

## SOME ALASKAN NOTES

BY IRA N. GABRIELSON

*(Concluded from p. 130)*

CALIFORNIA MURRE, *Uria aalge californica* (Bryant).—This was probably the most abundant species observed on the trip. We did not see California Murres until we reached Seward (June 10) where there was a large colony associated with the still more numerous Pacific Kittiwakes. The deep water at the base of the cliff allowed us to drift the boat close and in the clear depths we could see the birds literally flying under the water as expertly as fishes. Often they came to the surface, saw the boat, and instantly dived again.

The great colonies of the Semidis and Kagamil Island were the largest, composed largely or entirely of this species. In the former island group, whenever we approached the precipitous cliffs closely enough to see distinctly, we found every available shelf and nook crowded with murres. At Kagamil Island we traveled in the 'Brown Bear' for at least two miles along cliffs similarly occupied, and the water was covered with birds.

These were two of the most impressive of the bird colonies seen on the trip. On Bogoslof Island an almost equally large concentration of murres contained both this species and the next.

PALLAS'S MURRE, *Uria lomvia arra* (Pallas).—This northern species was first found on Bogoslof Island (June 24).

At St. George Island (July 3) and St. Paul Island (July 4–6) Pallas's Murre was common, while at Walrus Island (July 7) the enormous murre colony was comprised largely, if not entirely, of this species. I saw only one bird there that I thought was a California Murre and it moved away before I could be sure. Pallas's Murre was abundant also at St. Matthew Island on July 8 and 9.

PIGEON GUILLEMOT, *Cephus columba* Pallas.—The Pigeon Guillemot was widely distributed but never in great numbers. It was first seen at Portage Bay (June 4) and was noted throughout the trip along the Alaska Peninsula and through the Aleutians.

MARBLED MURRELET, *Brachyramphus marmoratus* (Gmelin).—A Marbled Murrelet found dead on the street in Ketchikan (June 3) was the first one noted in Alaska. The species was common at Petersburg and Portage Bay (June 4), and was particularly abundant in Glacier Bay and adjacent waters (June 7). A number were noted and one collected in the upper end of Iliamna Lake. It was common in Prince William Sound (August 10), and around Sitka (August 12).

On August 13, at Little Port Walter, a single juvenile was found above the weir apparently unable to get out; it remained all day and dived away from us across the pool whenever we approached.

ANCIENT MURRELET, *Synthliboramphus antiquus* (Gmelin).—Undoubtedly Ancient Murrelets were present among the thousands of birds noted at distances too great for certain identification, but they were definitely recorded on only four occasions—all but one in the Aleutian Islands. Two were seen close to the boat in Tanaga Bay (June 27), two others at the Ogliuga Island on the same day, and ten or more on the west side of Atka Island on June 30. A single bird allowed our boat to approach closely about forty miles off St. George Island on July 3.

CASSIN'S AUKLET, *Ptychoramphus aleuticus* (Pallas).—Several times auklets, which were almost certainly of this species, were seen about Kodiak Island and in the Aleutians, but the only positive identifications were made in Salisbury Straits on August 12 and around the south end of Baranof Island on August 13.

PAROQUET AUKLET, *Cyclorhynchus psittacula* (Pallas).—We saw auklets in the Shumagins that we were reasonably sure were of this species, but the first observed at close range were at Chagulak (June 20) where there were numbers inhabiting the same rock slide with a much greater colony of Crested Auklets. The species was present in small numbers on Amukta (June 25), and on Kasatochi Island (July 26). St. George Island (July 3) had a great number of Paroquet Auklets but they were relatively inconspicuous in the incredible masses of Least and Crested Auklets that swarmed over and around the island. They were much more evident in the smaller colonies on St. Paul (July 4–6), and were almost lost again among the great hosts of murrets and gulls on Walrus Island (July 7).

Paroquet Auklets were the most abundant auklet on St. Matthew Island and Pinnacle Rock (July 8–9), considerably outnumbering the other species in the parts of those islands that we explored.

CRESTED AUKLET, *Aethia cristatella* (Pallas).—This striking species, whose general outline and carriage are so much like those of the California Quail, was first seen at Chagulak Island (June 25) which harbored a large colony. We saw enormous swarms of auklets, many of them of this species, off Koniuji Island (July 26) where large colonies are known to exist. The greatest auklet colony we visited in the Aleutians was that on Kasatochi Island (June 26) where the present species was second in abundance.

Off Tanaga Island, a sea otter made several half-hearted attempts

to catch one of two Crested Auklets sitting on the water near the kelp beds. The otter's efforts did not seem to bother the auklets as they merely flew a few yards and settled down again.

On St. George Island (July 3) this species was second in abundance in the great bird assemblage and it was common on St. Paul (July 4-6) and fairly abundant on St. Matthew (July 8).

LEAST AUKLET, *Aethia pusilla* (Pallas).—These tiny seafoam were unbelievably abundant in some places. We were in two of the largest colonies and passed close by a third. Gray says that farther to the westward in the Aleutians there are other great auklet colonies in which this species furnishes a dominating element.

The first Least Auklets we saw were conspicuous in the great swarms of birds found to the north of Koniugi Island on June 26. We visited a major colony at Kasatochi Island (June 26) and the greatest of all at St. George Island (July 3). In addition to these vast concentrations we saw numbers of the birds in small flocks at Tanaga. The species was common on St. Paul Island and also on St. Matthew Island. While watching a great mass of Pallas's Murres on Walrus Island (July 7), something faintly incongruous in the landscape attracted my attention. It was a single Least Auklet sitting solemnly on a small rock amid the thousands of larger birds. It was the only one noted on that island.

