

*nanus** and *H. swainsoni*—are well known to be common summer residents. The occurrence of a representative of *H. alicia* in the United States at all during its breeding season is a matter of surprise, especially when we recollect the boreal distribution of the typical form during that period, and read† that so far towards the north as the Yukon and the Great Slave Lake it occurs “only as a bird of passage to and from more northern breeding grounds.” Additional information respecting the distribution of the new race will be awaited with great interest.

SHORT NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF BAYOU SARA, LOUISIANA.

BY CHARLES WICKLIFFE BECKHAM.

As the avian fauna of the lower Mississippi Valley is now receiving some attention,‡ it seems well that I should contribute my mite of information to the general fund.

Bayou Sara and the adjoining town of St. Francisville, in the parish of West Feliciana, are situated on the east bank of the Mississippi River, 170 miles above New Orleans by that stream and about 80 miles in an air line northwest of it. It is 30 or 40 miles north of Baton Rouge, near which place Dr. Langdon made his observations in April, 1881. The following notes were made principally on and near “Wyoming,” two miles from the river, the plantation of Ex-Gov. R. C. Wickliffe, a place possessing peculiarly agreeable ornithological associations on account of its former owner, Gen. Dawson, having entertained Audubon as his guest for several months. It will be remembered that the type specimen of *Buteo harlani* was captured here.

* See “The Coues Check List of North American Birds,” p. 24.

† Birds of North America, p. 12.

‡ Field Notes on Louisiana Birds. By Dr. F. W. Langdon. Journal of the Cincinnati Society of Natural History, July, 1881, pp. 145-155. A List of Birds from the Lower Mississippi Valley, Observed During the Summer of 1881, with Brief Notes. By O. P. Hay. Bull. Nutt. Ornith. Club, Vol. VII, pp. 89-94.

The topography is much more interesting, and is quite different from that farther south and that immediately opposite on the west side of the river. A level plateau, 100 feet above the levee, begins about a quarter of a mile from the river and extends back into the State of Mississippi. This plateau is deeply cut by numerous creeks and ravines, the banks of which are generally densely wooded, with water-oak, sweet gum, cedar, prickly ash, magnolias, etc. All of the level ground on top is in a state of cultivation; cotton being the principal crop. A few miles farther up the high ground does not extend so near the river, the intervening space being occupied by several small lakes and swamps—a great resort for water birds of all kinds. On account of the high water I did not have an opportunity of visiting this interesting field.

My observations extended only over a period of five days from April 15th to 19th, 1882, inclusive, but a great deal of ground was canvassed in that time; nearly the whole of each day being spent in the field. A good many birds were shot, but few were preserved, as taxidermy was necessarily subordinated to field-work. Dr. Langdon in his interesting paper particularly remarks the absence of the Catbird, Black-and-White Creeper, White-browed Yellow-throat, Kentucky Warbler, Large-billed Water Thrush, and the Redstart, but I found all of these at "Wyoming," together with many others not noted by either him or Mr. Hay, the Catbird and Kentucky Warbler being particularly abundant.

The writer was greatly assisted in his work by Mr. Robert Wederstraudt of "Wyoming," a young man whose unusually close and accurate observations of birds and bird-life rendered his help peculiarly valuable. Many of the following notes are credited to him entirely. I have followed the nomenclature of the Smithsonian list of 1881.

1. *Hylocichla mustelina* (Gm.) Bd. WOOD THRUSH. — Common in woodland, and several seen in the yard near the house.
2. *Merula migratoria* (L.) Sw. and Rich. AMERICAN ROBIN. — Not observed. They appear here in large numbers early in February to feed on the fruit of the "wild peach," and hundreds are shot for the table. They leave early in March.
3. *Mimus polyglottus* (L.) Boie. MOCKINGBIRD. — Very abundant, both in the town about gardens and yards, and in the country. Frequenting open ground exclusively. Four sets of eggs were taken; two perfectly fresh, and two about half incubated. Mr. Wederstraudt called my attention to a curious foraging habit of this bird. We noticed one hopping

along the ground in an open grassy place, pausing at every three or four hops to extend and close its wings. It repeated this several times until a grasshopper was flushed, when the bird immediately "reached" for it, and having captured it, made off to a neighboring bush to eat it. Mr. Wederstraudt says that he has observed this interesting performance many times.

4. *Galeoscoptes carolinensis* (L.) Cab. CATBIRD.—Abundant in the shrubbery in the creek bottoms. None were seen near the dwellings.

