

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

White-tailed Ptarmigan in the Mission Mountains, Montana.—Saunders (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 14, 1921:58) records the White-tailed Ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucurus*) from several of the mountain ranges in Montana but does not mention its occurrence in the Mission Mountains in Lake and Missoula counties. In the course of a collecting trip to these little explored mountains, an adult female was collected on August 1, 1949, on the south side of McDonald Peak (highest peak in the range) above timberline at about 7500 feet. We returned to this site the following day and observed four two-thirds grown young which were unattended. We obtained movies of the young at close range. It seemed probable that these young comprised the brood of the female taken the previous day. The specimen, which apparently represents the first one of this species to be preserved from these mountains, is now in the Montana State University Biological Station collection at Missoula.—**PHILIP L. WRIGHT and CLINTON H. CONAWAY**, *Montana State University Biological Station, Bigfork, Montana, and Department of Zoology, Montana State University, Missoula, Montana, March 22, 1950.*

Amphibia in Robin's Diet.—A recent note by Gullion (Condor, 52, 1950:46), adding a member of the Class Reptilia to the diet of the Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), reminds me of having observed a Robin feeding on an amphibian. Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. No. 196, 1949:25-28, 48, 50-51, 57-59) makes no mention of any amphibians taken as food by the Robin.

By mid-July the shallow margins of some ponds in western Oregon possess thick, emergent stands of spatterdock (*Nuphar polysepalum*) with the flat, table-like leaves as much as three feet above the water surface. These stands of pond lily persist until the first fall frosts and storms. During the late summer the upper surfaces of these leaves prove attractive to a great variety of insects. The insects, in turn, attract tree frogs (*Hyla regilla*) which use the pond lily leaves as dining tables. I have never seen more than one tree frog on a pond lily leaf, and these only on pond lilies in shaded, or semi-shaded areas during the morning hours.

Twice on the morning of August 26, 1946, at a small pond in Linn County, about three miles east of Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon, I watched a Robin take a tree frog from the upper surface of a pond lily leaf and carry it to a fledgling perched in an Oregon ash at the edge of the pond. In one instance the frog was carried by a hind leg, and in the other, by a shoulder. Although these observations were made about one hour apart, the captures were probably made by the same Robin, or pair of Robins, since a fledgling in the same ash tree was the recipient both times.—**FRED G. EVENDEN, JR.**, *Sacramento, California, January 30, 1950.*

Bird Records from Western Montana.—Incidental to a study of the Clark Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) in western Montana from October, 1946, to July, 1948, I kept records of other avian species encountered. The notes presented herein supplement Saunders' distributional list of the birds of Montana (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 14, 1921), and to the best of my knowledge, as indicated by perusal of The Auk, The Condor, and The Murrelet, represent previously unrecorded information. They increase our knowledge of the distribution or seasonal occurrence of the several species within Montana. Except as noted, birds collected are deposited in the Montana State University Zoological Museum.

Ardea herodias. Great Blue Heron. No previous winter records for Montana. One seen on February 4, 1948, at 3300 feet in the Bitterroot Valley near Stevensville, Ravalli County.

Cygnus columbianus. Whistling Swan. Not previously recorded for Missoula County. A flock of 21, including 7 gray non-adults, seen April 9, 1948, on a slough near Lolo, Bitterroot Valley, Missoula County.

Cathartes aura. Turkey Vulture. Not previously recorded for Missoula County. Seen three times, all in Missoula County: one, July 29, 1947, 4000 feet, Pattee Canyon; three, April 25, 1948, 3200 feet, Fort Missoula; one, May 13, 1948, 4100 feet, Bitterroot Mountains at Carlton Creek.

Falco sparverius. Sparrow Hawk. The only previous winter record for Montana is cited by Saunders as February 28, 1910, in the Bitterroot Valley. One was seen on January 21, 1948, and two on January 31, 1948, both records at about 3200 feet near Lolo, Bitterroot Valley, Missoula County.

Rallus limicola. Virginia Rail. There are few previous records for Montana. Dr. D. S. Farner

collected a juvenal male on October 12, 1945, on the East Fork of the Bitterroot River, Ravalli County, and an adult male on November 11, 1945, at Tucker's Crossing, Ravalli County. These two birds were deposited in the United States National Museum.

Fulica americana. American Coot. No previous winter records for Montana. Two, and sometimes three, were seen regularly between January 28 and February 12, 1948, at 3200 feet near Lolo, Bitterroot Valley, Missoula County.

