

a board wired in a corner under the floor of a water-tank tower about twenty feet high. The pair of Kingbirds before mentioned as having trouble with the Thrasher, tried to take the nest away from the Wrens, but the owners were too persistent and they gave it up. Last year the Wrens had raised a brood in the same place; after the young had left I tore the nest out and the Kingbirds raised a brood. Hence both factions had some rights, the Wrens the prior right, however, which they made good. Four young were raised here, and on July 8 they were started on another set of four. After the first brood had flown from the tank I removed the old nest, and they soon rebuilt. Three eggs of this set hatched, the fourth being infertile. I might say that last year after the young Kingbirds had left the nest, the Wrens built again and incubated four eggs for three weeks. I then decided that the eggs were infertile, which proved to be the case. Besides the three nests of this pair of Wrens, five others were found, four in mesquite trees and one in a Zizyphus.

**Auriparus flaviceps flaviceps.** Verdin. Three nests in the mesquite thicket, two in Zizyphus shrubs, and one in a mesquite. They seem to breed usually but once a year, though there may be exceptions.

**Poliophtila plumbea.** Plumbeous Gnatcatcher. One nest in a Zizyphus five feet from the ground, with two Gnatcatcher's and two Dwarf Cowbird's eggs.

A total of sixty-six sets was found on the forty acres, representing eighteen species; this not counting the pair of Redwinged Blackbirds which deserted their nest, the Texas Nighthawk of which the nest was not found, nor the White-winged Dove, just out of bounds.

*Sacaton, Arizona, July 25, 1914.*

## SOME PARK COUNTY, COLORADO, BIRD NOTES

By EDWARD R. WARREN

WITH TWO PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

I SPENT the last two weeks of September, 1914, in the western part of Park County, Colorado, collecting mostly mammals but some birds also, and the notes I made in a comparatively little known portion of the State, and at a season when the migratory movements are on, seem sufficiently interesting to be published.

Park County covers the geographical center of Colorado, comprises the well known South Park, and is bounded on the west by high mountain ranges. The place which I made my headquarters, with the exception of the first two days, was Alma, one of the oldest mining camps in the State, at an elevation of 10,235 feet. The first two days were spent at Fairplay, also an old mining camp and the county seat, its altitude being 9,900 feet. It was not very favorably situated for the work I wished to do, therefore I moved to Alma, five miles above, and spent the remainder of my time there.

To reach these places I took the South Park Railroad, a narrow gauge, from Denver, going up the South Platte River 29 miles, then up the North Fork of the South Platte 40 miles farther to Webster, then climbing Kenosha

Hill and dropping down into the South Park at Jefferson. At Como, a few miles beyond, I changed to a train consisting of an engine and a combination coach and baggage car. Sometimes they take a freight car or two along, but not always. The principal crop in the South Park is hay, and the meadows were full of stacks. From Como to Fairplay the road passes most of the way by these fields.

Fairplay is on the South Platte River, the same stream up which I had started from Denver, but here I was close to its head; the town is not very near to the mountains. The first day I was there I walked over to Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Platte, running nearly parallel to it on the easterly side of a low ridge which separates the two streams. I followed this stream up a short

