

FURTHER NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF MIDDLE
SOUTHERN OHIO.

BY W. F. HENNINGER.

Since publishing my list of the Birds of Middle Southern Ohio in the WILSON BULLETIN of Sept. 1902, enumerating 209 plus 7 hypothetical species I have been able to add two new species, the *Bonaparte Gull* and the *Red-legged Black Duck* (WILSON BULLETIN, Dec. 1902, pages 133 and 134). This spring I again spent three weeks in southern Ohio, staying in Pike county from May 17th to May 26th, and in Scioto county from May 26th to June 3d. Most of this time I was in the field and the result of this work was an increased knowledge of many birds as well as the chance to transfer two species from the hypothetical to the list proper. These two are *Butco platypterus*, seen several times in Scioto county and *Helminthophila chrysoptera*, which I met at the edge of some wooded ravines, singing its lazy "zeezee zeezee," as a local and not common summer resident near Bloom Switch on the B. & O. S. W. R. R. in Scioto county. Both species had previously been studied at Tiffin and an error was therefore excluded; they were not found in Pike county. The list of Middle Southern Ohio birds is therefore brought up to 213 plus 5 hypothetical species, making a total of 218 species. There are also a number of field notes in addition to those published in 1902, which add to our knowledge concerning the birds of this region and they are given in connection with references to Dawson's and Jones' works on the birds of Ohio.

1. *Aythya affinis*.—Lesser Scaup Duck.

Two males seen, one shot May 22 on a thoroughfare in the bottoms along the Scioto River. Contents of craw and stomach, fishworms. Four males seen May 24th, 1905. Latest previous spring record May 14th, 1902. Dawson records but this one date, as if I had found this duck on that date only. Here are all the data, to avoid this in the future: Nov. 16, 1898, male shot; April 8, 1899, May 7, 1900, March 10 till May 2, 1901, March 21 till May 14, 1902; May 24, 1905.

2. *Melcagris gallopavo fera*.—Wild Turkey.

There is nothing at hand to substantiate the opinion expressed by Dawson and Jones, that this bird may still be found westward from Scioto county. The Wild Turkey has been extinct in these counties since the Civil War. That this is the wildest region in Ohio will be seen again by the records I sent in to Prof. Harlan E. Hall for his "Manuals of Ohio."

3. *Elanoides forficatus*.—Swallow-tailed Kite.

While my record of this species is the last one in the state, both Jones and Dawson overlooked one record, that one given by Oliver Davie on page 198 of his Nests and Eggs (5th edit.), a specimen killed in Ohio July 10, 1883.

4. *Empidonax flaviventris*.—Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

A few more explicit remarks of my acquaintance with this bird seem timely, as Dawson never met it in the state and Jones but once. On May 7, 1897, I saw my first one in an apple orchard at South Webster, sitting on a low hanging bough; identification was easy. May 17, 1898, in some heavy brush under some tall sycamores, on the Scioto River, near Waverly. And on May 2, 1901, I shot one in a similar place as the preceding one, though two miles farther south. The bird flew up from the tangled brush, out of which I almost kicked it, with the explosive note, "pshyuk," then sitting on a higher limb called out two notes "pshui-pi." The specimen could not be preserved. My only fall record for the state is Tiffin, Ohio, Sept. 17, 1904.

5. *Agelaius phœniceus*.—Red-winged Blackbird.

Since 1902 a large swamp of about twelve acres was formed near Bloom Switch by an overflow of Hales Creek and this has brought in great numbers of this species. On May 31st, 1905, I found about thirty nests with young and eggs at this place, a phenomenal increase over the past.

6. *Agelaius phœniceus fortis*.—Thick-billed Redwing.

Pike county specimens shot in the fall months seem to be intermediates between this and the preceding species. This is my opinion as well as Dawson's, to whom I sent the specimens in question, as I could not get Ridgway's book on the Birds of Northern and Middle America.

7. *Otocorys alpestris praticola*.—Prairie Horned Lark.

Observations of this spring prove this bird to be increasing in Pike county.

8. *Icterus galbula*.—Baltimore Oriole.

Rapidly increasing in Scioto county.