So few naturalists have been privileged to observe these great Alaskan bird concentrations that a reproduction of my notes on two of them may be justified. On Kasatochi Island the great attraction was the auklet colony made up largely of this species and the Crested Auklet. This island is a mountain peak rising abruptly from the water, so precipitous, in fact, that in only a few spots where slide rock has weathered off the cliffs or broken their sheer faces is it possible to ascend. We made a somewhat precarious landing at the base of one of these slides and slowly worked our way upward. My notes on this occasion are as follows:

"I climbed a rock slide trying to collect one of the Aleutian wrens but, failing to get within range, sat on a rock and watched the show put on by the auklets. There were three species, the Least Auklet by far the most abundant, with the Crested Auklet second in numbers, and the Paroquet Auklet represented by a few pairs. Scattered pairs of Tufted Puffins also were present. Gray says that in 1936 this island had a large puffin colony and attributes its decrease to the introduction of blue foxes on the island."

(Note: This is one of several bird islands from which the foxes are being removed. As we saw three foxes on the one slide and as there are neither beaches from which the foxes may obtain sea food or rodents, it is evident that the foxes are entirely dependent for food on the bird population.)

"From the loose rocks of this slide came a great medley of chatter and clucks. The louder, coarser notes were those of the Crested Auklet, which looks like a red-billed quail. They talk among themselves exactly as do quail coveys. The Least Auklets have a softer voice, but they, too, chatter incessantly in the slides.

"The Crested Auklets predominated in numbers at the bottom of the slides while the Least were most abundant in the smaller rocks toward the top.

"As the birds leave the nesting crevices, they walk out to a rock that is in the clear and pitch off. Aviators might well have watched these little sea fowl perform to get the idea of power diving. That is exactly what they do. They dive from the rocks with wings working at top speed, pitching straight down the slopes. By the time they reach the water and flatten out to dart away over the sea they have attained terrific speed. The wings of the two species whistle in different tones as they dive, that made by the Crested Auklet being deeper. As the birds straighten out over the water, they occasionally rock from side to side as I have seen quail do at high speed. Sometimes in the dive they sideslip—behaving as do teal and other small ducks pitching down from a height.

"As evening advanced, the flocks of Least Auklets, with a few of the larger crested species often intermingled, increased in size until the clouds of individuals were like the great blackbird swarms of the Middle West and Gulf Coast. These flocks circled and swirled as ribbons and drifts of black, or occasionally white, smoke on the skyline or as shadows over the water, twisting and turning in fantastic figures.

"When one of the flocks swerved in over the rock slide the roar of wings was almost deafening. The bulk of the birds swept back out to sea but dozens out of each flock dropped like falling leaves to alight on the rocks near their particular domiciles.

"Some, seeing me, immediately took off again. Others would look me over, cocking their heads first to one side and then to the other, before finally deciding that I was unimportant. When that decision was made they went about their business, which consisted of posing on the rocks or strutting about a bit, like half-grown quail, before popping into their holes. The absurd gravity of the Least Auklets, with their spotted coats and big eyes, made apparently bigger by the scattered, stiff, white feathers about the head, was one of the most amusing traits noted in a lifetime of bird watching.

"As these swarms of birds maneuvered over the water in intricate patterns, the synchronization of their movements compared favorably with that of the apparently well-drilled sandpipers. Sometimes thousands of birds in a single flock alternately flashed white or black in the setting sun."

At St. George, which is a comparatively low island, the auklet colonies were mostly concentrated on a long, low volcanic ridge back of the village. This site, however, harbored by no means all of the birds, which were everywhere we went; it merely was the greatest assemblage. Undoubtedly I saw here the greatest number of living birds in the air and on the water that I ever saw in one day. My notes for St. George are as follows:

"July 3. When I went up to the pilot house about 7 a. m. we were about fifty miles from St. George. Fur seals were scattered over the comparatively calm sea and murre and red-legged kittiwakes began to appear in small numbers. \* \* \* \*

"I noted one Ancient Murrelet about forty miles off shore at about the time the first Tufted and Horned Puffins were observed. As we neared the islands the number of birds, both in species and individuals, increased. Paroquet, Least, and Crested Auklets appeared in the order named, and by the time we were within three miles of shore the Least Auklets outnumbered all others combined. Many birds of the year were among them, a fact verified by collecting one.

"We landed about 2 p. m. Over the last mile of water the Least and Crested Auklets had been swirling like swarms of insects. As we landed, the air over the village was filled with hurrying flocks. When we reached the little hill on which the buildings stand, a long, low ridge was exposed to our view and the air between us and the ridge, as well as that over it, was filled with circling, swirling thousands of birds. Auklets constantly flying over the village to join the milling throngs were mostly Least but there were many Crested and a few Paroquets among them. All the afternoon, hastening bands from all directions joined the circling hosts. When one remembers that the sea for miles out had been dotted with them, and the air over it filled with great swarms, drifting like shadows over the surface of the water, some idea of the immensity of the population may perhaps be obtained. The occasional endless processions of Sooty Shearwaters on the Oregon coast, the blackbird clouds of the Mississippi Valley, and the myriads of waterfowl on some of the greatest concentration areas are the only things in my experience that even remotely compared with these auklet hosts.

