

Bachman's Sparrow in New York.—On May 8–12, 1940 (inclusive), I observed a Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis bachmani*) at Mendon Ponds Park, Monroe County, New York. This apparently constitutes the first record of this species for New York State. The circumstances of the observation were as follows. The bird was found on a hillside clearing overgrown with meadow grasses and scattered small aspens and conifers. On three sides the clearing is bordered by heavy deciduous woodland, on the fourth by a swampy, brush-covered area. As I entered this clearing at 6.00 a. m., May 8, 1940, I heard a song of unusual beauty which was entirely new to me in twenty years of observation in this region. It resembled in phraseology the songs of both the Field Sparrow and the Towhee, but in quality, especially of the first reed-like phrase, it was suggestive of the songs of the thrushes. A phonetic description is approximated by *g-r-r-e-e-e-en* (usually crescendo and reed-like), *back* (lower pitch), *tur-tle*, *tur-tle*, *tur-tle* (clear, full, vigorous, and fairly rapid). This was the usual song, but there was an occasional variation in phrasing, pitch, and completeness. The bird was heard singing daily between 5.30 and 7.00 a. m., once at midday, and once in the late afternoon. Delivery usually took place from the top of one of the small aspens or conifers with head thrown back and bill wide open, pointing straight up.

When seen on May 8, a tentative identification as Bachman's Sparrow was made on the basis of the plain-buffy breast and flanks, grayish auricular area, reddish-brown nape and the song. On subsequent observations the bird was compared carefully with textual descriptions and (in the field) with a series of six skins of the Pine-woods Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis aestivalis*) loaned by Ward's Natural Science Establishment. No *bachmani* skins were available, but the bird under observation was generally lighter and browner than the *aestivalis* specimens. Confirmation of identification was also made by Mr. Fred Hall, of Ward's Museum, who was previously familiar with the bird in Tennessee. Five other experienced members of the Genesee Ornithological Society (Rochester) observed the bird and concurred in the identification. During the five days the bird was under observation for periods of one-half to one and one-half hours under all conditions of light and at distances of twenty to eight feet with 8-power binoculars and 15-power telescope, and from all angles.

The bird's behavior was distinctive. When first seen each day, the bird was always on the top of a small aspen or conifer. There it would remain, singing at ten- to thirty-second intervals, until approached too closely or rapidly when it would stop singing, become uneasy, and then would dart down with a very shallowly undulating flight into the grass or low branches of a conifer. When found again and flushed, there would be a short low flight and another drop into the grass. After a waiting interval it would again take an elevated perch and resume singing.

The description of the bird as finally compiled from field observations was as follows. Completely unmarked under parts with breast, upper belly and flanks definitely yellowish buff; throat grayish with trace of buff; rest of under parts grayish white; crown reddish brown with suggestion of a gray center stripe; supraocular line buffy; nape longitudinally striped with gray and reddish brown (lighter than crown); auricular area buffy gray with apparently a fine line of brown through it; back and rump streaked with black, brown and gray; secondaries and wing-coverts chestnut brown, primaries blackish brown. I was unable

to see any yellow at bend of wing. Tail about same color as primaries; bill of typical sparrow form, dark horn color; feet and legs yellowish.

Although sufficient opportunity existed, the bird was not collected, as no permit was available. The record is, therefore, submitted as a visual one for whatever value it may have.—GORDON M. MEADE, M.D., *Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, New York.*

Gambel's Sparrow in Pennsylvania.—On April 17, 1940, one of my assistant bird-banders, Mr. Guy L. Bomberger, of Lititz, Pennsylvania, called me to his station to verify the identification of a Gambel's Sparrow, *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*, which he had trapped that day. I photographed the living bird at a distance of eight inches (see figure on Plate 4) and on the following day compared the photographs with skins of this race at the Reading Museum. Dr. Earle L. Poole, director of the Museum, agreed with me in its identification. Though reported from South Carolina and from Massachusetts, this appears to be the first record for Pennsylvania. Unfortunately the bird escaped before it could be banded. Notable is the early date of its appearance in contrast to the usual dates for the White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), which arrives with us in early May. The first record this year (1940) was May 7, and there seems to have been an unusually large flight in the next three days, during which we trapped five, and another observer reported seeing at least twenty-five individuals within a few hours.—BARTON L. SHARP, 201 North Broad St., Lititz, Pennsylvania.

Termites taken by birds.—Although countless thousands of winged, swarming termites must be eaten each year in North America by individuals of a good many species of birds, actual observations of the phenomenon appear to be very rare. There seem to be only two such records in the literature, both more than sixty years old. Baron Osten-Sacken (Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 19: 72, 1877) in the early summer of 1876 in California saw bluebirds (presumably *Sialia mexicana occidentalis*) feeding on winged examples of what must have been *Zootermopsis nevadensis*. Hagen (ibid., 20: 118, 1878) relates that an observer in Cambridge, Massachusetts, saw Robins, Bluebirds, and other unnamed birds feeding upon a swarm of *Reticulitermes flavipes*. On May 30, 1940, at Lincoln, Massachusetts, I saw *R. flavipes* taken by *Iridoprocne bicolor*, *Hirundo erythrogaster*, *Dendroica striata*, and *Setophaga ruticilla*. In the same locality on June 2, the same termite was taken by *Tyrannus tyrannus*, *Dumetella carolinensis*, and *Melospiza melodia melodia*. It should be noted that the cases here detailed are (with one exception) the only published ones in which the identity of the termites is clearly evident. From Snyder (U. S. Dept. Agric., Bull. 333: 9, 1916), Cottam and Knappen (Auk, 56: 138-169, 1939) and Bent (Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 176: 242, 265, 1940) I list the other American birds known to feed on termites: *Aix sponsa*, *Chordeiles minor hesperis*, *Nephoecetes niger borealis*, *Chaetura pelagica*, *Colaptes auratus*, *C. cafer*, *C. chrysoides mearnsi*, *Ceophloeus pileatus*, *Dryobates villosus*, *D. pubescens*, *D. nuttalli*, *D. borealis*, *Tyrannus vociferans*, *Myiarchus tuberculifer olivascens*, *Sayornis nigricans nigricans*, *Myiochanes richardsoni richardsoni*, *Otocoris alpestris*, *Riparia riparia riparia*, *Thryothorus ludovicianus*, *Mimus polyglottos*, *Toxostoma longirostre sennetti*, *Hylocichla mustelina*, *Sturnella* sp., *Piranga erythromelas*, *Aimophila botterii botterii*.—CHARLES H. BLAKE, Lincoln, Massachusetts.