

Breeding of Cassin's Sparrow in central Oklahoma.—The Cassin's Sparrow (*Aimophila cassinii*) is considered a rare bird in most of Oklahoma. Nice (1931. *Publ. Univ. Okla. Biol. Survey*, 3 [11]:185) reported its breeding in Cimarron County at the western end of the panhandle and in Jackson and Harmon counties in the southwestern corner of the state. She mentions that McCarthy and Clark, in 1860, collected eggs at Adalene Creek, Corral Creek, and Rabbit Ear Creek, but states that "most of these creeks unfortunately have changed names, making the location of the collections rather indefinite;" however, she believes that probably these sites were in what is now the westernmost column of counties in the state. Howell (*Proc. Okla. Acad. Sci.*, 29, 1948:36-37) reported a small colony of breeding Cassin's Sparrows in Woods County, just east of the panhandle.

This sparrow has been recorded only once from central Oklahoma. On November 21, 1952, Jean W. Graber (1953. *Wilson Bull.*, 65:208) collected an immature female in postjuvinal molt near Noble, Cleveland County. The occurrence of such a bird in that locality seemed puzzling at the time.

On May 5, 1955, in the moderately overgrazed, open prairie two miles north of Norman, Cleveland County, I encountered three singing males along a fence row and among abandoned oil well equipment in an area of approximately two acres. They sang either from perches or, more often, during short display flights. I collected one in full adult plumage (U. O. M. Z. no. 2068); its testes were much enlarged. These Cassin's Sparrows probably had arrived at the locality some time after April 28, on which day I had spent at least an hour at this spot without detecting a bird of this species. On May 6, Margaret M. Nice, Donald H. Baepfer and I observed one individual there and heard two others along fence rows, about one-eighth and one-fourth miles distant. On May 12, I recorded four singing birds, even more widely distributed over the prairie, always along fences. A male which George M. Sutton and I watched for at least 30 minutes on May 13 sang repeatedly during display flights and remained within a maximum of 100 yards of a silent Cassin's Sparrow, most probably a female, the first we had encountered.

Thus it appeared that a breeding population of this bird was indeed present here, at least 100 miles east of its previously-known breeding range. However, no proof of nesting was to be obtained until after several weeks had passed. From May 9 until about May 25, 1955, Oklahoma experienced unusual amounts of rainfall; in the central part of the state up to four inches fell each day on May 16, 18, and 19. Perhaps coincidentally, May 17 was the last day of the month on which I heard the song of this sparrow; still, while it may have entered into a period of little or no song at about this time, it seems likely to me that the abundance of rainfall retarded the nesting cycle of this species whose breeding center in the state is in the markedly drier western portions.

My visits to the area became less frequent during June, and not until June 23 did I detect the bird again. On June 30 I observed a solitary pair within 200 yards of the original location. For an hour I watched them from a minimum distance of about 50 yards; both remained most of the time along an approximately 100-yard stretch of fence. The male sang from posts and wire, never during flight, with silent periods of up to 20 minutes; its mate spent much of her time on the ground near the fence, occasionally flying for brief visits to a growth of small wild plums about 75 yards to the south. No young birds were in evidence, nor did either adult appear to be visiting a nest. Within half an hour after moving into my car, using it as a "blind," I twice saw the male, with food in its beak, fly directly from one fence post to a particular small

area of ground nearby; during the next half hour the female also visited this spot twice with food, though she arrived by a much more devious route. The nest held five nearly-fledged young; it was on the ground, well concealed among weed one to two feet high, primarily ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*), about 20 feet north of the fence, and in the firelane 35 feet in width paralleling the fence. The young showed clearly the distinct dark striping on the breast; one was collected (U. O. M. Z. no. 2161).

The presence in the fall of 1952 of an immature Cassin's Sparrow (mentioned above) provides evidence that this bird probably has nested in central Oklahoma for a minimum of four years. Considering the facts that in the three intervening years a considerable amount of time has been spent in the field in the vicinity of Norman by ornithologists from the University of Oklahoma and by local enthusiasts, and that prior to this year no Cassin's Sparrows have been encountered during the breeding season, it seems certain that this bird breeds here only in widely-scattered, small populations.—JOHN C. JOHNSON, JR., *Department of Zoology, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, July 29, 1955.*

Wilson's Petrel in southern Ontario.—Hurricane "Connie" passed south of Buffalo, New York, at approximately 6:00 p.m. on August 13, 1955, bringing gale-force winds and torrential rains to the eastern end of Lake Erie. The following morning Eric W. Bastin, George Meyers and Glenn Meyers, all of Hamilton, Ontario, searched the north shore of Lake Erie at likely points in the affected area, hoping to see unusual pelagic birds.

At Grabell Point, near Long Beach, Ontario, the body of a Wilson's Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus*) was picked up by Glenn Meyers. Lying just above high-water mark, it was water-soaked but otherwise in good condition, no decomposition being apparent. Identification was confirmed shortly afterwards by Dr. Harold Axtell of The Buffalo Museum of Science, who joined the party later. The petrel was given to The Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, Ontario. The only previous record for the species in Ontario occurred in the year 1897, at Gull Lake in the Muskoka District.—ERIC W. BASTIN, *43 Inglewood Drive, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, September 2, 1955.*

Prairie Warbler breeding in Texas.—Breeding of the Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*) in east Texas has been suspected for some time, for some of these birds remain here several weeks after the main migration has ended. Bent (1953. *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* 203:436) does not list this warbler as breeding in Texas. I saw and heard singing males of this species in the late spring and early summer in 1952, 1953 and 1954 in three localities in Smith County, Texas, but found only two abandoned nests and three immature birds during that time. These observations were witnessed by my wife and some of the members of the Tyler Audubon Society.

In 1955 my observations were begun 12 miles south of Tyler in an abandoned field of about 15 acres which contained second-growth sweet gum (*Liquidambar*), hickories (*Carya* sp.) and oaks (*Quercus* sp.). Nearby were shortleaf pines (*Pinus* sp.), various shrubs and a stand of grass 15 inches tall. On visiting this area on April 17, I discovered that some of the Prairie Warblers had already arrived, and during the following weeks I observed from four to six singing males in the vicinity of the old field at all times. On May 30, I observed a female gathering nesting material and flying into a 25-foot sweetgum, but I did not locate the almost-completed nest until