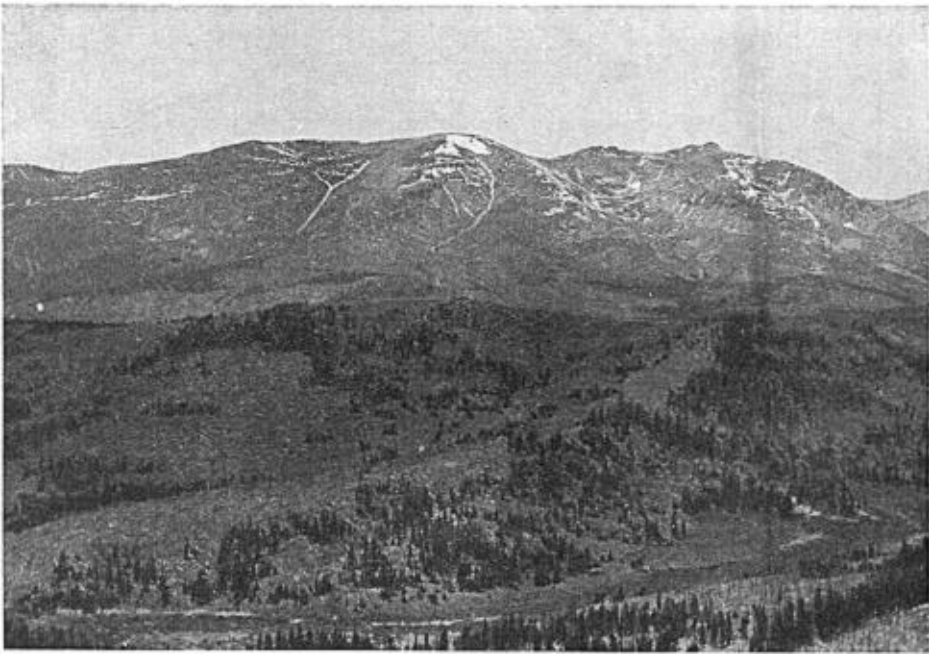


Fig. 36. MT. BROSS AND MT. LINCOLN, FROM SILVERHEELS. (BROSS IS THE ROUNDED MOUNTAIN IN CENTER, AND LINCOLN THE SHARPER PEAK NEXT ON THE RIGHT.) BEAVER CREEK AND BEAVER RIDGE IN FOREGROUND. SOUTH PLATTE RIVER IS BETWEEN BROSS AND LINCOLN AND BEAVER RIDGE. ALMA IS AT FOOT OF MT. BROSS, NEAR LEFT HAND SIDE OF PICTURE, OUT OF SIGHT BEHIND THE RIDGE

distance and then went to above timber-line on Mt. Silverheels, altogether some eight miles and back. My second day at Fairplay was spent closer to the town.

Alma is also situated by the South Platte River, here not a large stream, as it is but a few miles to its source, and Buckskin Creek flows through the town to the river. Mosquito Creek and Gulch are to the southwest over a low divide. The town is at the foot of Mount Bross, which is 14,100 feet high, with Mount Lincoln just beyond, and a couple of hundred feet higher. It is easy to reach high altitudes in the mountains here, which makes it an excellent place to study the life of such regions.

The life zones represented are the Canadian, Hudsonian, and Arctic-

Alpine. Only the upper portion of the first mentioned is represented. A very characteristic tree is the foxtail pine, *Pinus aristata*, which seems to be much more common at timber-line than the Engelmann spruce, though the latter grows on the mountain slopes. The pine is also common on the hills in the adjacent portion of the South Park away from the mountains proper. Lodgepole pines, *Pinus murrayana*, were also common, largely, I think, as second growth after the destruction of the first forest. Along the streams was the Colorado or blue spruce, *Picea pungens*, but not showing the blue color of the foliage as strongly as at lower altitudes. I doubt if it grew above 10,400 feet.

I had a distinguished predecessor in field work in this region in the person of Dr. J. A. Allen, who spent the week from July 19 to 26, 1871, at Montgomery, several miles above Alma, at the northeast base of Mt. Lincoln, practically at the source of the South Platte, with a party from the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard College. Montgomery is now practically deserted, a very few people living there. Dr. Allen gives a list of 36 species found by him while there. Curiously enough the present list also includes 36 species, but no less than 16 of these were not noted by Allen at Montgomery, one, the House Sparrow, because it had not yet traveled that far west, in fact was hardly known in the East at that date. Another, the Pink-sided Junco, because it was not the right season, and others in my list are noted by him in his list of the birds observed in South Park, a few, indeed, at Fairplay. Some no doubt would be found at Montgomery, others probably do not reach there.

The following list shows what birds were present just about the time the last of the summer residents would be leaving. I think it hardly likely that any of the birds noted were migrants from any great distance, with the exception, of course, of *Junco hyemalis mearnsi*. I expected to find Pine Grosbeaks, Nuthatches, and Brown Creepers, but it so happened that none were seen. A few notes are included of birds observed from the train when passing through the South Park to and from Alma.

**Oxyechus vociferus.** Killdeer. A single individual flew past me September 27 as I was examining some beaver work in the South Platte above Alma.

