

A nest-full of half grown Flickers is indeed an interesting, if noisy, crowd of youngsters. I can recall to mind no other bird voice that sounds more like the hissing of a large snake. It is doubtful, however, whether this sound is produced by the young birds in order to frighten their enemies; indeed my observations convince me that this is not the motive that prompts the uttering of this peculiar note, since it is not only given when the young are disturbed by a person, but is uttered whenever the parents return to the nest with food. The young remain in the nest about sixteen days, at the end of which period the five or six full grown birds fill the nesting hole to overflowing. They are very ravenous, requiring a great amount of food daily, both parents working unceasingly during the daylight hours to supply the demand for sustenance. During the first few days of life out of the nest the young remain entirely upon the ground, feeding largely upon ants. They soon become strong upon the wing, however, and as winter approaches, they, together with the parents, can be observed high up among the branches of berry-bearing trees, feeding upon the fruit. In this latitude insects do not entirely disappear in winter, but the Flicker's diet is chiefly vegetable during that season.

REVIEW OF "MIGRATION RECORDS FOR KANSAS BIRDS":

(Wilson Bull., 1918, Dec. 1919, March and June.)

I have read and re-read the series of articles bearing the above title: published by the instructress in Zoölogy of the Kansas State University. Having resided in north-eastern Kansas for fifteen years, I am naturally much interested in the *ornis* of the entire state. Many of the records in the article cited above, being so greatly variant from the results of my own observations and records, and some of them so manifestly misleading, I feel that one should, in the interests of exact ornithological records,

make running comment on many of the species and subspecies variously accredited to the state.

In so doing I wish to express my conviction that many of the statements made in the article I criticize are far too sweeping. What is asserted may be true of isolated portions of Kansas: it is most certainly *not* true of *some* portions of Kansas.

Again, one fails to see how one can say,—“No records”; and yet make broad statements regarding occurrence, and manner of occurrence.

7. *Gavia immer*—Loon.

Truly, a “rare migrant.” A single flock (of seven) passing over Blue Rapids, October 30, 1919, is my one record.

59. *Larus franklini*—Franklin Gull.

“A rather common migrant.” I should call it a *very* common migrant.

69. (For Foster's Tern, *Iege* Forster's.)

74. *Sterna antillarum*—Least Tern.

“Intermittantly common summer resident.” Qualify by saying, from central Kansas southerly. (One questions the use of the word “resident” in this connection. A “resident” remains the year through. It were better to use the term “habitant.”)

131. *Lophodytes cucullatus*—Hooded Merganser.

“Summer resident.” This, extremely doubtful.

137. *Marca americana*—Baldpate.

“Rare summer resident.” Occurrence in summer, greatly doubtful.

142. *Spatula clypeata*—Shoveller.

Same characterization; and the same comment, thereat.

144. *Aix sponsa*—Wood Duck.

“Now nearly extinct.” This, hardly true, today. The Wood Duck is still fairly abundant, in some regions; and greatly so in preserves. (In Louisiana it still abounds, in a ferial condition.)

149. *Marila affinis*—Lesser Scaup.

(The writer saw a pair of these Ducks at Elmdale in July, 1919. There were no indications, whatever, of their breeding.)

180. *Olor columbianus*—Whistling Swan.

“Winter resident.” This, most improbable.

181. *Olor buccinator*—Trumpeter Swan.

“A rare migrant.” This species being practically extinct can hardly be truthfully said to be a “migrant,” *anywhere*.

203. *Nyctanassa violacea*—Yellow-crowned Night Heron.

"Rare as summer resident." Decidedly so: I have never met with it,—in north, central or southern Kansas.

215. *Coturnicops noveboracensis*—Yellow Rail.

"A rare summer resident." This is absurd, enough. The most southerly breeding record extant is for southern Minnesota; and even that is rather doubtful. (The writer hereof modestly avers that he is an authority on the breedings of this Rail: having studied it for fifteen years, during June, in North Dakota.)

216. *Creciscus jamaicensis*—Black Rail.

