

their assistance. The project was supported by the Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and the Graduate College, Iowa State University. This is Journal Paper No. J-10666 of the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experimental Station, Ames, Iowa. Project No. 2427.

Department of Animal Ecology, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011. Present address of first author: Department of Biological Sciences, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky 40475. Received 20 May 1982. Final acceptance 13 November 1982.

Condor 85:258

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OCCURRENCE OF WILLOW WARBLER (*PHYLLOSCOPUS TROCHILUS*) IN NORTH AMERICA REFUTED

DON ROBERSON

AND

FRANK A. PITELKA

On 15 June 1952, Keith L. Dixon (Utah State University) picked up a dead *Phylloscopus* near Point Barrow, Alaska. It was identified as an Arctic Warbler (*P. borealis*) and accessioned into the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (MVZ), Berkeley. In the late 1950's the specimen was sent to George E. Hudson (Washington State University) on an exchange. Noting the lead gray color of the bird, Hudson suggested that it might not be an Arctic Warbler, and the specimen was forwarded to Alexander Wetmore (Smithsonian Institution) who identified it as belonging to the Siberian race of Willow Warbler (*P. trochilus yakutensis*). Hudson generously returned the bird to MVZ (no. 163410), where it has remained. The record was published by Pitelka (1974) as the first occurrence of the Willow Warbler for continental North America.

In June 1979 we re-examined the specimen. Roberson, while researching identification problems in this genus, noted the anomalous presence of wingbars on the specimen, so we compared the wing formula against readily available keys (Ticehurst 1938, Dement'ev and Gladkov 1954, Williamson 1976). A short wing chord and a short first primary corresponded well with the original impression that the bird might represent *borealis* rather than *trochilus*. We sent the specimen, with our comments, to George E. Watson (National Museum of Natural History [NMNH], Washington, D.C.). He, along with Martha B. Hays and Richard C. Banks, compared the bird against other specimens and informed us (pers. comm.) that our analysis was correct: the specimen is indeed *P. borealis*. Our short-billed, short-winged individual (wing 61 mm, culmen from skull 13 mm) is the grayest example of a series of mainland *P. b. kennicotti* (MVZ 163410 is unsexed; other similar specimens include NMNH 591958, a male from north of Umiat, 21 June 1950; NMNH 591959,

a female from Killik River, 23 June 1950; and NMNH 437767, a female from Kanngomarik [=Kongumavik] Creek, 23 July 1952). Identification of these taxa can be difficult. Note that NMNH 591958, identified here by Watson et al. as a gray example of *P. b. kennicotti*, was previously identified, by M. R. Browning of NMNH, as Siberian *P. b. borealis* and has been published as such (Gibson 1981).

The re-identification of the MVZ specimen was briefly noted in Roberson (1980:481). The correction of this record leaves no valid report from North America, the nearest occurrence being a bird taken 18 September 1937 at Myggbukta, E. Greenland (labelled *P. t. acredula*, British Museum; AOU 1957, Williamson 1976).

We thank Brina Kessel and Daniel D. Gibson for a critical review of the manuscript.

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Woodcock Publications, P.O. Box 985, Pacific Grove, California 93950. Address of second author: Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. Received 16 March 1982. Final acceptance 25 October 1982.