

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

**A New Swallow from the Fox Canyon Local Fauna (Upper Pliocene) of Kansas.**—Many avian fossils from the Rexroad and Fox Canyon local faunas of the Rexroad Formation, Meade County, Kansas, remain unreported. One of these, the humerus of a previously undescribed swallow from the Fox Canyon Locality, is reported in this paper. Fossils from this locality have been included previously within the Rexroad local fauna, but Hibbard (Pap. Mich. Acad. Sci., Arts, and Letters, Vol. 52: in press) now considers them to represent an older local fauna, which is distinct on the basis of the small mammals.

The fossil was compared with 20 extant species representing the following genera: *Iridoprocne*, *Tachycineta*, *Progne*, *Notiochelidon*, *Atlicora*, *Alopocheidon*, *Riparia*, *Stelgidopteryx*, *Hirundo*, *Cecropis*, and *Petrochelidon*. It was also compared with the Pleistocene swallow, *Tachycineta speleodytes*.

The Fox Canyon fossil is compared below with *Hirundo rustica*, the species it most closely resembles.

### ***Hirundo aprica*, new species**

**Holotype.** Nearly complete right humerus (fig. 1), University of Michigan Museum of Paleontology no. 28104, from the Fox Canyon local fauna, Rexroad Formation (Upper Pliocene), locality UM-K1-47, Fox Canyon (XI Ranch), Sec. 35, T. 34 S., R. 30 W., Meade County, Kansas. Collected by Claude W. Hibbard and party, summer of 1951.

**Diagnosis.** Humerus similar to that of Recent *Hirundo rustica*, but head larger; capital groove deeper, its margin being more pronounced; remaining part of median crest relatively heavier; base of external tuberosity slightly excavated (in *H. rustica* there is little or no excavation below the external tuberosity); base of ectepicondylar prominence slightly larger (the tip is broken off); entepicondylar prominence more pronounced; bicipital surface larger and extends farther laterally, but more constricted at its lateral termination. Maximum length of type, 16.3 mm; width of shaft, 1.9 mm; width of distal end (partially broken), 4.7 mm. Corresponding dimensions for the largest of 10 specimens of *H. rustica* are 15.4, 1.9, and 4.5 mm. No useful measurements were obtainable from the proximal end of the fossil humerus.

**Etymology.** From Latin, *aprica*, exposed to the sun, in reference to the subtropical climate of the Upper Pliocene of Kansas.

**Discussion.** *Hirundo aprica* was probably a large, strong-flying swallow close to Recent *H. rustica*. Whether or not it was ancestral to any Recent swallow cannot be determined. The assignment of the fossil to the genus *Hirundo* is tentative and one of convenience. Many Recent swallow genera lack diagnostic generic characters, and in the absence of better fossil material a definite generic assignment is undesirable.

*Hirundo aprica* carries the record of the Hirundinidae in America back to the Upper Pliocene.



Figure 1. Holotype of *Hirundo aprica* (UMMP no. 28104). About twice natural size.

The only other fossil species, *Tachycineta speleodytes*, Brodkorb (J. Paleontol., 31:131, 1957) has been described from middle Pleistocene (Illinoian stage) cave deposits near Reddick, Marion County, Florida, and is reported also from the Pleistocene at Arredondo, Marion County.

Records for living species of the Hirundinidae that are known as fossils are as follows:

*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*. Cliff Swallow. Late Pleistocene, McKittrick, California; Quaternary (Late Pleistocene or Early Recent), Natural Chimneys local fauna, Augusta County, Virginia.

*Petrochelidon fulva*. Cave Swallow. Late Pleistocene cave deposits in the Dominican Republic; prehistoric cave deposits in Puerto Rico.

*Progne subis*. Purple Martin. Middle Pleistocene (Illinoian stage), Marion County, Florida.

I am particularly indebted to Claude W. Hibbard for many informative discussions concerning the Pliocene in North America. I also wish to thank Karoly Kutasi for photographing the specimen, R. Zusi for the loan of a specimen of *Petrochelidon fulva* from the U.S. National Museum, C. T. Collins for the loan of a humerus of *Tachycineta speleodytes*, R. W. Storer, H. B. Tordoff, and J. R. Jehl, Jr., for their criticism of the manuscript, and A. Wetmore for supplying information on the fossil record of swallows.—J. ALAN FEDUCCIA, *The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104, 18 November 1966.*

**The Common Loon in Sonora, México.**—Friedmann, Griscom, and Moore (Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 29, 1950, p. 12) refer to occurrences of *Gavia immer* in the Republic outside of Baja California as follows: "Sonora (one midwinter record; 'rather common' off Tiburón Island); one doubtful record from the Valley of Mexico." There is no mention of specimens. The Tiburón record is quoted from van Rossem's A Distributional Survey of the Birds of Sonora, Mexico (Occ. Pap. Louisiana State Univ. 21, 1945, p. 28) which gives the date of the observation as 28 December 1931. Van Rossem also revealed that "while there is at least one other sight record for the Gulf area (La Paz), no specimens have been collected. . . ." The A.O.U. Check-list (5th ed., 1957, p. 1) indicates wintering of the species south "to Sonora" but provides no details.

Allan R. Phillips has informed us that he knows of no Mexican specimen of *Gavia immer* in any Mexican collection, and we know of none from that country, excepting Baja California, preserved elsewhere. It is therefore worth recording our capture of a winter-plumaged Common Loon at Cholla (= Choya) Bay, near Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, on 24 November 1965. The bird was found alive, but unable to fly, on the rocky beach. Its breast and flanks were very heavily oiled. Although it was promptly prepared as a specimen, no gonads were visible. It measured: wing (arc), 350 mm; bill from nostril, 60 mm; tail, 83 mm.

Earlier that day, and on 25 November, we closely observed at least 12 other Common Loons within 100 yards of the beach. Arctic Loons (*G. arctica*) were present in large numbers much farther from shore; they could be identified only with the aid of a 30-power telescope. All loons seen near shore were *G. immer*.

The specimen has been deposited in the collections of the Instituto de Biología of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in Mexico City.—DALE A. ZIMMERMAN, *Department of Biological Science, Western New Mexico University, Silver City, New Mexico 88061*, and JOHN W. BOETTCHER, *Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803, 15 November 1966.*

***Rhynchopsitta terrisi* Is Probably a Valid Species: A Reassessment.**—Together with Robert W. Dickerman (Hardy and Dickerman, Condor, 57:305, 1955) I recommended that the Maroon-fronted Parrot of the Sierra Madre Oriental of México be regarded as a well-marked subspecies of the Thick-billed Parrot, *R. pachyrhyncha*, the nominate race of which occupies pinelands of the Sierra Madre Occidental, in western México. Ranges of the two forms do not meet. The latter has a bright-red frontal patch, and the former has a maroon frontal patch. Otherwise, color and size differences are subtle, although consistent. I have recently concluded (Auk, 83:81, 1966) that in parrots color and color pattern are especially significant in social recognition, and that parrots are so "clannish" that phenotypic differences of even subtle kinds are thus socially enforced, forming