

## NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF WESTERN NORTH DAKOTA.

BY IRA N. GABRIELSON AND STANLEY G. JEWETT.

WESTERN North Dakota, for the purpose of this paper, includes the Missouri River bottoms as far north as Sanish and all the territory south and west of the river. Generally speaking, this is a rolling prairie country dotted with occasional buttes rising high above the surrounding plains. The Killdeer Mountains are the largest of these and support a considerable growth of oak, alder, aspen, white birch, and other shrubs. The brakes of the Missouri River and the badlands of the Little Missouri also contain some timber—cottonwood and willow being the common trees, although others are present. In the bottoms, thickets of Buffalo-berry, buck brush, and wild rose often swarm with birds.

Mr. Jewett spent the months of June, July, and part of August of 1913, collecting for the U. S. Biological Survey. He worked from Sentinel Butte, Medora, and below Medora on the Little Missouri, at Oakdale in the Killdeer Mountains, Glen Ullin on the prairie, and Mandan and Fort Clark on the Missouri River.

Mr. Gabrielson was in the territory from July 22 to September 9, 1918, engaged in rodent control work for the U. S. Biological Survey. While in the district his work was at Bismarck, the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation on both sides of the Missouri, Oakdale in the Killdeer Mountains, and Medora, Killdeer, Dickinson, New England, and Amidon on the prairie country southwest of the Missouri. As most of Gabrielson's time was spent at the four latter places on the plains and Jewett remained in the river valley, the two sets of notes are, to a large extent, complementary.

Gabrielson had a paper based on his notes nearly completed when the discovery was made that the two sets of notes covered nearly the same district. It was therefore decided to revise this paper, incorporating Jewett's notes and making it a joint paper. This work has largely been carried out by Gabrielson, each author, however, assuming responsibility for his records.

The authors' initials are used to designate their records; where no initials appear both recorded the bird from that locality or recorded it as common over the territory covered.

**Podilymbus podiceps.** PIED-BILLED GREBE.—A single Pied-billed Grebe was observed diving about in a small roadside pool between Dickinson and Medora on August 17. (I.N.G.)

**Sterna forsteri.** FORSTER'S TERN.—Two individuals observed over a swampy creek bottom on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation on July 31. (I.N.G.)

**Anas platyrhynchos.** MALLARD.—Fort Clark, July 30. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, twelve noted on Missouri, July 22. (I.N.G.) Bowman, single drake in small creek, September 9. (I.N.G.)

**Querquedula discors.** BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—Observed on Little Missouri below Medora, June 18. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 22. (I.N.G.) Bowman, September 9. (I.N.G.)

**Spatula clypeata.** SHOVELLER.—On Little Missouri River below Medora, June 18. (S.G.J.)

**Botaurus lentiginosus.** BITTERN.—Two birds were flushed in small creek bottoms on the Berthold Reservation south of the Missouri River on July 31. (I.N.G.)

**Ardea herodias herodias.** GREAT BLUE HERON.—A single bird on July 27, and another on July 30, near Elbowoods on the Reservation. (I.N.G.) Fort Clark, July 28 and 30. (S.G.J.)

**Fulica americana.** COOT.—One at Mandan, July 13. (S.G.J.)

**Steganopus tricolor.** WILSON'S PHALAROPE.—One flushed from a small slough near the Ree ferry across the Missouri on July 30. (I.N.G.)

**Pisobia maculata.** PECTORAL SANDPIPER.—Several in the slough with the Wilson's Phalarope on July 30. (I.N.G.)

**Limosa fedoa.** MARBLED GODWIT.—A single bird feeding in a small pool south of Bowman, on September 9. (I.N.G.)

**Helodromas solitarius cinnamomeus.** WESTERN SOLITARY SANDPIPER.—Several on July 30 and 31, along Missouri south of Elbowoods, and on August 11 and 12 along Little Missouri north of Killdeer. (I.N.G.)

**Bartramia longicauda.** UPLAND PLOVER.—Not an abundant bird but well distributed over the district as the following records show. Little Missouri below Medora, June 21, Mandan, July 14, Sentinel Butte, August 2. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 22; Elbowoods, July 26 and 27; Little Missouri north of Killdeer, August 6 and 12. (I.N.G.)

**Actitis macularia.** SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—Little Missouri below Medora, June 19, and Glen Ullin, July 10. (S.G.J.) Medora, four individuals, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Oxyechus vociferus.** KILLDEER.—Both authors found the Killdeer quite common at all points visited.

**Tympanuchus americanus americanus.** PRAIRIE CHICKEN.—Noted at Fort Clark on east side of Missouri on July 16. (S.G.J.)