The writer once flushed a single Rail of this species from a marsh in Stafford county.

219. *Gallinula galeata*—Florida Gallinule.

(Not listed.) But it has been found breeding in Kansas,—Coffey county,—June, in marshy margin of a lake: nest on a board, at high water. This record now made for the first time by the finder, P. B. Peabody.

221. *Fulica americana*—Coot.

"Common summer resident"—WHERE?

224. *Steganopus tricolor*—Wilson Phalarope.

"... female should be returning south the middle of July. . . ." This I consider doubtful. Few baby Phalaropes are hatched, on the coulees of North Dakota, before July 20, at the earliest. And since both parents,—quite contradictorily,—join in the care of the young, it is most improbable that the females would desert their charges before the end of July, at the earliest.

225. *Recurvirostra americana*—Avoset: (Advisedly so-called.)

"Rare summer resident." One would like a word of proof of this allegation.

251. *Vetola haemastica*—Hudsonian Godwit.

"Rare migrant." Hardly,—on the whole: I once watched a flock of thirty, or more, in Coffey county, one spring.

(Under, Solitary Sandpiper:—for "full," *lege Fall*?)

258 and 258a. For "Willet" *lege* Willet.

262. *Tryngites subruficollis*—Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

"Rare migrant." Formerly, at least, not so: I used to find flocks, not a few, numbering from five to a dozen, in Coffey county, spring-time, thirty years ago.

278. *Leucopoliis*,—(NOT "—pholus"), —*nivosus alexandrinus*—Snowy Plover.

"Rare summer resident, Southwestern Kansas." But,—I found the Snowy Plover *abundant*, in Stafford county, the first of June.

(By the way: the above affords a horrid example of the futility and cumbersome result of an invariant application of the procrustean Law of Priority. Now,—"*Aegialitis nivosa*" was poetic, simple, meaningful, fit. But,—"*Leucopoliis*"!—and "*alex*

andrinus!"—both of them archaic, stilted, and intrinsically unmeaning. The one lovely, specific name,—*nivosus*,—and that, of course, changed for grammatical reasons,—is the one element in the entire concatenation that could afford one scintilla of intelligibility to the non-classical student.)

305. *Tympanuchus americanus*—Prairie Hen.

"Locally common year-round resident." On the contrary, now growing very rare everywhere.

325. *Catharista urubu*—Black Vulture.

"A common summer resident in Barber and Comanche counties. No Data" (!!!). How, then, do you know that this most-improbable allegation holds good, in fact?

(*urubu*, indeed!)

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

"Irregular summer resident." If occurring, most-unlikely as a breeder. I once watched a flock of three, in a wide Kansas valley,—as they soared and manoeuvred, with duckling-like "quackings." One of these was brought down from far heights, with a 12-gauge shell, winged. To my great sorrow, the specimen could not be located, in the woodland wherein it fell.

331. *Circus hudsonicus*—Marsh Hawk.

"Common resident." *Per contra*, really rare, in northeastern Kansas

332. *Accipiter velox*—Sharp-shinned Hawk.

"A year-round resident." *Query*. I have never seen one, in Kansas.

337a. *Buteo borealis krideri*—Krider Hawk—(mis-spelled Krel-der).

"A visitant." Rather, one should set down this hawk as a rare *breeder* in eastern Kansas. A pair has nested in this county,—Marshall,—for at least two years.

337d. *Buteo b. harlani*—Harlan Hawk.

"Occasional in winter." Who can blame some of us, bird-amateurs, if we feel strongly inclined to discredit the existence of this reputed sub-species? I have often wondered that the attention of savants has never been seriously called, apparently, to the fact that the type-specimen of the "Harlan" Hawk,—which is reputed to breed only in the South-land,—was an autumnal migrant from the North. (This type was taken in Kansas; but I believe that a magnificent bronzy-black adult, bought by me from a Neosho county pot hunter, in November, antedates the type.)

339. *Buteo lineatus*—Red-shouldered Hawk.

"Common resident—in the southern part of the state." I confess I cannot believe this to be true. But, *if true*, will not the

Kansas examples of *lineatus* prove referable to *B. l. texanus*?