"Mr. Mandeville, the acting superintendent, told us that in spring the natives make nets on hoops, about the size of a barrel hoop, to catch these birds for food, as they fly over the edges of low bluffs. He said that one boy sometimes catches as many as a hundred a day. When one reflects that the auklets are literally whizzing projectiles, such a feat seems impossible until the numbers present are taken into account.

"The natives also collect the eggs. Three of us went through a colony trying to locate downy young. We found shells of recently hatched eggs but no eggs nor downies. The comical Least Auklets sat around on the rocks, ogling us owlishly as we delved for nests. They seemed entirely unconcerned and they proved to be right. All that we accomplished with our rock-rolling effort was a slight disturbance of the landscape. We finally gave it up and concluded that our combined egg-hunting intelligence quotient was considerably below that of a ten-year-old native boy."

WHISKERED AUKLET, *Aethia pygmaea* (Gmelin).—Two members of the party, Jackson and Tripp, came in from the trip across Atka Island (June 30) saying they had found a live "dickey bird" in the trail and caught it. As one of the party had brought in a newly-fledged Alaska Longspur a few days before, I expected something similar and was surprised when they produced our first specimen of this, the most local and least known of the Aleutian Island auklets.

On July 1, we saw several hundred in the waters between Carlisle and Kagamil Islands and along the great cliffs on the latter island. Their behavior on the water and in the air did not differ from that of the other species.

**RHINOCEROS AUKLET, *Cerorhinca monocerata* (Pallas).**—We identified this bird with certainty only twice. We saw between twenty-five and thirty birds just outside of Cape Spencer as we started north across the Gulf of Alaska (June 7). They were mostly in pairs and the breeding plumes were conspicuous. As we came south over the Gulf of Alaska (August 12) we observed a number as we neared Salisbury Straits on the run into Sitka.

**HORNED PUFFIN, *Fratercula corniculata* (Naumann).**—This small puffin, though widely distributed, was never present in large colonies, and in fact was usually seen in smaller numbers than its larger relative. The first seen were a few pairs near Seward (June 10). We also saw scattered individuals on the waters about Kodiak Island. In the Semidis, Horned Puffins were more abundant, equalling or perhaps exceeding the Tufted Puffins observed. The birds were coming and going out of nest burrows along the tops of the cliffs but there was no great concentration of them in any one spot. From the Shumagin Islands west and north the Horned Puffin was usually the more abundant of the two.

**TUFTED PUFFIN, *Lunda cirrhata* (Pallas).**—This was one of the widely distributed water birds, being found about most of the rocky islands visited. It was first recorded when scattered individuals were seen just outside Cape Spencer (June 7). We saw small nesting colonies scattered from the Barren Islands (June 13) to the Pribilofs.

**NORTHWESTERN HORNED OWL, *Bubo virginianus lagophonus* (Oberholser).**—Two horned owls, taken by Collins and O'Connor, agents of the Alaska Game Commission, on June 26 along Willow Creek, north of Anchorage, and put into storage for me, proved to be of this form.

**AMERICAN HAWK OWL, *Surnia ulula caparoch* (Müller).**—Two individuals near Fairbanks on August 4 were to be the only ones noted during the summer.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD, *Selasphorus rufus* (Gmelin).**—Two were seen near Petersburg on June 4.

**WESTERN BELTED KINGFISHER, *Megaceryle alcyon caurina* (Grinnell).**—Single birds were noted at each of three places—Petersburg (June 4), Yakutat (June 8), and Little Port Walter (August 13).

**NORTHERN FLICKER, *Colaptes auratus luteus* Bangs.**—Woodpeckers of all kinds proved to be scarce although a careful lookout was maintained for them in wooded country. This flicker was noted as follows: one at Yakutat (June 8), two along Susitna River near Curry (August 2), three near Fairbanks (August 4), two along Steese Highway (August 6), and five along Richardson Highway (August 9).

NORTHERN RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER, *Sphyrapicus varius ruber* (Gmelin).—Three birds near Petersburg (June 4) and one at Portage Bay on the same day were the only ones observed.

SITKA HAIRY WOODPECKER, *Dryobates villosus sitkensis* Swarth.—Single birds, one each at Petersburg and Portage Bay on June 4, were the only hairy woodpeckers seen.

BATCHELDER'S WOODPECKER, *Dryobates pubescens leucurus* (Hartlaub).—A single downy woodpecker, presumably of this form, was seen on the shores of Tustamina Lake (July 30). It was not taken, so the subspecies cannot be positively stated.

SAY'S PHOEBE, *Sayornis saya saya* (Bonaparte).—Say's Phoebes were seen only twice, as single birds on Kalgin Island on July 28 and near the Richardson Highway on August 9.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, *Nuttallornis mesoleucus* (Lichtenstein).—A single bird was noted south of Paxton Lake along the Richardson Highway on August 9.

PALLID HORNED LARK, *Otocoris alpestris arctica* Oberholser.—This pale race of horned lark was not common in the territory visited. About a dozen individuals were seen above timber line in Mt. McKinley Park on August 3 and about the same number were found along the Steese Highway halfway between Fairbanks and Circle on both August 6 and 7.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW, *Tachycineta thalassina lepida* Mearns.—Although noted at intervals, swallows were not usually common. Four of this species were seen in Petersburg (June 4) and a like number, or slightly more, were constantly about the buildings at Cooper Landing on the Kenai River (June 11–12).