**Pedioecetes phasianellus campestris.** PRAIRIE SHARP-TAILED GROUSE.—Quite common in the badlands and brakes of the Missouri. Particularly common on the Indian Reservation. Recorded by both authors at most points visited.

**Centrocerus urophasianus.** SAGE HEN.—Sentinel Butte, August 2, 3, and 4. (S.G.J.)

**Zenaidura macroura marginella.** WESTERN MOURNING DOVE.—Common bird throughout the entire district. It was one of the common and characteristic birds of the prairie.

**Cathartes aura septentrionalis.** TURKEY VULTURE.—Little Missouri below Medora, June 20. (S.G.J.) Four on August 11, and one on August 16 in Little Missouri badlands north of Killdeer. (I.N.G.)

**Circus hudsonius.** MARSH HAWK.—Little Missouri below Medora, June 18; Mandan, July 13, and Fort Clark, July 30. (S.G.J.) Common in all districts on the prairie, being the most abundant hawk. (I.N.G.)

**Accipiter velox.** SHARP-SHINNED HAWK.—Nest seven feet up in small oak tree contained three small downy young, near Oakdale, on June 28. (S.G.J.) Little Missouri bottoms north of Killdeer, August 7, Marmath, August 20. (I.N.G.)

**Accipiter cooperi.** COOPER'S HAWK.—An immature bird sat on a fence post while we drove slowly along the road past it. Dickinson, August 16; Marmath, August 20. (I.N.G.)

**Buteo swainsoni.** SWAINSON'S HAWK.—Sentinel Butte, June 5; Little Missouri below Medora, June 21; Glen Ullin, July 8. (S.G.J.) Bowman, September 9. (I.N.G.)

**Archibuteo ferrugineus.** FERRUGINOUS ROUGH-LEG.—Quite common, found sitting on a post or tree watching a prairie dog town. One collected at Elbowoods on July 27. (I.N.G.) Two flying over Sentinel Butte, August 3. (S.G.J.)

**Aquila chrysaetos.** GOLDEN EAGLE.—Two nests found at Oakdale on July 2. (S.G.J.) Sentinel Butte, August 3. (S.G.J.)

**Falco mexicanus.** PRAIRIE FALCON.—One noted south of Bowman on September 9, near the South Dakota line. (I.N.G.)

**Falco peregrinus anatum.** DUCK HAWK.—Oakdale, June 23 and 28, and Sentinel Butte, August 2. (S.G.J.) On June 23, Jewett took an adult and three young of this species at Oakdale. The young flew from the nest and one was caught alive.

**Cerchneis sparveria sparveria.** SPARROW HAWK.—Common throughout the entire district.

**Asio flammeus.** SHORT-EARED OWL.—A single bird noted about dusk between Garrison and Elbowoods the evening of July 22. (I.N.G.)

**Otus asio** sub-sp. (?) SCREECH OWL.—Little Missouri River bottoms, August 3. (S.G.J.) No specimens were secured and therefore we have not attempted to name the subspecies.

**Bubo virginianus occidentalis.** WESTERN HORNED OWL.—Sentinel Butte, collected one June 7, saw another June 8; Little Missouri below Medora, June 18; and Oakdale, June 28. (S.G.J.) Dr. H. C. Oberholser has examined the specimen collected and pronounced it to be *occidentalis*.

**Nyctea nyctea.** SNOWY OWL.—Sentinel Butte, June 5, mounted specimen. A large number in possession of J. D. Allen, taxidermist at Mandan. (S.G.J.)

**Speotyto cunicularia hypogaea.** BURROWING OWL.—A very common resident of the Dickinson, Killdeer, and New England districts. Nearly every prairie dog town had its quota of these Owls and many colonies were noted far from any dog towns. This Owl's curious call was one of the characteristic sounds of the plains country. (I.N.G.) Noted Mandan, July 14. (S.G.J.)

**Coccyzus erythrophthalmus.** BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO.—Noted on Little Missouri, June 18, and one collected at Medora on June 16. (S.G.J.)

**Ceryle alcyon alcyon.** BELTED KINGFISHER.—Mandan, July 11, and Fort Clark, July 23 and 30. (S.G.J.) Missouri River, near Elbowoods, July 30 and 31, and on Little Missouri, August 12. (I.N.G.)

**Dryobates villosus leucomelas.** NORTHERN HAIRY WOODPECKER.—Fort Clark, on July 17 and 23. (S.G.J.) Elbowoods, July 26. (I.N.G.) Specimens collected by Jewett were identified as *septentrionalis* by Dr. Oberholser. This is equivalent to *leucomelas* of the 1910 Check-list.