360. *Falco sparverius*—Sparrow Hawk.

"Year-round resident." Has the University of Kansas any proof of the wintral occurrence of the Sparrow Hawk, within our borders?

366 and 367. *Asio wilsonianus* and *A. flammeus*—Long-eared and Short-eared Owls.

"Common summer resident (s)." Save in Coffey county the Short-ear I have found extremely rare; while the Long-eared Owl I have never seen, within the state.

368. *Strix varia*—Barred Owl.

"Common resident." Really, very rare, northeasterly.

378. *Speotyto cunicularia hypogaea*—Burrowing Owl.

"Common resident—central and western Kansas." Not uncommon, northeasterly, breeding.

402a. *Sphyrapicus varius nuchalis*—Red-naped Sapsucker.

"A rare migrant." Very doubtful. If so, to any extent, it must be in the extreme western part of the state.

413. *Colaptes cafer collaris*—Red-shafted Flicker.

"A rare resident in eastern Kansas." Not resident, at all; but rather an irregular wintral visitant. May occur, as breeder, in the extreme western portion of Kansas.

417. *Antrostomus vociferus*—Whip-poor-will.

"Common all summer." If so, WHERE? I have never seen nor heard it, in Kansas.

420c. *Chordeiles virginianus sennetti*—Sennett Night Hawk.

"Not uncommon in summer; one record, Lawrence." Patrick Floyd took a typical specimen, thirty years ago, in Coffey county. 466 and 466a. *Empidonaces trailli* and *t. alnorum*—Traill and Alder Flycatchers.

It is extremely doubtful if *trailli* occurs in Kansas. *Alnorum* is the form that occurs (rarely) in Marshall county, in Concordia, and probably Coffey county. (In the latter region, the Alder Flycatcher is common.)

474b. *Otocoris alpestris* "*pratacola*"—(*legè, praticola*)—Prairie Horned Lark.

474c. *O. a. leucolaema*—Desert Horned Lark.

"Permanent resident, western part of the state." It is of great interest to learn of this fact. I used to find *leucolaema* abundant in northeast Wyoming; mingled, in winter, with Mr. Oberholser's (unaccepted) *enthymia*.

475. *Pica pica hudsonica* (Black-billed) Magpie.

"Rare winter resident." I wish to record, here, the astonishing extension, easterly, of the range of the Magpie into Benson county, North Dakota: Last June, friends observed a specimen,

one afternoon, among the rolling hills beside a wooded lake. Two hours later, we found an old nest in an ash, close to the water's edge.

498c. *Agelaius phœniceus (predatorius)*—Red-winged Blackbird.

"... remains in winter. . . ." This is very doubtful. In all likelihood, the wintral birds are either *fortis* or *arctolegus*: as the early-spring migrants assuredly are. (Personally, I doubt the occurrence of *fortis*.) Students unaware of the fact will be interested to learn that I have found *arctolegus* breeding commonly in Benson county, North Dakota.

498. *Agelaius p. phœniceus*—"Northeastern" Red-wing.

"Migrant." There is no such bird. The type-Red-wing is found in Florida.

501 and 501.I—*Sturnella magna et neglecta*—Eastern and Western Meadowlarks.

(*Neglecta*) "replaces the (Eastern) Meadowlark in the western part of the state; not uncommon in eastern Kansas." I find *neglecta* to be the wintral habitant; while, probably, it may nest in eastern Kansas, sporadically.

514a. *Hesperiphona vespertina montana*—Western Evening Grosbeak.

"A rare migrant." No proof of this statement is offered. The Evening Grosbeak of northeastern Wyoming having proven, incredible as it may seem, to be of the type-race, it is unbelievable that Kansas birds can be anything else.

519. *Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*—House Finch.

"Rare resident." WHERE? If anywhere, must be in the extreme west.

521a. *Loxia curvirostra stricklandi*—Mexican Cross-bill.

