

darker coloration of the head and the deeper rust-brown color of the back. The species has recently been discovered on Sumatra (*sumatrensis* Chasen, Treubia, 17: 184, 1939).—ERNST MAYR, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

White-winged Crossbills and Sitka Crossbills summering in the West Virginia spruce belt.—The summer of 1941 was a notable one for West Virginia bird students, due to the presence of large numbers of crossbills in the red-spruce (*Picea rubra*) forests which clothe many of the higher mountain ranges. The writers, accompanied by I. B. Boggs and Gene Frum, had opportunities to observe the birds during the second week of June, and at subsequent times during the summer.

On June 9, 1941, a trip was made to Dolly Sods fire-tower, a high point on the Allegheny backbone, where Tucker, Grant, and Randolph Counties, West Virginia, meet, with Pendleton County almost contiguous to the three others. Here a flock of White-winged Crossbills, numbering well over a hundred was seen. The birds were feeding on the flowers of the spruce trees, and were decidedly restless, never allowing a very close approach. They circled overhead a number of times during our stay at this point, and we were unable to determine that any but White-winged birds (*Loxia leucoptera*), were in this flock. Unfortunately, efforts to collect specimens were unsuccessful.

Later in the same day we visited Gaudineer Knob in the Cheat Range, where Randolph and Pocahontas Counties join. At this point Red Crossbills have been under observation for the last three years (see Auk, 57: 576-577, 1940). Almost immediately we saw a flock of 65 White-winged Crossbills which again kept out of our way. After they had fed for a time on the blossoms of the spruce trees we followed them with our glasses as they flew to another point a mile or so distant. On June 10, on the same mountain, we saw a smaller mixed flock of White-winged and Red Crossbills.

This constitutes the first known summer record for White-winged Crossbills in West Virginia, and the first State record of any kind for these birds since the winter of 1921. Although no specimen was secured, we saw the birds under circumstances which seem to justify the publication of this sight record. On June 9, 10, and 11, and again on various later dates in June and July, Red Crossbills were seen by various observers in the Gaudineer region.

From the mixed flock of White-winged and Red Crossbills (the birds were feeding at the top of a very high spruce tree) seen on June 10, a single bird was collected. Unfortunately it lodged near the top of the tree, and had to be shot down. The bird, an adult male Red Crossbill, was badly shot to pieces, but, luckily, the bill was uninjured, and it was possible to preserve the head and wings. From a small flock of Red Crossbills seen on the Pocahontas County side of Gaudineer Knob on June 11, two individuals, an adult male and an adult female, were taken. For critical determination these birds were submitted to Mr. Ludlow Griscom, who has kindly given us permission to quote from his findings. Under date of July 18, 1941, he writes (in part):

- "1. Adult female. Typical *minor* without a shade of doubt.
- "2. Adult male, coloration more scarlet, wing 82.8, culmen 15×8.8 , characteristic *minor* from the coast of southern British Columbia. The small and, above all, slender bill precludes its being the Appalachian Mountain subspecies.

"3. The adult male fragment, color doubtful, wing 80.5, culmen 15×9.2 . This bird exactly matches intermediates between *minor* and *bendirei* from southern British Columbia discussed in my monograph on page 122, paragraph 3, of the systematic discussion."

Through these specimens therefore West Virginia is added to the States reached by the 1940-41 Sitka Crossbill migration. The last (and only) previous record for this bird in the State was made in 1889 (see Griscom: 'A Monographic Study of the Red Crossbill,' Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 41: 124, 1937). It seems highly interesting that both Sitka Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills lingered through the summer so far south as West Virginia.

We are convinced that the best time to find crossbills in the West Virginia mountains is during the first three weeks in June when the young spruces are often bearing good flower crops. The individual carpels of these flowers are loaded with waxy grains, and have a decided sweetish taste. Birds which had obviously been feeding extensively on these blossoms were very fat, the fatty tissues hard and firm.—MAURICE BROOKS, *West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia*, AND WILLIAM A. LUNK, *Fairmont, West Virginia*.

January 1940 in southern Mississippi.—January 18, 1940, was a normal winter day in every respect on the Gulf coast of Mississippi. The temperature was well above freezing, the sun shone, and a mild wind blew from the northwest. As evening approached, however, this wind increased in velocity, the temperature rapidly dropped, and by the following morning southern Mississippi, in common with all the Southeast, was experiencing the first day of a cold wave that was unprecedented in the history of the Weather Bureau. The temperature registered 14 degrees Fahrenheit the morning of January 19, and during the succeeding thirteen days there was little evidence of thawing even during the middle of the day, and at night the temperature dropped 21 degrees or lower. Lower temperatures have been recorded in past years, but only for very brief intervals, and never for such long duration or intensity. At Hattiesburg, 52 miles north of Gulfport, snow reached a depth of three inches during this abnormal cold weather, and at Saucier, 25 miles north of the coast, sleet on January 23, and the two following days, covered everything with a coating of ice. South of this point, however, the ground remained bare; not even a trace of snow was reported.

The first apparent effect of the heavy snowfall and abnormally low temperatures farther north on the bird life of the coast region was the sudden abundance of Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and Pipits (*Anthus spinoletta rubescens*). Robins winter about Gulfport in small scattered flocks, and are a recognized part of the winter bird life, but never before have they been so numerous. Flocks numbering several hundred individuals were literally everywhere during this interval, and for at least a month there was little decrease in their numbers. Pipits are likewise not uncommon here during the winter, but the third day of the cold wave small flocks were noted feeding on the roads and in open fields and pastures, and for several weeks these birds were a conspicuous part of the winter bird life.

January 23 witnessed what might be considered the first major ornithological event in this unusual winter. On that day a flock of fully 300 Bronzed Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*) was observed feeding in a stretch of open pine woods. During the preceding five years no grackles of any of the present recognized races had been recorded during the winter months in southern Mississippi. Breeding