

Nineteenth in the Fuertes print series

[The painting opposite was published in *Bird-Lore*, Volume XXII Number 2, March-April, 1920. It was accompanied by text by Harry C. Oberholser and Frank M. Chapman, which has here been substantially revised and updated, especially in reference to distribution and modern taxonomic thought.]

Mexican Jay (*Aphelocoma ultramarina*)

This species includes Arizona Jay (*A. u. arizonae*), (Fig. 1) and Couch's Jay (*A. u. couchii*). There are several more subspecies in Mexico but only these two occur in the United States. The Arizona Jay is essentially resident wherever found and ranges from southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico south to northeastern Sonora and northern Chihuahua. In juvenile plumage the entire upperparts are uniform gray, the underparts much as in the adult. At the postjuvinal molt these slight differences disappear and on its completion young and old are alike in color. There are no sexual or seasonal differences. The Couch's Jay ranges from southern Nuevo Leon northwest through the Mexican state of Coahuila to just over the United States border in the Chisos Mountains of central western Texas.

Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*)

This species includes several subspecies that were formerly considered species of the genus *Aphelocoma*. The range of Scrub Jay covers a wide geographic front from Washington and Idaho south to southern Mexico and from the Pacific coast east to Wyoming and Texas. A race, the Florida Scrub Jay (*A. c. coerulescens*), (Fig. 4) is present locally in peninsular Florida. There it inhabits low thicket and scrub where trees are rarely more than 3 meters high. This is a smallish, slender blue and gray bird with a long and often drooping tail. It lacks white on the wings and tail and its gray back contrasts with its blue head and tail. It has a white or bluish white stripe over the eye. The bill, legs, and feet are black. This race has an extremely interesting social system involving 'helpers' at the nest. These are immature birds which assist the parent birds in territory and nest defense, mobbing and chasing predators and nest sanitation. They do not, however, take part in nest building, incubating, or brooding young.

Scrub Jays inhabiting the western and southwestern United States can be grouped into two general types. The *californiaca* group includes the California Jay (*A. c. californica*) (Fig. 2) which inhabits the coast district of central and western California east to the Coast Ranges, north to the south side of San Francisco Bay and south to Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. In juvenile birds of this race the crown and sides of the head are grayish brown, the back somewhat paler with no tinge of blue, and the white line over the eye of the adult is obscure. The breast band is faint dusky and the streaked

appearance of the throat is barely suggested. The adult bird is a crestless blue and gray jay with white throat and distinctive blue necklace. From above, its grey back contrasts sharply with its blue head and tail. The Long-tailed Jay (*A. c. immanis*) is confined chiefly to California and Oregon, ranging north to central southern Oregon and southwestern Washington, west to the Coast Ranges of Oregon and northern California, south to the southern Sierra Nevada and south central California, and east to the Sierra Nevada, to northwestern Nevada, central southern Oregon and the Cascade Mountains in western Oregon.

Belding's Jay (*A. c. obscura*) occupies the coast region of southwestern California and northern Lower California, north to the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, California, south to Santa Ana, lower California, at about 29°20' north latitude, and east to the San Bernardino Mountains, California. Xantus' Jay (*A. c. hypoleuca*) is found in the southern two-thirds of lower California, ranging from Cape San Lucas north to Yubay at about 29°15' north latitude. Swarth's Jay (*A. c. oocleptica*) synonymous with *A. c. superciliosa* inhabits the coast region of northern California, east to the Coast Ranges, south to San Francisco Bay, and north to Wedderburn, southwestern Oregon. The Santa Cruz Jay (*A. c. insularis*), (Fig. 3) is confined to Santa Cruz Island in the Santa Barbara group, California. The *woodhouseii* group of Scrub Jays includes Woodhouse's Jay (*A. c. woodhousei*) which ranges in the western United States north to southern Wyoming, southern Idaho, and southeastern Oregon, west to western Nevada and southeastern California, south to southeastern Arizona, southern New Mexico, and the northern part of central western Texas, and east to eastern New Mexico and eastern Colorado. The Texas Jay (*A. c. texana*) ranges in central and central western Texas east to Kerr County, north to Taylor County and the Davis Mountains, west to the Davis Mountains and the Chinati Mountains, and south to the Chisos Mountains.

The various forms of the Scrub Jay are difficult to differentiate in the field; however, since this species is non-migratory only one form is to be expected in one location. Therefore various forms can more easily be identified specified by the locality in which they are found rather than on the basis of minutely different morphological and plumage characteristics.

—S.R. Drennan



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Rosa Agassiz Fuentes