"Irregular winter visitants." This, I doubt, greatly. I can find no difference between specimens taken by Patrick Floyd in Coffey county, many years ago, and the large suite taken by myself in Weston county, Wyoming: the latter proving to be *bendirei*. But then,—Dr. Allen once wrote me:—"I can't match your Wyoming birds, in both size and character of bill, with birds taken in New England." Truly, then, our *curvirostra* Cross-bills are just a sort of Chinese puzzle, anyhow!

528. *Acanthis linaria*—Red-poll.

"Rare as a winter visitant." I have never seen it. Students will be interested to learn that I found the predominant Red-poll of the Red River Valley to be *exilipes*; and that *rostrata* was sparingly found,—usually in March and April. (*Exilipes* fairly swarmed, during February and March; and Mr. Brewster once told me that some of my specimens were "the whitest birds (he had) ever seen, from any region." But I saw one specimen, in high plumage, that was hoary-white, all over.)

529a. *Astragalinus tristis pallidus*—Pale Goldfinch.

“. . . three collected in March . . . and April. . .” I believe that, in time, this alleged subspecies will be entirely discredited. The above statement seems to me to involve a palpable error: If even an expert cannot differentiate *tristis* and *pallidus*, in the breeding plumage,—UNLESS HE KNOWS WHENCE THE SPECIMENS CAME!,—how can *any one* pronounce on the specific status of birds in the eclipse plumage? (It may not be impertinent to state that I have been trying, for months, to “run to earth” a really typical specimen of *pallidus*: but have failed. A male from Alberta proved to be *tristis*!)

537. *Calcarius pictus*—Smith, (better, Painted), Longspur.

“A common winter sojourner.” Thus I found it, in Coffey county, a quarter-century ago. Of late years I have never seen one.

539. *Rhyncophanes mccowni*—McCown Longspur.

“Common in winter in western Kansas.” Unquestionably breeds there.

540. *Poæcetes gramineus confinis*—Western Vesper Sparrow.

“Migratory in western Kansas.” Undoubtedly breeds there.

546a. *Ammodramus savannarum bimaculatus*—Western Grasshopper Sparrow.

“The Museum records (*bimaculatus*) May 3 to December 3.” One naturally infers from this statement that the Western Grasshopper breeds in eastern Kansas. This is counter to all experience: that a type-species and its sub- should both breed in identical localities.

547.—*Passerherbulus henslowi*—Henslow Sparrow.

“Rare summer resident.” Fairly common, some seasons, in Marshall county. (Only an expert can identify this sparrow, “in the bush”; and even then only by its laconic note,—“T’sirp,”—or “D’sert”).

549.I *Passerherbulus nelsoni*—Nelson Sparrow.

“A rare summer resident.” IMPOSSIBLE! I have never found *nelsoni*, in summer, south of Benson county, North Dakota. Had it occurred, in the several regions to the south of that region, where I have been, I should most certainly have recognized it, for its note is unique: just a squeezed-out,—“Kre-e-zhl.” (How many younger students know that the Nelson Sparrow absolutely hides its nest: which is the daintiest, most-elaborate sparrow fabric extant, save that of the Le Conte Sparrow,—with which, however, it is quite identical)?

553. *Zonotrichia querula*—Harris Sparrow.

“. . . rare winter resident.” This is utterly counter to my repeated experience: In both the Kansas regions wherein I have

repeatedly wintered, this great sparrow has been wintrally very common.

554 and 554a. *Z. leucophrys* and *Z. l. gambeli*—White-crowned and Intermediate Sparrows

(Records furnished by the Museum of the Kansas State University seem to be confused and conflicting. Who can differentiate these two, in the field?) It is probable that the White-crown is the prevailing migrant form.

558. *Zonotrichia albicollis*—White-throated Sparrow.

"Common migrant." I found our winsome *atbicollis* wintrally common, in Coffey county.

560. *Spizella passerina*—Chipping Sparrow.

"Common in summer." In Marshall county, decided rare, at any time.

563a. *Spizella pusilla arenacea*—Western Field Sparrow.

