

*Troglodytes aedon aztecus*. Western House Wren. Rather rare; a few were seen but none taken.

*Cistothorus palustris plesius*. Western Marsh Wren. Taken at Sulphur Spring March 16 at which time they were abundant.

*Sitta carolinensis aculeata*. Slender-billed Nuthatch. Abundant in the mountains, but none seen in the valley.

*Parus wollweberi*. Bridled Titmouse. Common resident in the mountains where they frequent the oak woods. Many were taken in the Dragoon and Chiricahua mountains.

*Psaltriparus plumbeus*. Lead-colored Tit. Very common in the Dragoon mountains where it was generally seen with the preceding species.

*Regulus* sp. Kinglet. A few females were seen in the Dragoon and Chiricahua mountains.

*Polioptila cærulea obscura*. Western Gnatcatcher. First seen March 17; occasionally met with later.

*Myadestes townsendi*. Townsend Solitaire. Found in the Dragoon mountains in winter.

*Hylocichla guttata auduboni*. Audubon Hermit Thrush. One was taken in the Dragoon mountains April 14. A few others were seen on the same date.

*Merula migratoria propinqua*. Western Robin. Common in the Dragoon mountains.

*Sialia mexicana bairdi*. Chestnut-backed Bluebird. Common but less so than the following species, with which it was associated.

*Sialia arctica*. Mountain Bluebird. In winter large flocks were seen in the mountains and occasionally in the valley.

### Notes on the Texan Jay

BY HOWARD LACEY

ON buying a small ranch in Kerr county, Texas, in the summer of 1882, and stocking it with a few cows and other domestic animals, I began to spend my spare time in studying the habits of the wild creatures that I met, and at first gave nearly all my attention to the birds of the neighborhood. Not finding anyone else who took much interest in such things, I bought Coues' Key to North American Birds, and with this and a shot gun I by degrees learned the names of most of the birds that I saw as I rode about the range. I dislike having to use the gun, so I made a point of making a rough skin (a very rough one indeed at first) of everything that I shot and could not identify.

In 1893 I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of the "professor" who was then living in San Antonio, with whom I have since taken many pleasant little excursions, and between us we got to be on familiar terms with most of our bird neighbors. One of the birds that I could not place was our common jay, now known as the Texan jay (*Aphelocoma texana*).

In December, 1894, when deer hunting on the head of the Nueces river, I shot and skinned one of these birds and sent it to the professor. He sent it on, I believe, to the late Captain Bendire, and it is now the type of the species. In

March, 1896, I heard that the jays were nesting on the ranch of a friend about sixteen miles north of my place, so I rode over there and on March 29th and 30th found several nests and took four or five sets of eggs. These were carefully packed in an old cigar box and stowed away in one of the saddle pockets, but unfortunately as I was taking a rest and a lunch on my way home, the horse shook himself and of course the saddle also, with the result that most of the eggs were broken.

In 1898 the professor arranged to visit this same ranch with me, and on April 4th we started in an old buckboard and had a fairly successful trip, getting some good specimens of the birds and several clutches of eggs. The ranch is situated at the head of one of the main branches of the Guadalupe and takes in some of the divide between that river and the Llano. As in other parts of the county the limestone rocks are in evidence everywhere. Numerous little valleys run down toward the rivers, becoming deeper and steeper as they approach the larger creek, and often forming narrow canyons with high bluffs on both sides. Large trees are not numerous, but the whole face of the country is covered with clumps of shin oak and scrubby live oak. In these clumps we found the jays' nests, generally placed near the outside of a thicket, at from four to six feet from the ground, and often conspicuous from quite a distance, as the shrubs were only beginning to put out their leaves at that time. As a rule the birds were setting and one nest contained young nearly ready to leave it. The nests were composed of an outer basket of twigs not very firmly put together, and lined rather neatly with grass, hair, and small root fibres. They were rather more bulky than mockingbirds' nests and the inner nest was saucer shaped rather than cup shaped. Most of them were placed in the shin oaks, but some few were in live oaks, and I have since found several in cedar bushes. The birds are not so noisy as the common blue jay and are particularly silent when near their nests. They have a habit of hopping upwards through a thicket from twig to twig until they arrive at the top of it, when they fly off with four or five harsh squeaks to the next clump of brush, into which they dive headlong. It was a very warm day with the thermometer in the shade of the gallery at the ranch standing well up in the nineties, and tramping about through the thickets and picking our way over the rocks was by no means light work, but the walk was so interesting that we did not have time to think of getting tired. Of course we found much to interest us besides the jays. An untidy platform of sticks in a small Spanish oak tree, proved on investigation to be a road-runner's nest, containing six eggs, which from their unusually clear appearance, were probably all of them fresh. One frequently finds eggs in different stages of incubation in a road-runner's nest and sometimes eggs and young birds or young birds of different sizes.