**Lagopus leucurus leucurus.** White-tailed Ptarmigan. This species was reported common above timber-line in summer. I saw it but once, when I found a flock of six September 26 in a high basin on the north slope of Buckskin Ridge. They had begun the change from summer to winter plumage, one of them being a mottled brown and white, and the other five brown above and white below. I found them in rather an odd manner. I had killed a woodchuck several hundred yards up the hill, and skinned it on the spot. It was noon, and wishing to wash my hands before eating lunch I went down to a little stream which flowed there. I unloaded myself of camera, field glasses, etc., pulled off my coat, had a good wash, and was taking my lunch from my coat pocket when I happened to glance across the stream and saw two Ptarmigan about twenty-five feet away. When I tried to approach them with the camera I flushed four more between me and the first two. From the way the birds flew about when I followed them up after lunch I thought they were making the basin their home, for they merely flew back and forth from one side to the other. The elevation was about 12,000 feet.

**Zenaidura macroura marginella.** Western Mourning Dove. Seen on two occasions: September 23 I flushed one from a side-hill in Mosquito Gulch at

about 10,600 feet, and on the 29th one flew past me when I was near the South Platte about half a mile above Alma.

**Circus hudsonius.** Marsh Hawk. One seen from the train at Jefferson September 17, and again October 1; one was seen September 18 above timber-line on Mt. Silverheels; one seen near Fairplay and two or three near Alma.

**Buteo borealis calurus.** Western Red-tailed Hawk. This seemed to be a common hawk in the region, at least when I was there. Coming down into the Park on the train September 17, several were seen flying about over the hayfields, mostly immature birds; more were seen on the 18th when going up Beaver Creek from Fairplay. While at Alma I saw one or two in Mosquito Gulch at 10,600 feet or more, and they were also seen on one or two other occasions.

**Aquila chrysaetos.** Golden Eagle. One seen September 18, above timber-line on Mt. Silverheels.

**Falco sparverius sparverius.** Sparrow Hawk. Seen at Fairplay; in Buckskin Gulch,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Alma, at nearly 11,000 feet; and one from the train at Como.

**Sphyrapicus varius nuchalis.** Red-naped Sapsucker. One seen September 18, on Beaver Creek, 3 miles from Fairplay, at above 10,000 feet.

**Sphyrapicus thyroideus.** Williamson Sapsucker. One collected September 22 in Buckskin Gulch, near Alma, at 10,500 feet. Another was seen near Alma on the 23rd, and I thought I saw one in Mosquito Gulch on the 24th.

**Colaptes cafer collaris.** Red-shafted Flicker. September 18 I saw five or six Flickers together in pine timber on Beaver Creek, about 3 miles from Fairplay, and single birds were seen later in the day, both farther up and lower down the creek. On the 22nd, in Buckskin Gulch about a mile up from Alma, I ran across quite a flock of the birds. They were feeding on the ground in an open park, and I flushed at least sixteen different birds, and think there were more. This was at about 10,400 feet. Seen also in Mosquito Gulch, where one was collected on the 25th. On the 26th two were seen on Buckskin Ridge at 11,000 feet, in mixed dead and green timber. These were the last I saw in the region. One was seen on the 17th at Como.

**Pica pica hudsonia.** Magpie. A common species everywhere from the time I got into the South Park on the train, but was not noted above 11,000 feet.

**Cyanocitta stelleri diademata.** Long-crested Jay. Did not appear to be common, and only a few were seen, near Fairplay and near Alma, all below 10,400 feet.

**Perisoreus canadensis capitalis.** Rocky Mountain Jay. Common in the mountains about Alma, and I saw some about every day while there, and also saw them September 18 in the timber on Silverheels, in fact noted them on that mountain in the very last stunted pines at timber-line.

**Corvus corax sinuatus.** Raven. One seen flying high above timber-line on Mt. Lincoln, September 18. Probably not uncommon.

**Nucifraga columbiana.** Clark Nutcracker. A few seen near Fairplay and Alma. Near the former place they were seen in a foxtail pine getting seeds from the cones.

**Sturnella neglecta.** Western Meadowlark. The Meadowlark was not seen at Fairplay or Alma, but was often seen from the train in the hayfields. It was

seen last about four miles from Fairplay. The altitude at which it was seen varied from 9,100 to 9,800 feet.

**Euphagus cyanocephalus.** Brewer Blackbird. Common everywhere and noted every day. They were always to be seen about Fairplay and Alma.