"Rare: one record." This does not cover the known facts. *Arenacea* has been credibly reported as a migrant, in southwestern Kansas. Even this is misleading. It is confidently to be expected that expert observers will find this bird breeding commonly, clear across western Kansas.

567. *Junco hyemalis*—Slate-colored Junco.

". . . abundant in winter." In Marshall county, *never* common. (Why not *hiemalis*?)

567f. *Junco h. montanus*—Montana Junco.

"In western Kansas a winter resident." This alleged subspecies, now discredited. The bird referred to is probably *mearnsi*: the Junco which I used to find, now and then, in winter, among the flocks of *aikeni*, in Wyoming.

581j. *Melospiza melodia juddi*—Dakota Song Sparrow.

"Migratory, western Kansas, no record." *Juddi* ought to be found, in migrations, clear across our state. But then,—even experts are not agreed as to the territorial delimitations of this newly-descript race.

588. *Pipilo maculatus arcticus*—Arctic Towhee.

"A winter resident, rare in eastern Kansas." On the contrary, I once found it decidedly common, near Eureka and Eldorado, during the vernal migrations. (How inaccurate to call this bird the "Arctic" Towhee! It is the breeding form, in northeastern Wyoming, where it is much more common than I have ever found the "Common" Towhee anywhere).

596 (not 597)—*Zamelodia melanocephala*—Black-headed Grosbeak.

"Common summer resident. No migration records." This would seem to be a decided error: save that this Grosbeak *may* breed commonly, in far western Kansas.

597a. *Guiraca caerulea lazula*—Western Blue Grosbeak.

"In central and western Kansas, common in summer." Quite common, also, in Marshall county.

610. *Piranga rubra*—Summer Tanager.

"In eastern Kansas, common in summer." I found it very rare in Coffey county. Never seen elsewhere.

617. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*—Rough-winged Swallow.

"Common in summer." Decidedly rare, in the regions known to me.

618. *Bombycilla garrula*—Bohemian Waxwing.

"A rare winter visitant." This is now no longer true. During three winters I have found it at least fairly common; and, during the winter of 1919, decidedly so. (How misleading is "*garrula*": the sole note of this bird is just a wheezy murmur!)

619. *Bombycilla cedrorum*—Cedar Waxwing.

"Year-round resident." I doubt if the Cedar Waxwing is ever regularly habitant, here, in winter.

621, 622a, 622c—*Lanius spp*—Shrikes.

One greatly doubts if *any* Shrike is a "permanent resident." in Kansas. Certainly, there is always a gap between the wintrally-habitant and the breeding, Shrikes. (I confess I have hitherto neglected to secure specimens for the determination of the local breeding form.)

631. *Vireo griseus*—White-eyed Vireo.

It is utterly incredible that any bird so noisy as a Vireo should be "common" anywhere in Kansas; yet never seen, during nearly thirty years, in the counties of Coffey and Marshall.

636. *Mniotilta varia*—Black-and-White Warbler.

"A fairly common summer resident." INCREDIBLE! So far as my own region is concerned, it is found only in the migrations; and even then, very sparingly.

637. *Proto* (not *Protho*), *notaria citrea*—Prothonotary Warbler.

". . . common . . . wherever swamps are found." Are there really "swamps," in Kansas? I have never seen one. (The name, "Prothonotary," is absurd: even if the beak of this Warbler is unique enough to set the bird in a Genus of its own! Why not, as a fitting vulgar name, call this Warbler the "River" Warbler?)

647. *Vermivora peregrina*—Tennessee Warbler.

"Rare migrant." Fairly common, now and then, in Marshall county; and in Topeka.

655. *Dendroica coronata*—Myrtle Warbler.

I can remember when this Warbler really *was* "a common migrant," in Coffey county. It is so no more.

658. *Dendroica cerulea*—Cerulean Warbler.

". . . rare summer resident." Doubtful. We are out of the breeding range of this exquisite creature.

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

“Common migrant.” In my region, decidedly uncommon.

674. *Seiurus aurocapillus*—Oven-bird.

“Common summer resident.” I have never met it, here.