TREE SWALLOW, *Iridoprocne bicolor* (Vieillot).—Tree Swallows were among the more abundant representatives of the family. The first seen were two flying about over the Situk River (June 8) near the fisheries cabin. The species was not noted again until we reached Dillingham (July 17) where it was rather common not only about the town but over the river and adjoining tundra. It was also common on the lakes at the head of Wood River (July 18). A few individuals were observed over Brooks Lake (July 20) and a single bird flew about Stevenson's Road House on Iliamna Lake (July 24).

The only concentration of swallows was seen on July 30 about a mile north of Tustamina Lake. Here a large birch tree standing somewhat isolated in an open flat was filled with a mixed group of Tree and Bank Swallows. There were several hundred birds in the tree or flying about it.

**BANK SWALLOW, *Riparia riparia riparia* (Linnaeus).**—This species was first recorded when two birds were seen flying about the fish weir on the Karluk River on Kodiak Island (June 17). Five individuals were circling about an abandoned cannery at Chignik (June 19) and the species was fairly common on the shores of Morzhovoi Bay (June 21). Several were observed at Dillingham (July 17) and on Wood River Lakes (July 18). It was fairly common at Brooks Lake (July 21), Becharof Lake (July 21), and on the Kasilof River (July 29). About a dozen birds were flying about a bank filled with Bank Swallow burrows at Kenai Village (July 28) but none of the birds was observed to enter or leave the burrows. Bank Swallows made up about half of the concentration at Tustamina Lake on July 30, noted above.

**BARN SWALLOW, *Hirundo erythrogaster* Boddaert.**—The first bird I saw at Wrangel (July 3) as I stepped from the boat was a lone Barn Swallow flying over the street. At Petersburg, the next day, the species was the most conspicuous bird; as many as fifteen were in sight at once. Three birds were seen at Juneau (June 5) and a pair was flying about an old trapper's cabin on the shores of Glacier Bay (June 7). Two were noted at Yakutat (June 8) and the species was not seen again until July 21 on Ugashik Lake where a similar number was present. About a dozen birds were about Sieverson's Lodge on Iliamna Lake during our stay (July 24–25).

**ALASKA JAY, *Perisoreus canadensis fumifrons* Ridgway.**—Three Alaska Jays were observed (one adult and two fully fledged young) on the Kenai River (June 11), and two were about the fisheries camp at Brooks Lake (July 20). There were some ten birds about a cabin and clearing on the Kasilof River (July 29) where we spent an hour waiting for the tide to rise sufficiently for us to get over a sand bar. Two were present each morning about our cabin on Tustamina Lake (July 30–31). The species was common in Mt. McKinley Park (August 2 and 3) and along the Steese Highway on August 6. At Circle, eight came to one tree as I 'squeaked' at a group of sparrows in a thicket.

**STELLER'S JAY, *Cyanocitta stelleri stelleri* (Gmelin).**—Several were seen in and about Juneau on June 5 and 6. One was taken by me on the 6th and one by Dufresne at Cordova on June 10.

**AMERICAN MAGPIE, *Pica pica hudsonia* (Sabine).**—The Magpie was a conspicuous and fairly common element in the avian population of Kodiak Island, the Shumagin Islands, and the base of the Alaska Peninsula.

**NORTHERN RAVEN, *Corvus corax principalis* Ridgway.**—The Raven was widely distributed but not common and my notes do not record more than five in any one day.

On Bereskin Island I watched a young Raven just learning to fly. An empty nest on the cliff below indicated its probable, late home. This bird took off from the edge of the cliff in the face of a strong breeze on somewhat uncertain wings, flew out a few yards and then turned back to alight again. This feat was repeated a score of times.

At Tanaga Island my attention was attracted to an Arctic Tern's nest by the frantic cries and dives of the parent birds, obviously agitated by something behind a big rock. As I stepped around it, a Raven flushed from within a few feet of the terns' nest containing two eggs.

**NORTHWESTERN CROW**, *Corvus brachyrhynchos caurinus* Baird.—Crows were present in small numbers. The first land birds seen on the trip was a flock of about twenty crows flying over the harbor as we came into Ketchikan (June 3). There were also a number about Petersburg, Juneau, Kodiak Village, and Karluk.

**LONG-TAILED CHICKADEE**, *Penthestes atricapillus septentrionalis* (Harris).—Three or four chickadees were noted about the cabin on Tustamina Lake (July 20).

**YUKON CHICKADEE**, *Penthestes atricapillus turneri* Ridgway.—A single bird collected in an alder thicket on the mountain above Larsen's Bay, Kodiak Island (June 17) proved to be of this form.

**COLUMBIAN CHICKADEE**, *Penthestes hudsonicus columbianus* (Rhoads).—Columbian Chickadees were collected at Kenai Lake (June 12), Kodiak (June 14), Tustamina Lake (July 31), and at Brooks Lake (July 19) on the Katmai National Monument.

**CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE**, *Penthestes rufescens rufescens* (Townsend).—Chestnut-backed Chickadees were noted at Portage Bay (June 4) and Little Port Walter (August 13).

**CALIFORNIA CREEPER**, *Certhia familiaris occidentalis* Ridgway.—A female collected at Portage Bay on June 4 proved to be of this form.