Several times we disturbed deer. They were in their fresh summer suits of red, having already discarded their gray winter overcoats. As is so often the case when one is not hunting them, they would stop to take a second look at us, offering pretty broadside shots at fifty or sixty paces. In one extra dense thicket at the head of a rough little hollow we found a pair of long-eared owls (*Asio wilsonianus*) the first we had ever seen in the county; and on a rocky ridge just beyond were a couple of burrowing owls. They flew a few yards and then settled on some rocks, nodding their heads at us in their usual ludicrous fashion. These owls do not breed in this county, but we see them every year in the spring and autumn. There are no prairie dog towns on this side of the Llano river, but plenty of them just across it and I have been told that the owls breed over there.

Many small flocks of migrating birds were seen, some of them just arriving for the summer and others getting ready to leave us. Conspicuous among the

latter were the crown sparrows and lark buntings, the male buntings already about half clothed in their striking summer plumage.

Large trees were rather scarce on the divide and were not very large there except by comparison. They were principally isolated live oaks or black-jacks and most of them contained nests of the red-tailed hawk, usually old and deserted, but the new ones already contained either eggs or young birds. Of course all the hollow trees we saw had to be closely inspected and in one old stump we found a large pole cat peacefully taking his siesta. We had a good look at him but were very careful not to disturb his slumbers. He belonged to the white-backed, bare-nosed species and appeared to be very fat, also, fortunately for us, very sleepy.

In the winter the Texan jays are generally in small parties of four or five individuals, family parties probably. In the winter of 1896-1897 when large numbers of the common eastern blue jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) visited us, and it was not uncommon to see flocks of from fifty to one hundred of them, our native jays did not mix with them but wandered about in their usual small flocks. These flocks, however, were far more numerous than they have ever been since. Probably a heavy crop of shin oak acorns in this neighborhood and a failure of the mast in other places, attracted the birds of both species. I have not seen the eastern jay here but once before; in 1887 they were very plentiful. They remained until the middle of April on both occasions, but none of them stayed here to breed.

### A List of Birds from the Santa Cruz Mountains, California

BY MALCOLM P. ANDERSON AND HUBERT O. JENKINS

**D**URING the Christmas holidays of 1902-03 the writers made a ten days trip from their homes in Santa Clara Valley, California, to the sea, a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles. At that time recent rains had made the mountain road very bad so our first day, and half of the second, was spent in reaching San Gregorio Creek, a stream on the western slope of the coast range. Here near the village of La Honda we camped several days on the bank of the stream in a deep cold canyon. This canyon runs east and west at this point, so the sun which rose to us about nine, lingered just above the crest of the southern mountain until near four in the afternoon. The northern slope of the canyon thus received some warmth, but the southern and densely wooded side, little or none. For this reason, no doubt, the upper parts of the northern side have been cleared and were then in use as pastureland while the original forest, except some of the largest redwoods has been preserved on the southern side.

The most prominent forest tree in the neighborhood is the redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), but many Douglas spruces (*Pseudotsuga taxifolia*) occur, and the undergrowth is very dense. This consists largely of several species of oaks (*Quercus*), the tan-bark oak (*Quercus densiflora*), the buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) and the poison oak (*Rhus diversiloba*). San Gregorio creek, like all streams of this portion of the coast range is lined with alders (*Alnus oregana*), and the California laurel (*Umbellularia californica*) occurs on the banks as well as on the damp hillsides high above the stream. About two miles west of La Honda or eight miles from the coast the redwood forest ceases quite abruptly, giving place