

LIST OF BIRDS OBSERVED ON THE UPPER TOKLAT
RIVER NEAR MT. MCKINLEY, ALASKA, 1907-1908.

BY CHARLES SHELDON.

THE birds noted in this list were observed incidentally while hunting and studying the habits of some of the larger animals at the head of the Middle Fork of Toklat River, Alaska, practically at the north base of Mount McKinley in the main Alaskan range, latitude about $63^{\circ} 30'$. The river has its sources in the glaciers of the main range and flows through four high ranges before it emerges outside, where the main body of the timber ends. From its entrance into the outside range, however, there is a fringe of spruces on both sides from two to three hundred yards wide extending up the mountain slopes and thus continuing to within a few miles of the source. I built my cabin in the extreme upper end of this tongue of timber, 10 miles above the point where the river emerges from the outside range. The birds mentioned in this list were observed at and above that point, mostly above all timber. The variety of bird life in the region is not great. I arrived about the first of August, 1907, and left June 11, 1908. Careful attention was given to recording the spring arrivals, but the fall departures, in most cases, were not observed. By the latter part of September, 1907, all birds but the residents had gone, except in the few cases mentioned. The dates given show when the bird was first seen in the spring of 1908 or last seen in the fall of 1907. Thirty miles below, in the vast timbered area, bird life may be more varied and abundant.

The river is a silt-laden stream, dashing swiftly and often in several channels through a broad glacial valley with wide bars extending from a quarter to a half mile on each side. In some places willows grow abundantly; in others there is grass, but most of the country is bare. The mountains are high and rugged, with much snow on the north slopes the year round; they are usually bordered by narrow rolling hills, all above timber, and contain numerous small lakes of a few acres only. The trees are spruces and willows; willows often extend well up on the slopes and up the

creeks. The poplar is practically absent. Dwarf birch grows abundantly in places.

The specimens of birds collected were presented to the U. S. Biological Survey.

BIRDS OF TOKLAT RIVER REGION.

Larus argentatus. HERRING GULL.— Commonly breeding June 12, 40 miles below my cabin.

Larus brachyrhynchus. SHORT-BILLED GULL.— Seen commonly in pairs along the bars in spring. Probably breeds. First seen May 16.

Sterna paradisæa. ARCTIC TERN.— Common summer resident about the small lakes in the rolling country above timberline. Breeds. First seen May 30. Mature young observed August 2.

Anas platyrhynchus. MALLARD.— Summer resident below the mountain ranges. One migrating pair observed May 16. About 40 miles above the mouth of the river there is a stretch of 3 miles where the water does not freeze but remains open all winter. This is the end of the salmon run. About 300 mallards were there all winter. They fed on dead salmon and salmon eggs in the pools. White men have observed these ducks wintering there for seven years. Indians tell me they have always wintered there. I visited the spot on January 3, 1908, and secured two males and a female.

Sixteen mallards wintered on Moose Creek in the open water about 100 miles southwest of those in the Toklat. These also were in open water at the head of the salmon run.

Mallards winter also just below Gulkana Lake in the outlet which flows into Copper River, and a few have been observed wintering in a small tributary of the Tanana River just below the Delta River. Undoubtedly there are many other places in the interior of Alaska where Mallards winter.

Nettion carolinense. GREEN-WINGED TEAL.— Commonly seen with young in the small lakes in the rolling country above timber. So observed in July and August.

Histrionicus histrionicus. HARLEQUIN DUCK.— One pair observed May 16.

Chen hyperborea. LESSER SNOW GOOSE.— Flock of three seen migrating October 10.

Grus canadensis. LITTLE BROWN CRANE.— Seen only in fall migration, from Sept. 10 to early October. All flocks followed the same course.

Gallinago delicata. WILSON SNIPE.— Common summer resident. Arrived May 14.

Pisobia bairdi. BAIRD SANDPIPER.— One migrating pair observed May 12.

Heteractitis incana. WANDERING TATTLER.— Very abundant in spring. Arrived May 18. A female was secured May 22. They appeared mated

in pairs and their actions showed they were preparing to breed. They were still about in abundance when I left, June 11, but probably had not begun to breed. They occurred along the river bars and at the lakes and even on the small creeks high on the mountains. Not observed in the lower country.

Bartramia longicauda. UPLAND PLOVER.—Common summer resident; breeds. Arrived May 28.

Actitis macularia. SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—Common summer resident. First observed a few miles below my cabin June 11, but undoubtedly arrived earlier. Breeds.

Numenius hudsonicus. HUDSONIAN CURLEW.—Summer resident in rolling country above timber. Arrived May 16.

Squatarola squatarola. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER.—Observed occasionally late in July about the lakes.

Ægialitis semipalmata. SEMIPALMATED PLOVER.—Common on bars in spring migration. Arrived May 17 and still about June 11.

Canachites canadensis osgoodi. ALASKA SPRUCE GROUSE.—Resident. From time to time through the winter one would appear in the woods near my cabin. Two fine males were secured in October, 1907. Abundant below, in the timbered region.

Lagopus lagopus. WILLOW PTARMIGAN.—Very abundant resident. Began to pair for breeding April 20.

Lagopus rupestris. ROCK PTARMIGAN.—A male was killed March 5 in the rolling country above timber.

Lagopus leucurus peninsularis. ALASKA WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN.—Not uncommon high on some of the mountains.

Circus hudsonius. MARSH HAWK.—Common summer resident. Arrived May 12. Breeds.

Aquila chrysaetos. GOLDEN EAGLE.—Common summer resident. Breeds, nesting in cliffs. Arrived April 8. Last observed September 21. Arrived paired and went directly to old nest and remained about it. One nest contained two eggs when I examined it April 29. When next I examined it, June 7, it contained two fledglings.

