

## GENERAL NOTES

**Arkansas Kingbird in Florida.**—On December 11, 1948, Mr. Wray H. Nicholson and the writer observed five Arkansas Kingbirds, *Tyrannus verticalis*, near Shiloh, Merritt Island, Brevard County, Florida. The birds were perched on the telephone wires along a hard-surfaced road, for a distance of perhaps several hundred feet. The light-gray head and upperparts, yellowish underparts and narrow, white-bordered outer tail feathers were clearly discernible with 8-power glasses from a distance of about 25 feet. Although this bird turns up from time to time as a straggler in Florida (Howell, *Florida Bird Life*, 1932, cites eight records), its occurrence seems worthy of note.—ROBERT F. MASON, JR., *Fern Park, Florida*.

**A new Cuckoo-shrike from the Solomon Islands.**—In addition to several adult males of *Edolisoma tenuirostre*, the Whitney South Sea Expedition collected on Pavuvu, Solomon Islands, a single immature male which differed strikingly from any other specimen from the Solomon Islands. However, I refrained from describing this apparently new race on such scanty evidence. Recently, Mr. H. G. Deignan called my attention to the existence of three additional immature specimens in the United States National Museum and kindly placed them at my disposal. Even though this new material does not include adult females either, it fully confirms the distinctness of the Pavuvu race in the immature plumage.

***Edolisoma tenuirostre nisorium*, new subspecies**

TYPE: U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 405431; Pavuvu, Russell Islands, British Solomon Islands; October 25, 1944; S. M. Ray, collector.

Adult male similar to that of *E. t. erythropygium*. Immature even paler underneath than that of *erythropygium*; entire underparts from chin to flanks covered by narrow black bars; under tail-coverts unbarred. Upperparts darker; back fuscous brown, not rufous brown; rump brown with blackish bars, not pure rufous. Size as in *erythropygium*. Known only from Pavuvu, Russell Islands.—E. MAYR, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*.

**Recent Raven records in Massachusetts.**—Although *Corvus corax principalis* nests in Maine and through the higher Alleghenies to Georgia, it has been considered a rare bird in Massachusetts for at least a century. Forbush (*Birds of Massachusetts*, vol. 2, 1927) calls the Raven "an accidental visitor"; Allen (*List of Birds of New England*, 1901) agrees and adds, "no recent records." The former lists the following records: Tyngsborough, prior to 1859, one; Springfield, 1859, two; Dedham, about 1859, two; Williamstown, prior to 1877, two; Northampton, prior to 1901, one; Tyngsborough, no date, Brewster collection, one.

In short, "the raven . . . has long since retired to less frequented spots" (Allen, *Bull. Nuttall Orn. Club*, 1876) and is "now extirpated from Essex County, Massachusetts, though formerly common as attested by early writers" (Townsend, *Birds of Essex County*, 1905). S. Gilbert Emilio did not include the bird in his 'Field-List of the Birds of Essex County, Mass.' but relegated it to the hypothetical list because there was no known specimen for the county in 1940.

Since then, two Ravens taken in this county have been located, largely through the efforts of Oscar M. Root of North Andover, and have been placed in local museums. To quote Mr. Root, "the specimen in the Natural History Museum of Brooks School,

North Andover, was caught in a mink trap set in water at Haggett's Pond, Andover; about 1890 by S. Arthur Lovejoy." The second specimen was collected by Arthur Heiman of Methuen and has recently been presented by him to the Peabody Museum of Salem. Mr. Heiman says, regarding this bird, "In the latter part of July, 1933 I was shooting crows in the Scotland Hill district (near the Methuen-Haverhill line). In a pasture on the hilltop . . . a large black bird got up . . . which was secured and found to be a raven in the pin feather stage, though well advanced."

There are also recent sight records of the Raven, mainly in the past ten years, since between 1927 and 1938 only one has been found. An earlier one is that of November 11, 1922, when Mr. Arthur W. Beckford of Danvers, an experienced hunter who had shot many crows, saw in Ipswich a bird which he was convinced was a Raven.

By 1940, Paul F. Eckstorm of Brewer, Maine (Bull. New England Bird Life, 4 (2)) notes the Raven is "increasing somewhat in forested areas and westward along the coast," and Katharine Tousey (Bull. New England Bird Life, 5 (7)) reports "more than usual; two to eight in every wild harbor of the east coast of Maine." To the south, J. J. Murray in Virginia (Bent, Life Histories of North American Jays, Crows, 1946) says "commoner now than it was ten years ago."

It seems probable that this increase of breeding birds both north and south is reflected in the more numerous records for Massachusetts for the last decade. The two reports from Connecticut are included as confirming the possibility of a coast-wise migratory movement.

SUMMARY OF RECORDS OF 1940-1948

1941	Mass., Mt. Tom., October 26, Mrs. Albert Dietrich and Ruth Wheelright. . . . .	1
1942	Connecticut, Waterford, March 11, E. V. Stoddard. . . . .	1
1943	Conn., Waterford, April 2, E. V. Stoddard. . . . .	2
	Massachusetts, Osterville, April 18, John W. Eaton. . . . .	1
1945	Mass., Brookline, March 27, Ruth Ernst. . . . .	1
1947	Mass., Rockport, November 9, Davis Crompton. . . . .	1
	Mass., North Andover, December 12 and 15, Oscar M. Root. . . . .	1, 1
1948	Mass., Newburyport, May 22, Charles Crain and D. E. Snyder. . . . .	1

Such frequent encounters were apparently unknown prior to the last decade, or at least were unrecorded in the past century. Two explanations might be suggested: (a) an increase in Raven populations both to the north and south, with casual migrants flying over Massachusetts; and (b) an increase in the number of skilled observers in the state.—DOROTHY E. SNYDER, *The Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass.*

**European Tree Sparrows at Hannibal, Missouri.**—In 1870, a colony of European Tree Sparrows, *Passer montanus montanus*, was released in St. Louis, Missouri. They flourished near Shaw's Garden in St. Louis until 1877 when the English House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*, spread westward and displaced its less aggressive cousin. The colony broke into isolated groups which seemed to drift slightly eastward and southward. For a number of years nesting pairs were reported from St. Louis, East St. Louis, Alton, Horseshoe Lake in southern Illinois, and even down to the Reelfoot Lake country in Kentucky. Their usual range was in a radius of about 50 miles from St. Louis.

It is of some interest that in 1946 a pair nested behind a water spout on the Hannibal Missouri High School, which is about 50 miles farther north than the bird has ever before been reported. The following year a pair nested in a bird box at Hull, Illinois, ten miles east of Hannibal. No 1948 record has been secured of this pair.—T. E. MUSSELMAN, *Quincy, Illinois.*

**Raised ear coverts.**—It is well known that many birds raise the crown feathers when alerted, but not enough alarmed to flee. I have not seen any reference to