9. *Ammodramus sandwichensis savanna*.—It was a great surprise to me to hear of the rarity of this bird in Ohio in contrast with my experience in southern Ohio. The very first time I met this bird in Scioto county, near South Webster, June 6, 1897, I saw a female leading a brood of four young along a fence. For northern Ohio I have only two records, March 19, 1903, and May 10, 1904, Tiffin, Ohio.

10. *Coturniculus savannarum passerinus*.—Grasshopper Sparrow.

This bird is now (1905) beginning to come into the bottoms; heretofore I had found it on the upland meadows only. On the increase.

11. *Peucaea aestivalis bachmanii*.—Bachmann Sparrow.

At last I have again found this bird in Scioto county, a brood of young on May 31, 1905, near Bloom Switch, Ohio. Having heard its song at Lynchburg, Va., this spring and seen it almost daily, and pronouncing it as before an excellent song, I nevertheless differ from Dawson, who considers it the best songster among our North American sparrows. I still prefer the Lark Sparrow, because Bachmann's Sparrow's song is more feminine, full of poetic reverie and lacks the virile qualities of the Lark Sparrow's song. This is of course a matter of personal taste and opinion.

12. *Melospiza cinerea melodia*.—Song Sparrow.13. *Vireo gilvus*.—Warbling Vireo.

Dawson is of the opinion that these species are more common in northern than in southern Ohio during the summer, to which I never consented. Recent work only confirming opinion that the Song Sparrow is equally common in both parts of the state. The Warbling Vireo is even more common in southern than northern Ohio, but seems to cling more to the bottom lands, frequently the hill parts mostly in the vicinity of the houses only.

14. *Spiza americana*.—Dickcissel.

Increasing but very slowly in Pike county.

15. *Vireo philadelphicus*.—Philadelphia Vireo.

No new records for southern Ohio, but one for northern Ohio, May 9, 1903, a pair at Tiffin, Ohio.

16. *Vireo noveboracensis*.—White-eyed Vireo.

This bird can now be termed a rare and local summer resident in Scioto county. Observed May 27 to June 3d, 1905, at Bloom Switch and South Webster.

17. *Helmitheros vermivorus*.—Worm-eating Warbler.

Increase great in both Pike and Scioto counties. Is now a not rare summer resident in suitable localities. Male shot May 31st, 1905, with large testicles. Song, more rattling than the Chipping Sparrows, which it closely resembles.

18. *Dendroica striata*.—Black-poll Warbler.

Shot May 19, 1905, male, Cooperville, Pike county. First spring record for southern Ohio. Song, "tsee tsee tsee."

19. *Dendroica dominica albilora*.—Sycamore Warbler.

Four seen May 27, 1905, at Bloom, Scioto county. Song, "wit ta chip cheechee chea," last note rising suddenly.

20. *Dendroica blackburnia*.—Blackburnian Warbler.

Common spring migrant. Song, two kinds: I. "choo choo choo, chichichro'chro'." II. "choo wich; choo wich; choo wich."

21. *Geothlypis formosa*.—Kentucky Warbler.

Increasing in Pike county, still rather rare. Dawson's description of notes, "pe-e-oodle" repeated, reminding one of the Carolina Wren, is the best ever given. Shot May 19, 1905, at Jasper, Pike county.

22. *Icteria virens*.—May 17, 1901 (Pike county), another one; likewise, one on May 31, 1905, was a set of four *fresh* eggs in Scioto county. What is the reason for this peculiarity in breeding habits?

23. *Dendroica discolor*.—Prairie Warbler.

In 1902 I regarded the occurrence of this warbler as accidental, having found but one specimen in eight years. Now I have found him to be a not common breeder in Scioto county only. Having studied the bird and its song thoroughly this spring at Lynchburg, Va. I was surprised, when suddenly I

was greeted by its peculiar notes at Bloom Switch on a hillside covered with second growth oak scrub and stones, on a place often hunted over in the past. There he was building a nest, but before it was finished I had to leave. I found him frequently there, especially on May 31st, but it takes a stout heart to penetrate this scrub very much, for the deadly copperhead is at home there with an occasional rattlesnake added for special enjoyment. The song is loud, of a shrill rising nature as if it was climbing up an ethereal ladder, and cannot be mistaken under any circumstances.

All told, the Bird World of southern Ohio is enriched more and more with new forms and being but little, if ever, disturbed, bids fair to remain in the future what it has been to the writer in the past, a source of joy and delightful study for the lover of birds as well as for the professional ornithologist.