

GENERAL NOTES

Conducted by M. H. Swenk

Fifteen Minutes of Bird Observation in a Duck Blind in Indiana.—

During the last fifteen years, I have done a considerable amount of field work in connection with bird study and as a nature guide. During the month of March, 1933, I was at the Indiana Department of Conservation Jasper-Pulaski Game Preserve, taking a wild life census of the five thousand acres of the preserve. Part of this time was spent in a corn crib which we had fixed up as a duck blind twenty feet from the duck pond, which lies in about the center of the preserve. On several occasions, Mr. Nathan Anderson, also of the Department, and I had seen a thousand ducks of three or four species on the pond at one time, but never, I believe, have I seen as many kinds as I saw on the afternoon of March 25. On the preceding night a three-inch snow had fallen, the day had been cloudy and very cold, and at 6:30 P. M. the birds were apparently hustling around to feed before nightfall. The corn crib in which we were concealed was set on posts about three feet from the ground, giving us a good observation of the grounds before us. We had cleared snow from several places on the ground and had scattered corn there, as well as on the water at the edge of the land. Within a period of fifteen minutes from 6:30 P. M. on, all within forty feet of our observation post, the following birds were seen, feeding on the ground or the edge of the water unless otherwise noted:

One hundred male Red-winged Blackbirds, chattering and calling; twenty-eight male and twelve female Cowbirds squeeking; one male Cardinal; five Meadowlarks, singing and calling (during the fifteen minute period two male Meadowlarks had a very vicious fight in front of us); six Crows, cawing and flapping their wings as they walked and fed before us; six Mourning Doves; two Bluebirds, singing as they sat on a sunflower stalk to our right; seventy-five Slate-colored Juncos; two Killdeers (one flock of eight flew over our heads, calling as they flew); twenty Tree Sparrows; six Song Sparrows, two singing; eleven Bob-whites, crooning and eating under the corn crib directly under our feet; a male and a female Marsh Hawk flying low over the marsh close by; one White-breasted Nuthatch calling as he fed on the ground; eighteen Robins, calling and singing; twelve Blue Jays, squeaking as they fed; two Downy Woodpeckers, calling as they fed on the ground; one Red-headed Woodpecker; and at the pond's edge before us the following: one Great Blue Heron; five Coots; three Baldpates; twenty-eight Mallards; thirty Ring-necked Ducks; two Red-legged Black Ducks; and two Pintails (several other flocks of ducks of various kinds were seen flying north during that time). The total seen during the fifteen minutes was 389 individuals of twenty-five species.—SIDNEY R. ESTEN, *Indianapolis, Ind.*

Some Birds of Judith Basin County, Montana.—In 1903, P. M. Silloway published "Birds of Fergus County, Montana" (Bulletin No. 1, Fergus County Free High School), an annotated list of 179 species of birds observed by him in that county, or reported from that locality by earlier workers—drawing particularly upon an early publication by J. A. Allen (Notes on the Natural History of Portions of Montana and Dakota. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., XVII, 1874). Since that time, so far as I know, very little has been published concerning the bird life of that central section of Montana. The territory included within the boundaries of Fergus County in 1903, and covered by Silloway's list of birds,

now includes Fergus, Petroleum, and parts of Musselshell, Golden Valley, Wheatland, and Judith Basin Counties.

From July 5, 1925, until September 22, 1926, I was stationed at the Judith Basin Branch Experiment Station, two miles west of Moccasin, in Judith Basin County. During that time I became well acquainted with the birds that nested on, or visited, the Station farm, including the migrants that paused at an experimental plot of shelter belt trees and shrubs occupying an area of about two acres. A few trips into other portions of the county were made on Sundays when I was able to leave the Station.

At that time I did not publish any notes concerning the bird life of that locality. Being unable to secure a copy of Silloway's bulletin, I did not know whether any of my observations would add to the knowledge of the birds of that portion of Montana. Recently I obtained a copy of his list, and found that it did not include the following species of birds which I observed in the part of Judith Basin County formerly included in Fergus County.

American Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus s. johannis*). A rare fall and winter visitor. Observed at the Station, December 2 and 4, 1925, and September 13, 1926. One was seen in the Little Belt Mountains southwest of Utica, September 19, 1926.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*). Observed as a rare permanent resident. Observed occasionally throughout the year in various parts of the county. Three birds lingered at the Station farm from May 15 to 21, 1926.