**Leucosticte australis.** Brown-capped Rosy Finch. Seen September 24, 26, and 28, in South Mosquito Gulch, on Buckskin Ridge, and on Mt. Lincoln, always at high elevations, timber-line or higher. At about 12,000 feet in South Mosquito I found a flock of 15 or 20. Several of them worked down a little lower and perched in some dead trees, in the topmost branches, something I do not recall having seen these birds do before, though when at lower elevations in winter I have seen them in low bushes or trees. One specimen secured.



Fig. 37. FOXTAIL PINES IN BUCKSKIN GULCH, THREE MILES ABOVE ALMA, AT ABOUT 11,500 FEET ALTITUDE

**Spinus pinus.** Pine Siskin. A few seen near Fairplay, September 20, and at least one in Mosquito Gulch, not far from Alma, September 25.

**Passer domesticus.** House Sparrow. A flock of 20 or 30 seen in Alma. I think they were also present at Fairplay.

**Poocetes gramineus confinis.** Western Vesper Sparrow. September 17, when on the train en route to Fairplay, a good many sparrows were seen in the hayfields from the car windows. One of these was positively identified as a Vesper Sparrow. It is quite possible that some of these birds may have been Savannah Sparrows, and very likely other species were present.

**Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys.** White-crowned Sparrow. Common in the willows along the streams near Alma and Fairplay, both adult and immature birds. One of the latter collected September 25 had a little patch of black

on one side of its head, with just a trifle of white at its edge. One bird was seen September 26, on Buckskin Ridge, at between 11,500 and 12,000 feet.

**Spizella passerina arizonae.** Western Chipping Sparrow. An immature bird collected near Fairplay September 19, and two adults seen in Mosquito Gulch September 25.

**Junco hyemalis mearnsi.** Pink-sided Junco. First identified September 27, when one was collected along the South Platte near Alma, and one or two others were seen. One was seen on Mt. Bross the next day at about 11,000 feet. I was of the opinion that they had arrived two or three days previously, as on September 25 I saw in Mosquito Gulch a large, restless flock of Juncos in thick brush. The few identified were all the next species, but I had not seen Juncos in such a large flock before that day.

**Junco phaeonotus caniceps.** Gray-headed Junco. Seen on Beaver Creek and on Mt. Silverheels. Observed almost daily in country about Alma. The greatest elevation at which the species was seen was about 11,500 feet on Silverheels.

**Melospiza melodia montana.** Mountain Song Sparrow. One seen in willows on Beaver Creek, at about 10,000 feet, September 18.

**Dendroica auduboni auduboni.** Audubon Warbler. Seen in Buckskin and Mosquito gulches, September 22, 23, and 25. A flock of 12 or 15 was seen on the 23rd, which appeared to be all females or immature birds.

**Wilsonia pusilla pileolata.** Pileolated Warbler. Seen in Buckskin and Mosquito gulches, September 22, 23, and 24, up to 10,500 feet. Only single birds seen. One seen on the first date was in company with Chickadees and at least one Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Allen's list includes these two warblers. Possibly they are the only species of warbler breeding in the region.

**Cinclus mexicanus unicolor.** Water Ouzel. I fully expected to find this species along all the streams in the region, but saw only one individual, on the South Platte above Alma, September 27.

**Troglodytes aedon parkmani.** Western House Wren. One was collected September 22 in Buckskin Gulch about a mile above Alma. It was about some low cinquefoil bushes in a meadow where I was setting traps, keeping close among the bushes and stirring about but little. I am quite positive I saw one farther up the gulch the day before.

**Penthestes gambeli.** Mountain Chickadee. I saw but a few Chickadees, first on Mt. Silverheels and along Beaver Creek, and later in Buckskin Gulch and on Mt. Bross.

**Regulus calendula calendula.** Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Seen on Beaver Creek and in Buckskin Gulch. Two were collected.

**Myadestes townsendi.** Townsend Solitaire. Seen on but one occasion, between Fairplay and Alma, September 20.

**Planesticus migratorius propinquus.** Western Robin. One or two Robins were seen on Beaver Creek, September 18, and noted on several different days near Alma; last on 29th, when several were seen.

**Sialia currucoides.** Mountain Bluebird. Seen at timber-line on Silverheels, September 18; at Fairplay on the 19th. Observed on several different days about Alma, and in Buckskin and Mosquito gulches, and on Mt. Bross, up to 11,500 feet. Also noted from the train at different points in the South Park.

*Colorado Springs, Colorado, December 9, 1914.*