**DIPPER**, *Cinclus mexicanus unicolor* Bonaparte.—A single bird was noted on Wood River on July 18.

**ALASKA WREN**, *Nannus hiemalis alascensis* (Baird).—Five individuals of this form were seen and one was collected on St. George Island on July 3.

**TANAGA WREN**, *Nannus hiemalis tanagensis* Oberholser.—Eight or ten individuals of this subspecies were seen on Tanaga Island (June 27) and a like number on Atka (June 30). A single bird was collected on the latter island. In addition, specimens of this and other forms were taken at Chagulak, Kasatochi, Ogliuga, Amchitka, and Carlisle islands.

This tiny wren—the smallest land bird of these gloomy islands—is

quite abundant in places. It is confined largely to the rocky beaches and immediately adjacent areas and was seldom noted more than a hundred yards from the water's edge. Its clear, bubbling song was always a welcome sound.

SEMIDI WREN, *Nannus hiemalis semidiensis* Brooks.—Three birds were seen on Choweit Island (June 18).

KODIAK WREN, *Nannus hiemalis helleri* (Osgood).—A single specimen was collected on Afognak Island (June 13).

WESTERN WINTER WREN, *Nannus hiemalis pacificus* (Baird).—Winter Wrens were noted at Petersburg (June 4), Yakutat (June 8), and Port Walter (August 13).

EASTERN ROBIN, *Turdus migratorius migratorius* Linnaeus.—Robins were common and widely distributed on the mainland from the Kenai to the base of the Alaska Peninsula. A few birds also were present along the Litnik River on Afognak Island (June 15). The robin was often common on the tundra where the plentiful supply of berries furnished an easy living.

NORTHWESTERN ROBIN, *Turdus migratorius caurinus* (Grinnell).—This race was observed at Petersburg (June 4), Portage Bay (June 4), Juneau (June 5), and Glacier Bay (June 7).

PACIFIC VARIED THRUSH, *Ixoreus naevius naevius* (Gmelin).—Noted at Petersburg and Portage Bay (June 4), Juneau (June 5), Glacier Bay (June 7), and Yakutat Bay (June 8). Barely-fledged young were seen at the last place.

NORTHERN VARIED THRUSH, *Ixoreus naevius meruloides* (Swainson).—This race was noted at Afognak, Dillingham, Wood River, Tustamina Lake, Steese Highway, and Richardson Highway. It was one of the more common and conspicuous woodland birds. Young out of the nest, but still unable to fly well, were seen on Afognak. There is little difference in the breeding plumages of these two forms as seen in the field.

ALASKA HERMIT THRUSH, *Hylocichla guttata guttata* (Pallas).—Birds collected at Yakutat (June 8) and Kodiak (June 14) were of this form. Birds noted at Afognak (June 15), Chignik and Metrofania Island (June 19), Naknek (July 19), and Richardson Highway (August 9) probably belong here.

DWARF HERMIT THRUSH, *Hylocichla guttata nanus* (Audubon).—A bird collected at Juneau (May 5) by Greany is of this race.

RUSSET-BACKED THRUSH, *Hylocichla ustulata ustulata* (Nuttall).—Two individuals were seen at Portage Bay on June 4.

OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH, *Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni* (Tschudi).—

Several Olive-backed Thrushes were seen along the Steese Highway (August 6), and one was noted near Paxton Lake on the Richardson Highway (August 9).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, *Hyllocichla minima aliciae* (Baird).—A male of this species was collected at Dillingham on July 18.

EUROPEAN WHEATEAR, *Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe* (Linnaeus).—The Wheatear was one of the birds I hoped most to see in Alaska. I had gathered the impression that it was a rather uncommon species that one could expect to see only occasionally. I was delighted, therefore, to find it actually common in two widely separated localities. We saw numbers in Mt. McKinley Park on both August 2 and 3 and along the Steese Highway, about midway from Fairbanks to Circle, on both August 6 and 7. On August 8 we saw two more of these birds on the Richardson Highway just south of the Tanana River crossing.

In Mt. McKinley Park the Wheatears were in small flocks of six or eight to a dozen or more. They were feeding along the shoulders of the road and in action and behavior were much like pipits. Many spotted young were among them. We had a good opportunity to study several at close range as we sat on a rocky outcrop high in the mountain on August 3, watching a group of Dall's sheep. The Wheatears were all around us, sometimes within a few feet. In appearance, especially around the head and the breast, they resemble a female Bluebird; but when they flush, displaying the white in the tail, they suggest McCown's Longspur.

The flocks, and even individuals, have the trait of some other grassland birds of whirling off the ground, and mounting high into the air, apparently bent on getting out of the country, only to swerve and land again close to, if not upon, the spot previously occupied.

On August 6, the first one we saw was perched on the topmost twig of a spruce with its breast toward the car. In the early morning light the soft pink of the breast looked red enough for a Bluebird and we stopped the car and trained the glasses carefully upon it before we could be sure that our eyes were not playing tricks upon us.

KENNICOTT'S WILLOW WARBLER, *Acanthopneuste borealis kenicotti* (Baird.)—A single bird, which I took to be of this species, flew ahead of us up a small stream on the north end of St. Matthew Island (July 9). One was collected at Dillingham (July 18), and a second specimen, one of three birds that were making a great disturbance over my presence near a small, dense willow, was taken at Brooks Lake (July 19). In general appearance these birds reminded me of Tennessee Warblers although they were more nervous and excitable than that species.

