

Alaska Longspur in New Mexico.—In the recent book entitled 'The Birds of New Mexico' by Florence Merriam Bailey, I fail to find any mention of the Alaska Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus alascensis*) having been taken within the borders of the State.

I collected a female, No. 86128 Coll. Acad. Nat. Sciences, Phila., March 25, 1929. It was feeding with a flock of Chestnut-collared Longspurs near Slaughter's Lake, an artificial lake for watering sheep, ten miles southwest of Picacho, Lincoln Co., New Mexico, at an elevation of 5500 feet.—WHARTON HUBER, *Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Nelson's Sparrow Nesting in Minnesota.—A nest and eggs of Nelson's Sparrow (*Ammospiza nelsoni*) were collected on June 21, 1929, in Kittson County, Minnesota, the county occupying the extreme northwest corner of the state. The bird was known to nest in this area from a juvenile bird collected in Marshall County during June of 1928, and the present record came as the result of a week's concentrated search.

The section of the county where the nest was found is made up largely of extensive, swampy lakes bordered here and there with strips of tamarack. Poplar thickets and a few bits of prairie occupy the higher ground. A number of the shallow lakes have been entirely overgrown with a more or less floating layer of sphagnum, and on this, wiry sedges are thriving so as to give the uncertain expanse the appearance of a perfectly firm, level meadow. It was along the border of such a meadow of about two square miles in extent that the nest was found. The meadow itself was covered with about six inches of water but the nest was built just above the water level where the soil, although very damp, was free from standing water. It was constructed of coarse grass lined with finer grasses and rested on the ground, being not in the least sunken. A tiny dead willow a few inches high supported one edge of the nest but no definite clump of vegetation surrounded it. The three eggs were perfectly fresh and were identical in size, measuring .72 by .50 inches. Their ground color was a quite definite bluish-green. A rather dense wreath of light brown specks mixed with purplish encircled the large end while the remainder of the egg was sparsely but evenly speckled with light brown.

Before the nest was disturbed, several hours of waiting were necessary to allow the bird to return in order that she might be collected immediately upon flushing from the eggs. The female bird, nest, and eggs are now in the Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.—W. J. BRECKENRIDGE AND WM. KILGORE, *Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.*

The Genus *Brachospiza* not Distinct from *Zonotrichia*.¹—In 'The Auk,' vol. 15, 1898, p. 224, Mr. Ridgway created the monotypic genus *Brachospiza* for the reception of *Fringilla capensis* Müller, and from that date forward, the name has been universally applied to the single, wide-

¹ Contribution from the California Institute of Technology.

ranging, highly variable species. Originally, comparison was made with *Melospiza* Baird. Later, in part 1 of 'Birds of North and Middle America,' 1901, p. 346, *Brachyspiza* was again primarily compared with *Melospiza* and secondarily with *Zonotrichia* Swainson, in which latter genus *Fringilla capensis* had usually been placed until the erection of *Brachyspiza*.

The present writer has recently had occasion to investigate the status of *Brachyspiza* and has come to the conclusion that it is not sufficiently different from *Zonotrichia* to justify recognition. Even as a sub-genus its standing appears doubtful, unless two other sub-genera—one to include only *albicollis*, the other to include *leucophrys*, *gambeli*, *coronata* and *querula*—are to be recognized also. The differential characters ascribed to *Brachyspiza* as compared to *Zonotrichia* are "relatively much shorter and more rounded wing, much shorter tail and longer tarsi." Examination of all the species involved does not support such a claim. The accompanying table of proportions is based on five mature specimens of each form, selected only in the sense that they are in reasonably fresh, fully acquired plumage. Five specimens of each would seem to be an ample number where only generic differences are involved, but to make sure on this point, fifteen specimens each of *costaricensis*, *albicollis* and *querula* were measured as a check after the table was completed. The final differences between five and fifteen specimens of each of these forms showed in every case a result varying less than one-half of one percent. For the sake of convenience races are treated as species.