675 and 676. “Grinnell” and “Louisiana” Water-Thrushes.

One would be utterly disposed to discredit any merely *field* identifications, covering these two races of Water-Thrush. This much, at least, I KNOW: The “Louisiana” Water-Thrush now breeds as far north as Minneapolis, Minn.; while the Water-Thrush of the North reaches that latitude some time between the first and the tenth of August, most years. (Why not eliminate the utterly meaningless “Louisiana” as a designation; and substitute the title, “Southern” Water-Thrush?)

681. *Geothlypis trichas*—Maryland Yellow-throat.

In the matter of the Yellow-throats there seems to me some confusion, in the List sent out by the Kansas State University. We should all bear in mind that Kansas is entirely out of the reputed Breeding Range of the type-species; and that our bird is probably *brachidactyla*. (This last word, of course, should be spelled with a Y,—Brachy—).

684. *Wilsonia citrina* (*lege. mitrata*)—Hooded Warbler.

“A rare summer resident.” Have never met it. The same is true of the Wilson Warbler.

687. *Septophaga* (*lege. Setophaga*), *ruticilla*—Redstart.

“In summer a common resident.” I have found it breeding but once: 1920.

718. *Thryothorus ludovicianus*—Carolina Wren.

“A common resident.” Common, enough, in Coffey county. Some nine specimens seen in Marshall county, these fifteen years.

719c. *Thryomanes bewicki cryptus*—Texas Bewick Wren.

“A common migrant in southwestern Kansas.” I found this exquisite singer breeding to a fairly common degree in Barber and Comanche counties.

722. *Nannus hiemalis*—Winter Wren.

“Not uncommon in winter.” I have never met it.

735a and 735a. (These, of course, should have been, respectively, 735 and 735a; with the former “Black-capped” and the latter, “Long-tailed,” Chickadees.) One of the biological anomalies extant lies in the fact that both the species and the sub-species, named, should occasionally breed, side by side.

757. *Hylocichla aliciae*—Gray-cheeked Thrush.

758a. *Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*—Olive-backed Thrush.

These two undoubtedly co-migrate, both spring and autumn; and they pass us in mighty flocks. Though familiar with both, I should not presume to think of trying to differentiate them, in the

field. Utterly familiar with the variant thrush calls, one is yet tantalizingly unable to differentiate the two kinds of birds that utter the sound. It is quite likely that the *swainsoni* Thrushes that migrate through western Kansas are of the now-rejected sub-species, *almac*: which is, some of us are quite sure, a thoroughly good sub-species. Its temperament, its chosen breeding grounds, and its habits are all quite unique. There are several particularly good ornithologists that agree with me, in this contention. 761 and 761a. *Plantesticus* (*legè*, *Planesticus*).

This review is far and away from having any of the remotest personal animus or bearing. It is, rather, just AN IMPERIOUS DEMAND FOR MORE LIGHT. Past experiences have compelled me, at times, to disavow alleged personal differentiations; and I have hence felt it in no sense uncharitable to view, with skeptical mental attitude, certain differentiations made by others. It is a thousand pities that we might not have, in Kansas, some Nestor like the late Professor Snow, to criticize, formulate and re-tabulate the records made by men less learned or less critical; thus giving the world of Ornithological Science a sound and accurate survey of the *ornis* of Kansas. One also longs for the day when the scientists of this state will bring such concerted stress to bear upon our uncertain State Legislature that they may grant to accredited and genuine bird students the right to take, and to hold in possession specimens of bird-life. There are problems of absorbing interest, with some of us, that can be solved in no other way. The resulting prejudice upon bird life would be quite inappreciable; while the results of the licensing would be of substantial and lasting benefit to the local study of Ornithology.

Throughout, the reviewer has failed to repeat the scientific specific-nomen: as a prop to the proper use of the trinomial system. In this I am sure I should have, were he alive, today, no less a backer than beloved and brilliant Elliott Coues. How he did *hate* tautonomy: and how finely did he voice that hatred!

P. B. PEABODY.

Blue Rapids, Kansas.