Gyrifalcon.—A large grayish hawk was observed at times through the winter, always on and about the creeks of the mountains.

Falco columbarius. PIGEON HAWK.—Common summer resident. Breeds. Arrived May 27. Large hawks were occasionally seen in summer, but the species were not recognized.

Asio flammeus. SHORT-EARED OWL.—Exceedingly abundant everywhere above timber in spring. Arrived April 30 in pairs. Breeds.

Glaux funerea richardsoni. RICHARDSON OWL.—A male killed May 4, 1908.

Bubo virginianus subsp.? HORNED OWL.—Common resident in the woods.

Nyctea nyctea. SNOWY OWL.—Very common above timber from November to early May.

Surnia ulula caparoch. AMERICAN HAWK OWL.—Common summer resident. Arrived April 10.

Ceryle alcyon. BELTED KINGFISHER.—Summer resident. Breeds. Arrived May 29.

Dryobates pubescens nelsoni. ALASKA DOWNY WOODPECKER.—Resident. Not uncommon; always seen feeding in willows and sometimes as high as willows grow in the mountains. A male secured in December, 1907.

Picoides americanus fasciatus. ALASKA THREE-TOED WOODPECKER.—Resident in spruce woods. Common. A male secured October, 1907.

Sayornis saya. SAY PHOEBE.—Common. Arrived June 5.

Pica pica hudsonia. BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE.—One seen Sept. 22 in some high cliffs.

Perisoreus canadensis fumifrons. ALASKA JAY.—Resident. Very abundant.

Corvus corax principalis. NORTHERN RAVEN.—Resident. Abundant.

Euphagus carolinus. RUSTY GRACKLE.—Summer resident. Common. Arrived May 10, when a male was secured.

Pinicola nucleator alascensis. ALASKA PINE GROSBEAK.—Common in migrations but not observed at timberline between migrations. Few seen in spring, abundant in fall. First bird to arrive in spring; paired by March 12; migrated in flocks through October; last seen November 7. A male and a female were preserved in October, 1907, and a male March 11, 1908.

Leucosticte sp.?—Common in spring migration. Arrived May 3. Seen usually high above timberline in pairs.

Acanthis linaria. REDPOLL.—Resident. All through October numerous flocks appeared at timberline, but very few remained at timberline in winter. Common below the mountain ranges in winter. Again at timberline numerous flocks appeared in spring, beginning about April 15, and continued through May. Many remained near timberline to breed. In winter it feeds exclusively among willows. Males were secured in November, 1907, and May 24, 1908.

Plectrophenax nivalis. SNOWFLAKE.—Common spring migrant. Arrived April 8, when a specimen was secured.

Calcarius lapponicus alascensis. ALASKA LONGSPUR.—Abundant in spring migration. Arrived May 12, when a male was secured.

Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli. INTERMEDIATE SPARROW.—Abundant summer resident. Arrived May 3, when a male was secured. Nest with one egg observed on a bar, in a small grass tuft. Next day, outside the ranges, 30 miles below, I found another nest on the bar with 3 young ones and one egg.

Zonotrichia coronata. GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW.—Commonly seen in spring. Arrived May 26.

Spizella monticola ochracea. WESTERN TREE SPARROW.—Summer resident. Breeds. Commonest of sparrows at timberline. Arrived April 26. Last sparrow to leave in fall, late in September.

Junco hyemalis. SLATE-COLORED JUNCO.— Common summer resident. Breeds. A male was secured April 30, 1908.

Passerella iliaca. FOX SPARROW.— Common summer resident. Arrived May 4.

Petrochelidon lunifrons. CLIFF SWALLOW.— Seen breeding in cliffs 25 miles below my cabin on June 11.

Riparia riparia. BANK SWALLOW.— Abundant summer resident. Breeds. Arrived May 18.

Lanius borealis. NORTHERN SHRIKE.— Common summer resident. Breeds. Arrived April 26.

Dendroica coronata. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER.— Common summer resident. Most abundant of warblers. Arrived May 9.

Dendroica striata. BLACK-POLL WARBLER.— Flock observed migrating, June 3.

Wilsonia pusilla pileolata. PILEOLATED WARBLER.— Common summer resident. Arrived May 20.

Anthus rubescens. PIPIT; TITLARK.— Very common summer resident. Breeds. Keeps mostly above timberline. A male secured May 12, 1908.

Cinclus mexicanus unicolor. WATER OUZEL.— Common resident. Abundant in winter on the open water where Mallards winter on the Toklat, mostly below the mountain ranges, and keeps constantly singing for two hours after dawn. Specimen secured.

Certhia familiaris montana. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CREEPER.— Male killed near cabin in woods October 21.

Penthestes hudsonicus. HUDSONIAN CHICKADEE.— Common resident.

Regulus calendula. RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET.— Common summer resident. Arrived April 29.

Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni. OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH.— Common summer resident. Arrived May 12. Keeps singing all night when breeding. A male secured May 27, 1908.

Hylocichla guttata. DWARF HERMIT THRUSH.— Summer resident; fairly common. Breeds. Arrived May 26, when a female was secured.

Planesticus migratorius. ROBIN.— Very abundant summer resident. Almost as common high in the mountains, at upper limit of willows, as it is below. Breeds usually in small spruces, occasionally in willows and on the ground. Arrived May 3. Last seen October 4.

Ixoreus naevius meruloides. PALE VARIED THRUSH.— Common summer resident. Breeds. Arrived May 15. Last seen October 7.