by Alex Wetmore near Moran, Wyoming, September 3, 1910. These northern birds as compared with *breweri* from typical sage-brush territory (Nevada and eastern and southern California) do show certain minor tendencies toward *taverneri*, but they do not show the complete combination of characters shown by the New Mexico bird.

An interpretation here offered is that these northern United States birds are in the nature of intergrades toward *taverneri*, though in relatively slight degree. This idea has been expressed elsewhere concerning a breeding specimen from the high Transition or low Canadian life-zone close to Lassen Peak in northern California (see Grinnell, Dixon and Linsdale, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 35, 1930, p. 427). More "typical", that is, southern *breweri* over vast areas is associated in the breeding season with the sage-brush (*Artemisia tridentata*). At least two of the aberrant birds were recorded as from a quite different habitat—which may be of some significance.

The type locality of *Spizella breweri* Cassin is probably now satisfactorily established as the Black Hills, South Dakota (see Stone, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1899, p. 30, and Grinnell, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 38, 1932, p. 323). Hence that name would apply, on geographic grounds, to an intergradient population. I have tried out the idea suggesting itself that three races of *S. breweri* might be recognizable—(1) *taverneri* proper, (2) a northern United States race to which the name *breweri* might be restricted subspecifically, and (3) an unnamed southwestern race, slightly smaller, paler and more narrowly streaked above than the middle one, on an average of characters. But, as intimated above, I do not now find good ground for any such action. A best course would appear to be to consider all breeding birds up at least to the Canadian boundary as *S. b. breweri*, though in some specimens showing appreciable tendencies toward the extreme northern racial manifestation of the species, *S. b. taverneri*.

To return to the New Mexico bird, it, then, is typical *taverneri* without any doubt at all, and indicates a point far south along the migration route of that race, possibly terminal and hence a wintering station. Reference to Mrs. Bailey's "Birds of New Mexico" (1928, p. 748) reveals that some "Brewer Sparrows" (which might include this form) remain within that State through the winter, though apparently the great majority move farther south.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, June 26, 1932.*

## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

An article of extraordinary interest to students of bird behavior appeared in the June issue of the *Wilson Bulletin* (vol. XLIV, 1932, pp. 65-75) under the title "Winter Starling Roosts of Washington." The author, Mr. E. R. Kalmbach, therein describes most vividly the way in which the introduced European Starlings congregate at night for roosting in certain places

within the city of Washington, D. C. Among other traits, remarkable ability and tenacity is shown by these birds individually, to return night after night to particular roosting spots within the general locus of the aggregation, and to space out, each bird in its own position on a given perch. What seems to be vast confusion resolves itself finally into a degree

of orderliness which Mr. Kalmbach aptly likens to "what one sees at any football game when each of 50,000 or more spectators" has at last planted "himself in his own reserved seat before the start of the game."—J.G.

The two-volume work by Dr. Thomas S. Roberts on "The Birds of Minnesota" is out and will probably stand as the most noteworthy single American publication in the ornithological field during the year 1932. It has been long expected; indeed any comprehensive undertaking of the sort must require a period of years for its completion, even under the best of circumstances. That Dr. Roberts' life-time of labor has been unremitting and to good purpose is abundantly demonstrated by the high standards shown in the volumes in question, as to quality and quantity of text, as to the abundance and excellence of the illustrations (which include 92 colored plates by Brooks, Sutton, Weber, Jaques, and Breckenridge), and as to the high grade of bookmaking throughout. In the latter regard, the auspices of publication (The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis) deserve sincere commendation. The two volumes are of demy quarto size and comprise together some 1250 text pages. While costing many thousands of dollars to publish, friends of ornithology and of Dr. Roberts have defrayed most of this cost, so that the set can be purchased in stout, cloth binding (from the University of Minnesota Press) for \$6.00. There is also a de luxe edition at \$25.00.—J.G.

A well gotten up list of the "Birds of the Battle River Region [of central Alberta] With Notes on their Present Status, Migrations, Food Habits and Economic Value" has just appeared (July, 1932) under the authorship of our fellow Club member, Mr. Frank L. Farley, who is so well known for his successful activities in the bird-banding field. This 85-page booklet may be had for fifty cents from its publishers, The Institute of Applied Art, Limited, Edmonton, Alberta. It is rather surprising to us to find that no less than 238 species and subspecies have been found in this far northern district of relatively limited extent. Mr. Farley includes in this contribution a most interesting chapter on "Tracing the Gulls to their Winter Homes," based on the results of some of his banding operations near his home at Camrose, Alberta.—J.G.

## MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### NORTHERN DIVISION

MAY.—The May meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on June 23, 1932, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 2003, Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with forty-two members and guests present. In the absence of the regular officers Mr. Joseph Grinnell presided. Minutes of the Northern Division for April were read, corrected and approved.

"Current observations from the field" was the topic of the evening's program. So interesting and varied were the contributions offered and the discussions evoked that when the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:30 only half of the people present had had an opportunity to report. Many members lingered to inspect a caged Harris Sparrow, captured by Mr. E. L. Sumner, Sr., in a banding trap in Strawberry Canyon on May 3, the eighth record for the State. Mr. W. O. Emerson, who was present, secured the first known specimen at his home in Hayward in 1900.

The Phainopepla was reported by Mrs. J. R. Davis as being present this year in small numbers in a cañon southwest of Livermore, where three or four pairs were seen on May 1. A pair of these birds in Hospital Cañon south of Corral Hollow was reported by Mr. E. I. Dyer and Mr. W. F. Sampson as seen on April 17.

The Barn Owl was reported upon by Cranson Hopkins as using nesting boxes put up by himself in suitable places where natural nesting cavities were absent. Comment on the Russet-backed Thrush reminded Mrs. Lindsey of the apt description of the song as "spiral".

The marauding habits of the California Jay were illustrated by Dr. L. W. Taylor's report of the killing of chicks at the poultry farm in Strawberry Cañon by birds of this species; by Mr. Mailliard's report of the beheading of a canary, whose cage was hung outside a window at Belvedere; and by the discovery by Miss Erickson on three different days of jays carrying off very young brush rabbits. Miss Erickson also told of exchanging young California Jays between two nests and of the uninterrupted rearing of the exchanged young by the apparently unwitting adults.

Mr. Sumner told of banding a Golden-crowned Sparrow on April 18 which made 29 repeats before its departure on May 11.