White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis saxatalis*). Several White-throated Swifts were observed in a rocky canyon near Yogo Creek, in the Little Belt Mountains, August 2, 1925. This species probably breeds locally in the county.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*). One bird of this species, evidently a migrant, visited the Station shelter belt, June 3, 1926.

Northern Hairy Woodpecker (*Dryobates villosus septentrionalis*). One bird, apparently typical of this subspecies, was seen in the Little Belt Mountains along the South Fork of the Judith River, September 19, 1926. A few days later, September 22, one was observed on a fence post in prairie country near Hobson. It was watched closely for several minutes, and its typical markings were carefully noted.

Silloway (*op. cit.*, p. 35) lists *D. v. monticola* as a common resident of the timbered country in that locality. The only previous record of the occurrence of *D. v. septentrionalis* in that part of Montana is that of a specimen taken in the Big Snowy Mountains (Anthony, *Auk*, XIII, pp. 31-34, 1896).

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis mesoleucus*). Observed in the Little Belt Mountains near Yogo, August 2, 1925. This represents one of the easternmost summer records for this species in Montana. It has been previously reported from the Belt Mountains (Williams, *Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club*, VII, p. 62, 1882).

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina lepida*). Two birds of this species were seen flying about the face of a high cliff in the Little Belt Mountains, near the South Fork of the Judith River, July 25, 1926.

Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis serripennis*). Observed as a fairly common summer resident along the Judith River throughout its course in the prairie portion of the county.

Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla pusilla*). A few Wilson's Warblers visited the Station shelter belt during their fall migration in 1926. The first ones were recorded August 19, when about twenty stopped at the shelter belt. Thereafter a few birds were seen frequently until September 17 (I left the locality September 22). About fifty individuals, all females except one, were observed September 13.

Northern Pileolated Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla pileolata*). Birds of this subspecies also visited the shelter belt during their fall migrations, but in much smaller numbers than those of the preceding subspecies. Observed September 5, 7, and 8, 1925; a female and a male seen August 20, were the only ones observed during 1926.

Cassin's Purple Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*). A male Cassin's Purple Finch visited the Station shelter belt, May 12, 1926, singing several times soon after sunrise.

Pale Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis pallidus*). Silloway (*op. cit.*, p. 51) lists *S. t. tristis* as the form of this species occurring in Fergus County. So far as I could determine, from close observation, the breeding form at Moccasin was *S. t. pallidus*, and *tristis* occurred as a late summer and fall visitor. Possibly intergradation occurs in that locality. (See Saunders, Pac. Coast Avifauna No. 14, p. 112, 1921). In 1926, five pairs of Goldfinches which I believe to have been *pallidus* nested in the Station shelter belt. The species was first recorded that spring on May 24.

Northern Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza nevadensis nevadensis*). Six birds of this species visited the Station shelter belt, August 19, 1926, probably in migration. Three were seen there the following day. Previous records of this species in Montana appear to be restricted to Gallatin and Park Counties (Saunders, *op. cit.*, p. 128).

Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*). Observed as a regular migrant at the Station. Latest date in 1925, September 22. Observed April 25, May 14, and from September 13 to 19, 1926.

On July 25, 1926, at an altitude of about 6500 feet in the Little Belt Mountains near the South Fork of the Judith River, I observed three broods of young Slate-colored Juncos on the wing with adults. There appears to be only one published record of the breeding of this species in Montana (Thorne, *Auk*, XII, p. 217, 1895), and Saunders (*op. cit.*, p. 125) suggests that this record may be inaccurate.

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*). Six migrant birds of this species were observed in the Station shelter belt, September 13, 1926.

Slate-colored Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca schistacea*). Several Slate-colored Fox Sparrows were observed along the Judith River southwest of Utica, July 25, 1926.—WINTON WEYDEMAYER, *Fortune, Mont.*

Bird Life Along the Kankakee.—During the spring of 1930, it was my privilege to spend several weeks along the Kankakee River in the northeastern part of Illinois, collecting and observing birds. Arrangements had been made some time before to rent a cabin from the owner of one of the numerous summer resorts which are to be found along both banks of this river, and which are well patronized during the summer months. We had made our plans to get there during the height of the migration period, but did not arrive until nearly a week after it was in full swing.