5. *Harporhynchus rufus* (L.) Cab. BROWN THRASHER.—Abundant in same places as the last. Three clutches of three eggs each were taken, in one of which incubation was very far advanced, and on the 19th a nest was found containing two young nearly able to fly.

6. *Sialia sialis* (L.) Haldem. BLUEBIRD.—Observed several pairs in town and in the country. Not as common as in Kentucky.

7. *Poliophtila caerulea* (L.) Sch. BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER.—A common, and, on account of its active and noisy habits, conspicuous bird.

8. *Lophophanes bicolor* (L.) Bp. TUFTED TITMOUSE.—Not very common. Frequenting principally the tops of trees.

9. *Parus carolinensis* Aud. CAROLINA CHICKADEE.—But few observed. A pair bred in a hole in a cedar post within twenty yards of the house last year.

10. *Thryothorus ludovicianus* (Gm.) Bp. CAROLINA WREN.—Very abundant everywhere. A clutch of three eggs was taken on the 19th from a nest in a small recess formed by the junction of several timbers, under the piazza, which was frequented at all times of the day. The nest was empty on the 16th, one egg was deposited on the 17th, one on the 18th, and one on the 19th. I saw neither of the old birds about the place at all, and it was only by capturing the female on the nest at night, that the eggs were positively identified. A pair have bred about this piazza for many years, I am informed.

11. *Mniotilta varia* (L.) V. BLACK-AND-WHITE CREEPER.—A male, the only one seen at all, was captured in a dense wood on the 17th.

12. *Parula americana* (L.) Bp. BLUE-YELLOW-BACKED WARBLER.—Very abundant. A persistent but weak vocalist.

13. *Dendroica aestiva* (Gm.) Bd. SUMMER YELLOWBIRD.—Common in open places.

14. *Dendroica blackburniæ* (Gm.) Bd. BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER.—Common in large trees about open ground.

15. *Dendroica dominica albilora* Bd. WHITE-BROWED-YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER.—A male, the only one seen, was shot out of a magnolia tree on the 10th. In all of my Kentucky specimens of this bird the anterior portion of the superciliary line has a trace of yellow. In this one no yellow is perceptible.

16. *Dendroica pinus* (Wils.) Bd. PINE-CREEPING WARBLER.—Apparently not uncommon. Preferring open ground. In song.

17. *Siurus auricapillus* (L.) Sw. GOLDEN-CROWNED THRUSH.—One specimen captured in a thicket on the 15th.

18. *Siurus motacilla* (V.) Coes. LARGE-BILLED WATER THRUSH.

—Heard one singing in a densely wooded ravine on the 17th. Mr. Wederstraudt has often seen them in pairs along the smaller water-courses.

19. *Oporornis formosa* (Wils.) Bd. KENTUCKY WARBLER.—One of the most abundant inhabitants of the dense growth along the ravines. Two or three were often heard singing at the same time.

20. *Geothlypis trichas* (L.) Cab. MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT.—Abundant in the usual places.

21. *Icteria virens* (L.) Bd. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT.—Very abundant. In full song.

22. *Myiodioctes mitratus* (Gm.) Aud. HOODED WARBLER.—Found in same places, and almost as abundant as the Kentucky Warbler. An inhabitant of the undergrowth principally. In song; its note being uttered at intervals of 15 or 20 seconds as it hops from branch to branch in pursuit of insects.

23. *Setophaga ruticilla* (L.) Sw.—REDSTART.—A single specimen, a male, captured in a swamp. It was in company with a female.

24. *Vireosylvia olivacea* (L.) Bp. RED-EYED VIREO.—Very abundant everywhere.

25. *Vireosylvia gilva* (V.) Cass. WARBLING VIREO.—Heard one singing in a shade tree in Bayou Sara on the 15th.

26. *Vireo noveboracensis* (Gm.) Bp. WHITE-EYED VIREO.—Very abundant and voluble everywhere.

27. *Lanius ludovicianus* L. LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE.—Not observed. Mr. Wederstraudt says that they are not uncommon here in the fall. He once saw one kill and devour a small bird in a thorn tree.

28. *Ampelis cedrorum* (V.) Bd. CEDAR WAX-WING.—Observed several small flocks. Said to be very abundant here in winter when numbers are shot for the table. Known here as the "ortolan"—the fourth bird, I believe, embraced under that comprehensive name.

29. *Progne subis* (L.) Bd. PURPLE MARTIN.—Common about Bayou Sara and St. Francisville.

30. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* (Aud.) Bd. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW.—Very abundant. Beginning to breed. Several holes examined but no eggs found. One was shot out of a dead tree.

31. *Pyrranga aestiva* (L.) V. SUMMER REDBIRD.—Abundant about dwellings and open ground. In song.

32. *Passerculus sandwichensis savanna* (Wils.) Ridgw. SAVANNA SPARROW.—Common in old wet fields. One individual captured, a female, had a very large tumor on the bill and several smaller ones on the toes.

33. *Zonotrichia albicollis* (Gm.) Bp. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.—Abundant in parties of six or eight in the undergrowth about open places in the low lands.

34. *Peucaea aestivalis illinoensis* Ridgw. OAK-WOODS SPARROW.—Two specimens of this interesting form were taken; both males. One was shot from the top of a small bush near the edge of an old corn field; the other from the top of an isolated pine on the edge of a cotton field.

Both were singing when shot. No others were observed. This, I believe, is the most southeasterly "record" of the form.

35. *Melospiza palustris* (Wils.) Bd. SWAMP SPARROW. — Not uncommon in the usual places.
36. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (L.) V. CHEWINK; TOWHEEL. — Abundant. Locally known as the "Joree."
37. *Cardinalis virginianus* (Briss.) Bp. CARDINAL GROSBEEK. — Very abundant. Took a set of three fresh eggs on the 17th. Nest as usual.
38. *Passerina cyanea* (L.) Gray. INDIGO BUNTING. — Rather common about open places, but very shy. Not in song.
39. *Passerina ciris* (L.) Gray. PAINTED BUNTING; NONPAREIL. — First seen on the 16th. A male in full song captured on the 19th—the only two seen. Mr. Wederstraudt, who has trapped them, using a captive male as a decoy, says that the same individual is always to be found within a few hundred feet of the place where first observed. I saw several males in confinement in New Orleans, and observed that the red of the underparts was heavily blotched and obscured by yellow, and attributed it to immaturity, but was informed that it was due to the confinement. They are called "Pops" here, the derivation of which name I could not make out.
40. *Agelaius phoeniceus* (L.) V. RED-AND-BUFF-SHOULDERED BLACKBIRD. — Abundant in swampy places.
41. *Sturnella magna* (L.) Sw. MEADOW LARK. — Common in old fields. Their note seemed to me to be different from that of the Kentucky bird.
42. *Icterus spurius* (L.) Bp. ORCHARD ORIOLE. — Common about open ground.
43. *Icterus galbula* (L.) Cones. BALTIMORE ORIOLE. — Observed several singing in shade trees in Bayou Sara and St. Francisville.
44. *Quiscalus purpureus* (Bartr.) Licht. PURPLE GRACKLE. — A common Grackle about the river and bayou at Bayou Sara is referred to this form, as the one found forty or fifty miles down the river is according to Dr. Langdon the Purple, and not the Bronzed Grackle.
45. *Corvus frugivorus* Bartr. COMMON CROW. — Common.
46. *Cyanocitta cristata* (L.) Strickl. BLUE JAY. — Common.
47. *Tyrannus carolinensis* (L.) Temm. KINGBIRD; BEE MARTIN. — Common.
48. *Myiarchus crinitus* (L.) Cab. GREAT-CRESTED FLYCATCHER. — A common and conspicuous inhabitant of yards and orchards.
49. *Contopus virens* (L.) Cab. WOOD PEWEE. — Common in dense timber.
50. *Empidonax acadicus* (Gm.) Bd. ACADIAN FLYCATCHER. — Common in same places as last.
51. *Trochilus colubris* L. RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD. — Very abundant about cultivated ground.
52. *Chætura pelagica* (L.) Boie. CHIMNEY SWIFT. — Common.
53. *Antrostomus carolinensis* (Gm.) Gould. CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW. — Heard but one, on the night of the 19th, near the house, but I am told that they are quite common.

54. *Chordeiles popetue* (V.) Bd. NIGHT HAWK.—Saw one about dusk on the evening of the 19th, high in air, giving the peculiar call common to the males during the breeding season.

55. *Picus pubescens* L. DOWNY WOODPECKER.—Only two individuals were observed during my visit.

56. *Hylotomus pileatus* (L.) Bd. PILEATED WOODPECKER.—Not observed, but it is said to be common in heavy timber along the borders of the swamp.

57. *Centurus carolinensis* (L.) Bp. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER.—Rather common. At the time of my departure a pair had begun digging a hole for their nest in a large chince tree within thirty yards of the house.

58. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* (L.) Sw. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER.—A familiar and common bird here; preferring open to densely wooded country.

59. *Colaptes auratus* (L.) Sw. YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER.—Not observed. Mr. Wederstraudt and others pronounce it an abundant bird here.

60. *Ceryle alcyon* (L.) Boie. BELTED KINGFISHER.—Common in open places along Alexander's Creek and its branches. A clutch of six fresh eggs was taken from a hole in a perpendicular bank on the 16th. The orifice was about thirty-five feet from the bottom, and three and a half from the top of the bank. The hole extended horizontally into the bank for a distance of six feet. The old birds circled around a few times after we began digging for the eggs, and then flew off, apparently unconcerned at our operations.

61. *Coccyzus americanus* (L.) Bp. YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO.—One individual observed on the 19th in a large live oak near the house. In song.

62. *Conurus carolinensis* (L.) Kuhl. CAROLINA PARAKEET.—Not seen by me. Gov. Wickliffe says that twenty years ago it was quite common here at times in large flocks, and Mr. Wederstraudt has several times observed it within the last few years, but never more than two or three together at a time. About eighteen months ago he saw one in an orchard near "Wyoming."

63. *Scops asio* (L.) Bp. LITTLE SCREECH OWL.—Found here, according to Mr. Wederstraudt.

64. *Bubo virginianus* (Gm.) Bp. GREAT-HORNED OWL.—Given as a common inhabitant by Mr. Wederstraudt.

65. *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis* (Gm.) Ridgw. AMERICAN OSPREY; FISH HAWK.—Often seen here, according to the natives.

66. *Haliaetus leucocephalus* (L.) Savig. BALD EAGLE.—Said to occasionally occur here.

67. *Cathartes aura* (L.) Illig. TURKEY BUZZARD.—Common.

68. *Catharista atrata* (Wils.) Less. BLACK VULTURE; CARRION CROW.—Very abundant. I flushed thirty or forty, one day, from the carcass of a dead horse.

69. *Zenaidura carolinensis* (L.) Bp. MOURNING DOVE.—Abundant about open places. I took a clutch of two fresh eggs on the 19th from a nest on a horizontal limb of a water oak, eight feet from the ground.
70. *Ortyx virginianus* (L.) Bp. BOB-WHITE; AMERICAN QUAIL.—Abundant in pairs about cultivated ground. They are not much hunted here as the shooting is very difficult, for when flushed they immediately make for the thickets.
71. *Ardea herodias* L. GREAT BLUE HERON.—One was seen on the 19th flying towards the swamp.
72. *Herodias alba egretta* (Gm.) Ridgw. AMERICAN EGRÉT.—A flock of eight was observed on the 19th flying towards the swamp.
73. *Eutoides virescens* (L.) Bp. GREEN HERON.—A common bird about the creeks and ponds.
74. *Oxyechus vociferus* (L.) Reich. KILLDEER.—Saw a party of eight on the creek. They were very tame.
75. *Philohela minor* (Gm.) Gray. AMERICAN WOODCOCK.—Not observed. Said to be common here in the fall, when they are hunted in the cotton fields at night with torches.
76. *Gallinago media wilsoni* (Tenn.) Ridgw. WILSON'S SNIPE.—Not observed, but said to be common here in early spring.
77. *Rhyacophilus solitarius* (Wils.) Cass. SOLITARY SANDPIPER.—Two individuals were several times noted about a pond of stagnant water.
78. *Tringoides macularius* (L.) Gray. SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—Several times observed along the creeks.
76. *Rallus elegans* Aud. RED-BREASTED RAIL.—One several times seen in a small pond thickly overgrown with small trees, water-lillies etc.
80. *Rallus virginianus* L. VIRGINIA RAIL.—One seen in same place as the last. Both eluded capture.
81. *Fulica americana* Gm. AMERICAN COOT.—Not observed, but said to be common here in fall and early spring. Known here by the Creole name of "Poulet Dean."
82. *Anas boschas* L. MALLARD.—Not observed, but it is said to be common here during the migrations.
83. *Querquedula discors* (L.) Steph. BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—Two were shot out of a flock of eight on the 16th on Alexander's Creek.
84. *Aix sponsa* (L.) Boie. WOOD-DUCK; SUMMER DUCK.—Not observed, but common in the swamp, I am informed.
85. *Pelecanus fuscus* L. BROWN PELICAN.—Said to breed in the lakes above Bayou Sara.
86. *Podilymbus podiceps* (L.) Lawr. THICK-BILLED GREBE.—Not observed, but well known here.