Sphyrapicus thyroideus nataliae. Williamson Sapsucker. Not previously recorded for Missoula, Flathead, or Ravalli counties. An adult male was collected by Dr. P. L. Wright on April 15, 1947, at 4600 feet at Mitouer Gulch, Missoula County. Dr. Alden H. Miller examined this specimen and identified it as of the race *nataliae*. One male was seen in the same area on April 23, 1947. Three males and two females were seen at 5800 feet on Sweeney Creek, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County, on April 27, 1947. One male was seen on May 20, 1947, at 5700 feet on Dean Stone Mountain, Missoula County, and one male on July 16, 1947, at 5000 feet on Mount Aeneas, Flathead County. A male and female were seen on September 11, 1947, at 4100 feet at Holland Lake, Missoula County.

Sitta pygmaea. Pygmy Nuthatch. Not previously recorded for Missoula County. From 3 to 20 were encountered on 15 of about 100 field trips in Missoula County in all seasons of the year. About 20 were observed between 4000 and 6000 feet in the Mission Mountains near St. Ignatius in Lake County on May 30, 1948. Seen frequently in the Bitterroot Mountains of Ravalli County.

Troglodytes troglodytes. Winter Wren. No previous winter records for Montana. Single birds were seen as follows: January 5, 1947, 4200 feet, Mollman Creek, Mission Mountains, Lake County; January 18, 1947, 3600 feet, One Horse Creek, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County; November 16, 1947, 3400 feet, January 4, 1948, 4200 feet, and January 25, 1948, 5000 feet, Bass Creek, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County; November 23, 1947, 4000 feet, Rattlesnake Creek, Missoula County; January 9, 1948, 4200 feet, One Horse Creek, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County.

Salpinctes obsoletus. Rock Wren. No previous winter records for Montana. Five were seen on February 11, 1948, at 4300 feet, Sweeney Creek Canyon, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County.

Hylocichla guttata. Hermit Thrush. Not previously recorded for Flathead, Mineral or Missoula counties, and but once for Ravalli County. One male was collected from about 30 observed on July 12, 1947, at 6500 feet on Mount Aeneas, Swan Mountains, Flathead County. Dr. Miller found this specimen to be an atypical *Hylocichla g. guttata*. This bird was collected in an area where intergradation occurs within the species. In Mineral County, about 15 were observed on July 1, 1948, at 7500 feet on Illinois Peak, Bitterroot Mountains. In Missoula County: about five, July 20, 1947, 6200 feet, headwaters of Lolo Creek, Bitterroot Mountains; about five, July 22, 1947, 6500-7500 feet, Stuart Peak, Missoula Hills; about five, July 24, 1947, Miller Peak, Sapphire Mountains; about 25, August 4 and 5, 1947, 6000-7500 feet, Rattlesnake Lakes, Missoula Hills; and about five, September 8, 1947, 6500-7400 feet, Upper Holland Lake, Swan Mountains. In Ravalli County, three, August 9, 1947, 6000-8000 feet, St. Mary's Peak, Bitterroot Mountains.

Leucosticte atrata. Black Rosy Finch. There are two previous records for Montana. From about four observed, a pair in courtship was collected on June 18, 1948, at 9500 feet on St. Joseph's Peak, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County. Dr. Miller found the female to be typical *L. atrata*, but the male, although closest to *atrata*, bears some chestnut feathers on the breast and back suggesting relationship to *Leucosticte tephrocotis*.

Loxia leucoptera. White-winged Crossbill. Not previously recorded for Missoula County. One was collected from a flock of about 45 on February 16, 1947, at 5600 feet on Dean Stone Mountain, Missoula County. One was observed on March 6, 1947, at 4100 feet on Dean Stone Mountain, Missoula County, and about 40 on February 25, 1947, at 4000 feet in Mitouer Gulch, Missoula County.

Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha. White-crowned Sparrow. Not reported previously from Missoula County, nor from Ravalli County during the summer months. One adult male was collected from about 35 encountered on August 9 and 10, 1947, at 8200 feet near St. Mary's Peak, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County. Seen on June 11, 1948, and June 19, 1948, at 7000 feet, Bass Lake, Bitterroot Mountains, Ravalli County, and on September 8 and 10, 1947, between 6000 and 7400 feet, on both sides of the Swan Mountain Divide near Upper Holland Lake, Missoula County.—L. R. MEWALDT, Department of Zoology and Biological Station, Montana State University, Missoula, Montana, February 20, 1950.