**Dryobates pubescens** sub-sp. (?) DOWNY WOODPECKER.—As we have no specimens no attempt has been made to name the subspecies. Fort Clark, July 23. (S.G.J.) Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Melanerpes erythrocephalus.** RED-HEADED WOODPECKER.—Sentinel Butte, June 11; Medora, June 12, 14, 15, 16; Little Missouri below Medora, June 18 and 19. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 21, and Medora, August 11. (I.N.G.)

**Colaptes auratus luteus.** NORTHERN FLICKER.—Both the Northern Flicker and the Red-shafted Flicker were common enough with perhaps this species the more common.

**Colaptes cafer collaris.** RED-SHAFTED FLICKER.—As noted under the preceding species both forms were common. The Red-shafted Flicker was observed regularly over the plains district. Noted by Jewett at Oakdale, June 23, and Fort Clark on July 29.

**Chordeiles virginianus sennetti.** SENNETT'S NIGHTHAWK.—One of the common birds of the prairie country. At times every post along the road held one of these birds. It was noted generally throughout the territory by both observers.

**Chaetura pelagica.** CHIMNEY SWIFT.—Common at Bismarck on July 21 and two at Sanish on July 27. (I.N.G.)

**Tyrannus tyrannus.** KINGBIRD.—Very common throughout the territory. One of the characteristic prairie birds.

**Tyrannus verticalis.** ARKANSAS KINGBIRD.—Common throughout the district, though not so abundant as the Kingbird. A nest containing three nearly fledged young was found near Elbowoods on July 22. (I.N.G.)

**Sayornis sayus.** SAY'S PHOEBE.—Noted at Sentinel Butte, June 5; Oakdale, June 23; Glen Ullin, July 7; Mandan, July 14; and Fort Clark, July 18. Two nests with young at Sentinel Butte on August 2. (S.G.J.)

**Myiochanes richardsoni richardsoni.** WESTERN WOOD PEWEE.—Bismarck, July 21, and Little Missouri north of Killdeer, on August 7. (I.N.G.)

**Empidonax minimus.** LEAST FLYCATCHER.—One at Oakdale, July 1. (S.G.J.)

**Otocoris alpestris enthymia.** SASKATCHEWAN HORNED LARK.—Jewett's specimens from Sentinel Butte have been identified as *enthymia* by Dr. H. C. Oberholser. The Horned Lark and Chestnut-collared Longspur were the two most abundant birds of the prairie country. Recorded from every locality visited by either observer.

**Pica pica hudsonia.** MAGPIE.—Very common along the river bottoms. In a land where most of the common breeding birds are exceedingly inconspicuous and commonplace, two species stand out: the Burrowing Owl on the prairie and the Magpie along the streams. Go where you will along the rivers you will find the Magpies whispering and peering about from the shelter of some thick tree or scolding harshly from a safe vantage point in the top of some giant cottonwood. A flock of them furnishes endless amusement to an observer as they go poking about the garbage piles and buildings of the ranches. Knowing they are not welcome they soon become wary, but the good things to be found about the dwellings tempt them to return time after time and it must be admitted that they usually make a safe getaway. Every Indian camp has its Magpie attendants. The Indians tell tales of cattle with vitality lowered by severe winters, being attacked by the Magpies which eat great holes in their backs.

**Cyanocitta cristata cristata.** BLUE JAY.—Not common. Oakdale, June 28 and July 1. (S.G.J.) Four birds seen about Elbowoods, July 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31, and two on Little Missouri bottoms north of Killdeer, August 7 and 11. (I.N.G.)

**Corvus brachyrhynchos hesperis.** WESTERN CROW.—Common throughout the territory.

**Dolichonyx oryzivorus.** BOBOLINK.—Little Missouri bottoms below Medora, June 21. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 21; Elbowoods, July 22 and 27; and Killdeer, August 13. (I.N.G.)

**Molothrus ater ater.** COWBIRD.—Common throughout the territory.

**Agelaius phoeniceus arctolegus.** GIANT RED-WING.—Common throughout the territory wherever suitable conditions were found. Jewett's specimens of breeding birds from Medora were identified as *arctolegus* by Dr. Oberholser.

**Sturnella neglecta.** WESTERN MEADOWLARK.—Common bird throughout the territory. Noted at every point visited.

**Icterus spurius.** ORCHARD ORIOLE.—One observed in Bismarck on July 21. (I.N.G.)

**Icterus bullocki.** BULLOCK'S ORIOLE.—One collected at Medora, June 15. (S.G.J.)

**Euphagus cyanocephalus.** BREWER'S BLACKBIRD.—Common in the river bottoms. Both observers found it in such places. A flock of a dozen or more were found far out on the prairie about a homesteader's cabin near Amidon on August 20. (I.N.G.)