WESTERN GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET, *Regulus satrapa olivaceus* Baird.—A number of kinglets were noted at Portage Bay (June 4) and Juneau (June 5). Two were seen on Afognak Island on June 15.

EASTERN RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, *Corthylio calendula calendula* (Linnaeus).—Kinglets were common at Kenai Lake (June 12) and a single bird was seen at Kodiak (June 14). There were four or five in one spruce tree on Tustamina Lake (July 30).

SITKA KINGLET, *Corthylio calendula grinnelli* (Palmer).—The Sitka Kinglet was in full song up to, and including, June 8. We saw it commonly at Portage Bay, Juneau, Glacier Bay, and Yakutat. I have a specimen of this race taken by Greany on May 5 at Juneau.

AMERICAN PIPIT, *Anthus spinoletta rubescens* (Tunstall).—Pipits were fairly common, many of them in the odd juvenile plumage seldom seen in the United States. A number were collected in the hope of getting representatives of Asiatic forms, but all proved to be of this race.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING, *Bombycilla garrula pallidiceps* Reichenow.—On August 3, in Mt. McKinley Park, Dufresne first discovered a group of these beautiful birds, consisting of adults and newly fledged young. A few days later (August 8 and 9), this proved to be one of the most common species along the Richardson Highway, with both adults and juveniles present. Their behavior was much like that of the Cedar Waxwing at the same season. These birds perched conspicuously in the tops of the small spruces and called softly to one another as we worked about in the timber to get better views of various individuals.

NORTHWESTERN SHRIKE, *Lanius borealis invictus* Grinnell.—This shrike was one of the conspicuous birds of the interior country. Like its more southern cousins, it showed a decided fondness for telephone wires and poles along the highways. It was seen at frequent intervals in Mt. McKinley Park (August 2–3), along the Steese Highway (August 6–7), and along the Richardson Highway (August 8).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, *Vermivora celata celata* (Say).—An Orange-crowned Warbler, probably of this race, was heard singing and was later seen on the lower Kvichak River on July 23.

LUTESCENT WARBLER, *Vermivora celata lutescens* (Ridgway).—Several were seen at Juneau (June 5) and two at Glacier Bay (June 7). They were common at Yakutat (June 8) and on the Kenai River (June 11 and 12). Specimens were collected at the last-named place.

ALASKA YELLOW WARBLER, *Dendroica aestiva rubiginosa* (Pallas).—This species was one of the two most common warblers observed on the trip well out onto the Alaska Peninsula.

BLACK-POLL WARBLER, *Dendroica striata* (Forster).—A pair was observed on a mountain slope above Kenai Lake (June 11), and one was collected at Dillingham (July 17).

GRINNELL'S WATER-THRUSH, *Seiurus noveboracensis notabilis* Ridgway.—Four or five birds were seen and one was collected along a little stream tributary to Tustamina Lake, on July 31.

NORTHERN PILEOLATED WARBLER, *Wilsonia pusilla pileolata* (Pallas).—This was the most widely distributed warbler and a number of specimens were collected.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD, *Euphagus carolinus* (Müller).—Several were seen at Dillingham (July 17) and a small number around the University of Alaska grounds near Fairbanks (August 5).

KODIAK PINE GROSBEEK, *Pinicola enucleator flammula* Homeyer.—Pine Grosbeaks were not common anywhere. A single male was seen by Dufresne in Yakutat Village (June 8). We saw three pairs on the Kenai, all in the vicinity of Kenai Lake (June 11 and 12). A single male was noted at Kodiak (June 14) and two were observed on Afognak (June 15). Two were seen from the train along the Susitna River (August 2).

Only two specimens were taken, one by me at Kenai and the other by Collins and O'Connor near Palmer on June 27, and held in cold storage until I reached Anchorage on July 31. Both of these specimens are of this race. The birds along the Susitna may have been of this race or of the more northern *alascensis*.

ALEUTIAN ROSY FINCH, *Leucosticte griseonucha* (Brandt).—This handsome finch was one of the real joys of the Aleutian and other islands. We saw it first on the Semidi Islands (June 18) where a dozen birds were present along the rocky backbone of Choweit Island. From that time on they were present in varying numbers throughout the points visited on the Aleutians, the Alaska Peninsula, and the islands of Bering Sea.

They were exceedingly abundant on St. George (July 3) and St. Paul (July 4–6). On St. George, a nest containing three eggs was found by Frank Beals. It was placed on a low cliff and was made of coarse grass stems, somewhat scantily lined with finer fibers. It was rather bulky—about six inches across—resembling a Catbird's nest but more loosely constructed. I was also shown a similar nest built in a tool house.

HOARY REDPOLL, *Acanthis hornemanni exilipes* (Coues).—Two very pale redpolls were seen on Nunivak (July 11) in a narrow band of willow of some two-foot stature but, nevertheless, the largest woody

plants we had seen for weeks. The next day I found about a dozen similar birds about a patch of slightly larger willows on Cape Vancouver, Nelson Island, and collected two which proved to be of this subspecies.

COMMON REDPOLL, *Acanthis linaria linaria* (Linnaeus).—This bird was very common about timber line on the Kenai and wherever there was a patch of alders or willows along the Alaska Peninsula or the shores of Bering Sea. It was also common in all places visited in the interior.