Relative proportions of Tail to Wing		Relative proportions of Tarsus to Wing		Relative proportions of Tarsus to Tail	
<i>albicollis</i>	101%	<i>albicollis</i>	37%	<i>albicollis</i>	36%
<i>nuttalli</i>	97	<i>nuttalli</i>	32	<i>costaricensis</i>	36
<i>querula</i>	97	<i>costaricensis</i>	32	<i>canicapilla</i>	34
<i>leucophrys</i>	94	<i>querula</i>	31	<i>nuttalli</i>	33
<i>coronata</i>	94	<i>coronata</i>	30	<i>coronata</i>	32
<i>gambelii</i>	93	<i>gambelii</i>	29	<i>gambelii</i>	31
<i>costaricensis</i>	90	<i>leucophrys</i>	28	<i>querula</i>	31
<i>canicapilla</i>	77	<i>canicapilla</i>	26	<i>leucophrys</i>	30

Note that between "short-winged" and "long-winged" races of *capensis* represented by *costaricensis* and *canicapilla* respectively, there exists a far greater difference in wing and tail ratios than is the case among the other forms; also that in this respect *albicollis* differs more from *nuttalli* than does *gambelii* from *costaricensis*. As to "roundness" of wing, the five *costaricensis* are duplicated in wing formula by four out of the five *albicollis* and one of the *nuttalli*. The wing tip, that is the distance from the tips of the longest secondaries to the tips of the longest primaries, ranges in length proportional to the total wing from 22% in *querula* and *canicapilla* down to 16% in *albicollis* and 10% in *costaricensis*.

Finally, through an intimate field acquaintance, I can class *costaricensis*, at least, as a *Zonotrichia* in actions, song, nesting, and the ecologic niche occupied.—A. J. VANROSSEM, *Pasadena, California*.

Savannah Sparrow Nesting near Reading, Pa.—Throughout the month of June 1929, I frequently saw Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis savanna*) in a dense growth of weeds along the west side of the newly formed Ontelaunee Dam near Reading, and from the fact that pairs were usually noted together, I became suspicious that they were breeding nearby.

I devoted several hours on successive visits to searching for one of the suspected nests, but due to the tangled growth and the noncommittal actions of the birds, was about to give up the search, when on July 14, Mr. Byron Nunemacher and I saw on the east bank of the dam, opposite from where the first birds were observed, two pairs carrying mouthfuls of green "worms," and displaying every indication of having young.

A careful search of the surrounding area revealed one of the young, evidently just out of the nest, and capable of fluttering but a few inches at a time.

This is, I believe, the first recorded instance of the nesting of this Sparrow in southeastern Pennsylvania since the publication of Stone's 'Birds of Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey' (1894), when Dr. John W. Detweiler reported it as breeding at East Bethlehem, and may indicate an extension of its breeding range, as noticed recently in the neighborhood of New York City by Ludlow Griscom. At least four pairs were present in this locality.—EARL L. POOLE, *Public Museum, Reading, Pa.*

Another Cardinal in Colorado.—This species is a rare bird for this state; its recent occurrence at Littleton, Colorado, was reported by the writer in 'The Auk' of January, 1927, and now the presence of another individual of this species in the state needs to be recorded. It has been learned recently that a Cardinal has been resident during the past three years in a small town not very far north of Denver. The exact location of this bird's home is not included in this report because it happened that within a short time after the Littleton Cardinal was recorded it disappeared. The writer has the best of reasons for believing that this bird was shot for, or by, a Denver collector.

It is a great pity that this hardy pioneer could not have been left in its effort to establish its strain in this neighborhood. Several bird lovers in Littleton have expressed ire and regret over this wanton killing of a bird that they hoped would lead to many others of its kind in their vicinity. These are the things which set the public against even legitimate bird collecting. Such thoughtless deeds have come to our notice many times during the last fifty years.—W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*

The Siberian Bank Swallow and Other Records from Point Barrow, Alaska.—The representative of the Chicago Academy of Sciences