**Quiscalus quiscula aeneus.** BRONZED GRACKLE.—Common about ranch houses and river bottoms throughout the district.

**Loxia curvirostra minor.** CROSSBILL.—Flock flying over in Little Missouri bottoms, August 3. (S.G.J.)

**Astragalinus tristis tristis.** GOLDFINCH.—Common along the rivers

**Calcarius ornatus.** CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR.—An exceedingly abundant bird of the region. In walking through the grass on the Berthold Reservation a constantly increasing flock of these Longspurs was flushed. (I.N.G.)

**Rhynchophanes mccowni.** McCOWN'S LONGSPUR.—Sentinel Butte and Fallis ranch, August 2. (S.G.J.)

**Poocetes gramineus confinus.** WESTERN VESPER SPARROW.—Common throughout the district. Mr. Jewett's specimens, collected at Oakdale, have been identified as *confinus* by Dr. H. C. Oberholser.

**Passerculus sandwichensis** subspecies? SAVANNAH SPARROW.—One Savannah Sparrow noted at Bismark, July 21, but not taken. (I.N.G.)

**Ammodramus bairdi.** BAIRD'S SPARROW.—In the low spots on the prairie where the grass grows taller, I found these little sparrows to be fairly common. They were particularly abundant on that part of the Berthold Indian Reservation lying north of the Missouri. Specimens were collected on July 29. (I.N.G.) One was collected at Sentinel Butte. (S.G.J.)

**Ammodramus savannarum bimaculatus.** WESTERN GRASSHOPPER SPARROW.—Noted below Medora on the Little Missouri, June 21. (S.G.J.)

**Chondestes grammacus strigatus.** WESTERN LARK SPARROW.—Fairly common over the entire district.

**Spizella passerina arizonae.** WESTERN CHIPPING SPARROW.—Several noted about a ranch house near Medora. (I.N.G.)

**Spizella pallida.** CLAY-COLORED SPARROW.—Observed at Medora, June 12, 13, and 14, and on Little Missouri below Medora, June 19 and 20. (S.G.J.) Little Missouri above Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Spizella pusilla arenacea.** WESTERN FIELD SPARROW.—Field Sparrows, presumably *arenacea*, were observed at Bismarck on July 21 and Medora; August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Melospiza melodia juddi.** DAKOTA SONG SPARROW.—Both observers found it common in the Missouri bottoms. Dr. Oberholser has identified Jewett's skins taken at Fort Clark as *juddi*.

**Melospiza lincolni lincolni.** LINCOLN'S SPARROW.—One noted at Medora on August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Pipilo maculatus arcticus.** ARCTIC TOWHEE.—Specimens collected at Elbowoods were *arcticus*. (I.N.G.) Jewett's specimens from Oakdale have been identified as *arcticus* by Dr. Oberholser. Towhees were common in river bottoms over the entire district.

**Zamelodia ludoviciana.** ROSE-BREADED GROSBK.—Noted at Mandan, July 11. (S.G.J.)

**Zamelodia melanocephala.** BLACK-HEADED GROSBK.—Sentinel Butte, June 5 and 8; Medora, June 12; and Fort Clark, July 17, 18, 23, and 30. (S.G.J.)

***Paserina cyanea.*** INDIGO BUNTING.—One at Oakdale in the Killdeer Mountains on July 6. (I.N.G.)

***Passerina amoena.*** LAZULI BUNTING.—Sentinel Butte, June 5, 8, and 9; Medora, June 11, 14, and 16; Little Missouri below Medora, June 18; Oakdale, June 22; and Fort Clark, July 19 and 28. (S.G.J.) Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

***Calamospiza melanocorys.*** LARK BUNTING.—Up to August 20 they were exceedingly abundant around Dickinson and Killdeer. Small flocks of them fed in the grain fields and along the roads. I also found them common at Elbowoods in July. (I.N.G.) Found at Sentinel Butte June 6, 8, and 9; Medora 11, 14, and 16; and along Little Missouri, June 18. (S.G.J.)

***Passer domesticus.*** ENGLISH SPARROW.—Found throughout the district even at remote farms and ranches in the badlands.

***Progne subis subis.*** PURPLE MARTIN.—Breeding at Bismarck, July 21; Elbowoods, July 23-26; and found at Killdeer, August 1 and 2. (I.N.G.) Noted at Mandan, July 14; and Fort Clark, July 23. (S.G.J.)

***Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons.*** CLIFF SWALLOW.—Two individuals south of Sanish, July 27. (I.N.G.) Noted on Little Missouri below Medora, June 21. (S.G.J.)

***Hirundo erythrogastra.*** BARN SWALLOW.—Found quite commonly about ranch buildings in Dickinson and Killdeer country. (I.N.G.) At ranch below Medora, June 18. (S.G.J.)

***Iridoprocne bicolor.*** TREE SWALLOW.—Near Elbowoods, July 26 and 27, and in Little Missouri badlands north of Killdeer on August 7. (I.N.G.)

***Riparia riparia.*** BANK SWALLOW.—Noted at Garrison on July 22; Ree Ferry, July 30; and Killdeer, July 31 and August 12. (I.N.G.)

***Bombycilla cedrorum.*** CEDAR WAXWING.—Pair at Oakdale on August 2 and small flocks at Medora on August 16. (I.N.G.)

***Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides.*** WHITE-RUMPED SHRIKE.—Shrikes noted at Garrison, July 22; Little Missouri north of Killdeer, August 7; and Amidon, August 20. (I.N.G.) Observed at Sentinel Butte, June 5; Medora, June 15; and Little Missouri below Medora, June 18. (S.G.J.) Jewett collected specimens at Glen Ullin which have been identified as *excubitorides* by Dr. Oberholser.

***Vireosylva olivacea.*** RED-EYED VIREO.—Oakdale July 1, and Fort Clark, July 16 and 17. (S.G.J.) Little Missouri north of Killdeer, August 7; and Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

***Vireosylva gilva swainsoni.*** WESTERN WARBLING VIREO.—Medora, June 12 and 15, and below Medora, June 18. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 21. (I.N.G.)

***Mniotilta varia.*** BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER.—One noted at Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

***Dendroica aestiva aestiva.*** YELLOW WARBLER.—Common throughout the wooded parts of the river valleys.

***Dendroica auduboni auduboni.*** AUDUBON'S WARBLER.—Noted in Little Missouri bottoms, August 3. (S.G.J.)

**Seiurus aurocapillus.** OVENBIRD.—One with nest and three fresh eggs at Oakdale, July 1. (S.G.J.)

**Geothlypis trichas occidentalis.** WESTERN YELLOW-THROAT.—Common in river bottoms. Jewett's specimens have been determined as this subspecies by Dr. Oberholser.

**Icteria virens longicauda.** LONG-TAILED CHAT.—Fort Clark, July 17, 25 and 30. (S.G.J.) Noted at Bismarck, July 21. (I.N.G.)

**Setophaga ruticilla.** REDSTART.—Oakdale, June 22, 25, and July 1; and Fort Clark, July 30. (S.G.J.) Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Anthus spraguei.** SPRAGUE'S PIPIT.—Seven collected near Bullion Butte, August 4. (S.G.J.) Quite common at Elbowoods, July 27 and 30; and Killdeer, July 31, August 2, 5, and 12. One found dead, August 5, from eating prairie dog poison. (I.N.G.)

**Oreoscoptes montanus.** SAGE THRASHER.—One seen near Medora on June 16. (S.G.J.)

**Dumetella carolinensis.** CATBIRD.—Common in river valleys throughout the district.

**Toxostoma rufum.** BROWN THRASHER.—Found commonly in river bottoms by both observers.

**Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus.** ROCK WREN.—Found at Sentinel Butte, June 5; Medora, June 11, 12, 14, and 16; Oakdale, June 13; Glen Ullin, July 8; and Mandan, July 14. (S.G.J.)

**Troglodytes aëdon parkmani.** WESTERN HOUSE WREN.—Sentinel Butte, June 8 and 12; Little Missouri below Medora, June 20 and 21; Oakdale, July 1; and Mandan, July 13. (S.G.J.) Elbowoods, July 27 and 30; Killdeer, August 5; and Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Penthestes atricapillus septentrionalis.** LONG-TAILED CHICKADEE.—Oakdale, June 23 and 24; and Fort Clark, July 19 and 30. (S.G.J.) Bismarck, July 21; Little Missouri north of Killdeer, August 7; and Medora, August 16. (I.N.G.)

**Hylocichla fuscescens salicicola.** WILLOW THRUSH.—Specimens collected at Oakdale, July 1, have been identified by Dr. Oberholser as of this subspecies. (S.G.J.)

**Planesticus migratorius migratorius.** ROBIN.—Common in river bottoms throughout the district.

**Sialia sialis sialis.** BLUEBIRD.—Noted on Little Missouri bottoms below Medora, June 20. (S.G.J.) Elbowoods, July 22 and 30; and Bismarck, July 21. (I.N.G.)

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