RED CROSSBILL, *Loxia curvirostra pusilla* Gloger.—A flock of about twenty-five Red Crossbills was seen high up above Kenai Lake in the edge of the timber on June 12.

SITKA CROSSBILL, *Loxia curvirostra sitkensis* Grinnell.—About a dozen birds of this form were seen at Portage Bay (June 4), and a somewhat larger number at Juneau (June 5). More than twenty-five were observed about the fishery laboratory at Little Port Walter (August 13).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL, *Loxia leucoptera* Gmelin.—There were numbers of White-winged Crossbills along the Litnik River on Afognak Island (June 15). These birds were not in flocks but were scattered, in pairs or as individuals, over several miles of timber. They were common, distributed in the same way, on Kalgin Island (July 28) and in the timber north of Tustamina Lake (July 30).

WESTERN SAVANNAH SPARROW, *Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus* Bonaparte.—This was one of the common land birds of the Territory. An effort was made to collect Savannah Sparrows at frequent intervals along the coast, and in the considerable series taken, all birds from Juneau to Chignik seem to be nearer to this form. From west of the latter point and through the Aleutians, as far as we found Savannah Sparrows, the specimens seem nearer to *sandwichensis*.

ALEUTIAN SAVANNAH SPARROW, *Passerculus sandwichensis sandwichensis* (Gmelin).—My birds from Sand Point, Shumagin Islands (June 20), and Morzhovoi Bay (June 21) were closer to this form as were all specimens taken west of these points. Several birds were seen on Metrofania Island but none was collected. It was somewhat of a surprise to me to find Savannah Sparrows common on Kagamil, Carlisle, and Amukta Islands, all points beyond what I had understood the range of the species to be. They were particularly numerous on Kagamil.

SLATE-COLORED JUNCO, *Junco hyemalis hyemalis* (Linnaeus).—Juncos were common above Kenai Lake (June 12) and among them were

bob-tailed fledglings. They were common in Mt. McKinley Park about patches of timber (August 2-3), at Fairbanks (August 5), and very common along all of the Richardson Highway below timber line (August 8-9).

OREGON JUNCO, *Junco oreganus oreganus* (Townsend).—Ten to twelve individuals were noted about the animal pens of the fur farm near Petersburg (June 4).

WESTERN TREE SPARROW, *Spizella arborea ochracea* Brewster.—Tree Sparrows, including many newly-fledged young, were common about Dillingham (July 18), Naknek (July 22), Iliamna Lake (July 24-26), Mt. McKinley Park (August 3), along the Steese Highway (August 6), and along the Richardson Highway (August 8-9). It was noted that these, as well as other sparrows and shorebirds, fed freely on the dried, last-year's berries of crowberry and blueberry with which the tundra was covered. As the new crop of berries began to ripen the birds switched from the dried to the fresh diet with the consequence that every chin had a reddish stain. This was noticed particularly in birds taken at Iliamna Lake.

GAMBEL'S SPARROW, *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli* (Nuttall).—Gambel's Sparrows were common on the Kenai, the Alaska Peninsula, and in the interior. The swarms of sparrows along the interior highways, of which this species was a large element, reminded me of early October days in Oregon.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW, *Zonotrichia coronata* (Pallas).—These handsome sparrows were common at or near timber line on the Kenai (June 11-12). They were also numerous on Barren Islands (June 13), Kodiak (June 14-16), and Afognak (June 15). West of Kodiak we saw a few at Chignik (June 19) and four birds on Metrofania (June 19). From here they are not again mentioned in our notes until we reached the first patch of willows on Nelson Island where, among the other birds in a square rod or two of brush, we found a single Golden-crowned Sparrow. It was also fairly common about Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet.

EASTERN FOX SPARROW, *Passerella iliaca iliaca* (Merrem).—Eastern Fox Sparrows were fairly common at Dillingham (July 17) and about the Wood River Lakes (July 18). They were also in numbers along the Richardson Highway south of Fairbanks (August 8).

SHUMAGIN FOX SPARROW, *Passerella iliaca unalaschcensis* (Gmelin).—These big sparrows were fairly common although not so abundant as the Kodiak race. Specimens of this form were collected at Semidi Islands (June 18), Chignik and Metrofania Island (June 19), Shumagin Islands (June 20), and False Pass (June 22).

**KODIAK FOX SPARROW**, *Passerella iliaca insularis* Ridgway.—Nowhere on the trip were Fox Sparrows so abundant as on Kodiak and adjacent islands where they were the most conspicuous land bird. Specimens of this race were collected at several localities.

**VALDEZ FOX SPARROW**, *Passerella iliaca sinuosa* Grinnell.—Fox Sparrows were as rare on the Kenai as they were common on Kodiak and I saw only a single bird above timber line near Kenai Lake (June 12), which I failed to collect. One of this race was taken about twenty-five miles north of Valdez on the Richardson Highway (August 9).

**YAKUTAT FOX SPARROW**, *Passerella iliaca annectens* Ridgway.—Fox Sparrows were also scarce about Yakutat. The only birds seen were three in the village on June 8.

**TOWNSEND FOX SPARROW**, *Passerella iliaca townsendi* (Audubon).—A skin presented to me by J. M. Greany, taken May 23 at Juneau, is of this race. I heard Fox Sparrows singing in Juneau on June 5 but failed to find them in the open country.

