

The Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) nests abundantly in this understory association. Of 25 nests of the Yellow Warbler found on June 6, all but one were in this type of habitat, and were located at heights of from 21 inches to 12 feet. The exception was in an upright fork, almost at the top of an American beech. The female warbler flew from the nest when we tapped the trunk of the tree. The nest contained 5 eggs. A weighted line dropped from the rim of the nest to the ground measured 39 feet with a steel tape.

A. C. Bent (1953. *U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 203, p. 163) gives the usual heights for nests of this species as from 3 to 8 feet, rarely to 30 or 40 feet. However, he cites (p. 164) nests recorded by T. S. Roberts at heights of 40 to 60 feet in cottonwoods in the prairie region of Minnesota, where shrubbery is scarce. The highest nest that Bent mentions from eastern North America (p. 167) was 30 feet up in an elm, recorded by T. E. McMullen in either Pennsylvania or New Jersey (no date).—DOUGLAS S. MIDDLETON, 7443 Buhr, Detroit 12, Michigan, August 15, 1953.

Cannibalism by a Burrowing Owl.—While visiting a large prairie dog "town" situated $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north and 2 miles east of Sharon, Barber County, Kansas, on the afternoon of May 6, 1953, I observed four Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto cunicularia*). Three were perched on mounds of earth thrown up by prairie dogs at the entrances to their burrows. The fourth owl was observed feeding between two of these mounds. I approached the feeding owl and flushed it from a dead Burrowing Owl. Feathers from the breast and belly of the dead owl were scattered about in the short grass. The head had been torn from the body and could not be found. There remained the skin of the body with the wings and legs attached. The kill seemed to be no more than a day old; the exposed edges of the skin were dry and friable, and there were dried drops of blood on the feathers. Another instance of cannibalism by a Burrowing Owl has been reported by Bent (1938. *U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.*, 170:390).—THANE S. ROBINSON, *Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, May 19, 1953.*

Western records of *Chaetura vauxi tamaulipensis*.—As recently as 1939 it was generally supposed that the distribution of the swifts of the genus *Chaetura* in North America, north of Tamaulipas, was very simple: *vauxi* in the western part of the continent, *pelagica* in the eastern, and casually west over the Atlantic drainage as far as New Mexico. The only problem thought worthy of study was the winter range of the latter, then unknown. Swifts being in most places notoriously difficult to collect, the "sight record," based on geographic "reasoning," held happy and unchallenged sway.

The first shock to this complacency came when Lowery (1939. *Wilson Bull.*, 51: 199-201) discovered that a few swifts occasionally winter in Louisiana, and that they are *vauxi* rather than *pelagica*! We still, however, lack records of *vauxi* in any other region near Baton Rouge, so perhaps the shock failed to open closed minds. Soon afterward, Sutton (1941. *Wilson Bull.*, 53:231-233) demonstrated the intermediate characters of the birds of northeastern Mexico, which he named *C. v. tamaulipensis*, and showed that they are at least partially migratory. The only record between October and March, apparently, was one from San Lucas in the mountain of southern Guatemala. With the announcement by Barnes (1946. *Auk*, 63:258) of the capture of *C. pelagica* in Utah, and the discovery of its winter home, it seemed likely that the next important discoveries would be in the northern or western parts of the Mexican mainland or the adjacent Southwest of the United States. Here, west of Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí, *Chaetura* was

generally an uncommon transient, a status not conducive to procuring specimens of such masters of the air!

The past few years seemed unfavorable for *Chaetura* in southeastern Arizona; few were seen, and no *C. v. vauxi* were taken. On May 14, 1950, however, I was fortunate enough to secure a lone male swift feeding with about fifty Violet-green Swallows (*Tachycineta thalassina*) rather low over the grassland at the mouth of Garden Canyon on the Fort Huachuca Reservation, Cochise County, Arizona. Subsequent examination by several ornithologists showed this to represent some Mexican race. Only Dr. Sutton, however, had enough material to actually compare it with *tamaulipensis*. He has kindly written me, under date of January 15, 1953, that it is "very similar" to the type and three topotypes (two males, one female) of *tamaulipensis*, "but rump feathers and upper tail-coverts . . . somewhat more conspicuously edged with buffy gray; and lower belly and under tail-coverts very slightly darker. General effect of the crown and back very similar to that of male topotypes—i.e., less blackish than in *richmondi*." Summarizing, he writes: "I see no reason why the bird should not be called *tamaulipensis*. . . . I cannot believe that the nominate race is ever this dark on the crown, back, lower belly, and under tail-coverts."

Meanwhile, I was very much interested to find a number of *Chaetura* apparently settled for the winter in the foothills east of Las Varas, southwestern Nayarit, in mid-November 1952. They never came within range more than momentarily at my camp at the foot of the mountains; but in returning up to Compostela on November 29, I found them hawking low over the cornfields along the road just above Mazatán. In fact, a Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) that pursued one too hotly was killed instantly in full flight by striking telephone wires. Climbing a little ridge in the sloping fields in this narrow valley, I obtained a single female just finishing the annual molt. Though a trifle paler, this closely resembles the Arizona male, and it doubtless represents the same race. Both are definitely distinct from *C. v. vauxi*, according to the studies of Allan J. Duvall and Dr. Alexander Wetmore. I wish to thank all of those who have helped in the identification of these swifts.

Thus it appears that any of the three northern forms of *Chaetura* may turn up almost anywhere on the Mexican mainland or in the adjacent parts of the United States. *Chaetura* thus joins the large and growing list of genera in which, to have any scientific value whatever, records in this large region must be based on critically determined specimens. Further, the north Mexican race may now be added to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-List of North American Birds as having been recorded from southeastern Arizona.—ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona, August 21, 1953.*