**LINCOLN'S SPARROW**, *Melospiza lincolni lincolni* (Audubon).—A single juvenile bird collected on the portage trail between Iliamna Lake and Cook Inlet provided our only record for this species.

**ALEUTIAN SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia sanaka* McGregor.—Song Sparrows in the portions of Alaska we visited were restricted to a narrow belt almost within sight of salt water. They were essentially birds of the rocky beaches, and the beach drift and rocks exposed by the receding tides were their chosen haunts. I made an effort to collect Song Sparrows whenever practicable in order to have definite locality records for the races. All Song Sparrows taken from the Semidi Islands westward were of this form.

**BISCHOFF'S SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia insignis* Baird.—Specimens referable to this race were taken at Barren Islands (June 13), Kodiak village (June 14), and Uganik Bay, Kodiak (June 16). In this area Song Sparrows were distinctly less numerous than Fox Sparrows, a condition that did not often prevail along the shore line.

**KENAI SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia kenaiensis* Ridgway.—Song Sparrows were very scarce on the parts of the Kenai that we visited, and the only representatives of this race taken were obtained on the Copper River Flats (June 10).

**YAKUTAT SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia caurina* Ridgway.—Only the birds taken at Yakutat Bay are referable to this race.

**SOOTY SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia rufina* (Bonaparte).—Birds collected at Little Port Walter (August 13) belong to this form.

**RUSTY SONG SPARROW**, *Melospiza melodia morphna* Oberholser.—

Birds taken at Portage Bay on June 4 seem to be closer to this form than to any other although they are not typical.

ALASKA LONGSPUR, *Calcarius lapponicus alascensis* Ridgway.—This was one of the species that varied considerably in abundance from one island to the next. It was first seen at Morzhovoi Bay, on June 21, where it was fairly common in the sand dunes and about Frosty Peak. Then only two birds, both males, were seen on Akutan Island (June 23). We did not see the species at all on Chagulak Island, but on neighboring Amukta (June 25) it was very common, probably exceeding in numbers all other passerine species combined. Here Frank Beals found one nest containing four eggs. Longspurs were common and in song about the Atka village (June 26), and on crossing the island (June 30) we found it to be the most abundant small bird on the island.

On the part of Tanaga Island covered on June 27, only three or four pairs of this bird were noted. The species was outnumbered by the Song Sparrows, Rosy Finches, and the Tanaga Wrens. I did not see it on Ogliuga, although Snow Buntings and Rosy Finches were present, and the low grassy island seemed as suitable for longspurs as others where it was common. On Amchitka (July 28) it again exceeded all other passerine birds in numbers and it was almost equally common on Carlisle and Kagamil Island (July 1). I did not note the species at all on St. George although it occurs there, while Snow Buntings were more numerous than on any other island visited and Rosy Finches were very common. On St. Paul, the Longspur was well distributed but in actual numbers it was less abundant than the Rosy Finch.

On St. Matthew (July 8) it was fairly common, but was greatly outnumbered on the tundras by McKay's Snow Bunting and Pribilof Sandpipers. On Nunivak Island (July 10 and 11), the numbers of this species and the Snow Bunting were about equal, while on Cape Vancouver, Nelson Island (July 12), it was again the most abundant passerine bird.

PRIBILOF SNOW BUNTING, *Plectrophenax nivalis townsendi* Ridgway.—This was one of the more common land birds of the Aleutians and Pribilofs. In many places it was the wildest and most wary of the land birds, whirling up and away at the slightest hint of danger. This was true of both individuals and flocks everywhere except on St. George Island where they were most abundant and also very tame, allowing us to walk to within a few feet as they fed in the grass or among the rocks. We first found the species on the Semidi Islands (June 18).

Notes on its relative abundance are given in the discussion of the Alaska Longspur and there is no need of repeating them here.

MCKAY'S SNOW BUNTING, *Plectrophenax hyperboreus* Ridgway.—As we approached the shore of St. Matthew Island (July 8), home of this beautiful and rare finch, there was much speculation as to when we would see the first one and how abundant the species would prove to be. Both questions were soon answered. There was some surf running, so we had to hunt for a place to land. Eventually we found a quiet spot between two rocky points at the edge of a large snow bank piled high just above the reach of the tides. As I jumped from the boat, I heard a sparrow's song above my head, and there on the edge of the drift sat my first McKay's Snow Bunting. As we climbed up the low bluff that faced the sea and got onto the flat tundra, fluttering white specks answered the question of abundance. There were many of them—sometimes scores—in sight at one time. These birds, like the Pribilof Snow Bunting, have a tendency to fly a considerable distance when disturbed. They were, however, less easily frightened. They are very active and alert with a nervous trick of giving the wings a quick flirt as they hop about, searching for food.

This species showed a distinct preference for the cliffs and beaches rather than the extensive tundra areas. Fully fledged young were on the wing although a few were still being fed by the parents.

The next day we landed well toward the northern end of the island and found the Snowflakes common but much more widely distributed over the rolling hills than they were in the rougher south end visited the previous day. The birds were also much more suspicious and hard to approach, behaving much like the Snow Buntings of the Pribilof Islands.

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A CORRECTION.—In the previous installment of this paper (Auk, 61: 125, January, 1944), the Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Ereunetes pusillus*) was erroneously recorded from Nunivak Island. This record should be credited to the Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes maurii* Cabanis).

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