

into a near-by glass, it occurred to me to try to ascertain how many more there might be. I had placed the bird on a newspaper and noted that none of the lice would leave its host via newspaper but readily transferred to my hand. Therefore it seemed unlikely that few, if any, would have left via highway or the rubber-covered floor of my car. The bird now being cold, all of the parasites appeared to be in the feathers instead of on the body, the majority continually appearing exteriorly on the feathers about the neck and head. What seemed at first to be nearly a hundred proved to be approximately fifty-five individuals, counting one or two which escaped up my sleeve and proceeded to annoy me after I had dressed in the same clothing the next morning. I searched for over an hour in making this count in an effort to make my census as complete as possible, and I believe that few escaped my attention.

A few of the specimens were sent to the United States Bureau of Entomology and were identified as the Biting Owl Louse (*Philoaterus syrni* Packard).

Incidentally, the Burrowing Owl had fed upon Jerusalem Crickets (*Stenopelmatus*), a favorite food with hawks and owls here, five of these large insects being represented by the segments and parts which were in the stomach.—EMERSON A. STONER, *Benicia, California, May 25, 1932.*

Snowy Egret at Monterey, California.—On May 19, 1932, near the lighthouse at Pacific Grove, California, a Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula brewsteri*) was observed under such favorable conditions that, although sight records are usually not considered reliable, I feel it worth recording. Between the lighthouse and the ocean there is a small pond, with a building near-by. We noticed a white object on the far side of the pond, which upon closer investigation proved to be a bird. Soon it began moving about, and presently passed within a few feet of a resting Black-crowned Night Heron, which gave us an excellent chance to judge of size. We walked around toward our bird, and were able to get very close to it. When it finally flew its yellow feet and black legs formed a startling contrast.

The black bill was plainly seen. The bird lit some distance away, but with the 8x glasses which we were using we could still see the black legs and bill. We again walked toward the bird, but when we were still some distance from it, it flew again and finally disappeared over the bay. I have never had a better chance to observe any bird than I had with this one. Every possible point was checked with the aid of Hoffmann's "Birds of the Pacific States", which I had with me at the time, and later with colored illustrations in other books. The black legs and yellow feet of this bird, found together in no other heron in the United States, were plainly visible to the naked eye when the bird first flew, and for some considerable distance with the glasses.—CLARENCE F. SMITH, *San Francisco, California, June 24, 1932.*

An United States Record of the Timberline Sparrow.—On October 13, 1931, at an altitude of 4000 feet, one-half mile southwest of Escondida, Otero County, New Mexico, Mr. Seth B. Benson shot a specimen of *Spizella breweri taverneri* which gives important indication of the course of migration of this subspecies far to the southward of its restricted breeding ground in northwestern British Columbia. The bird, a female, apparently adult and in complete winter plumage, was prepared by Miss Louise Kellogg (her field number 1201) and by gift from her and Miss Annie M. Alexander is now number 59014 in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. The collector recognized this bird before it was shot, as differing from the Brewer Sparrows (*Spizella breweri breweri*) which were common at the same time and place.

In every single character ascribed to *taverneri* by the original describers (Swarth and Brooks, *Condor*, XXVII, 1925, pp. 67-69) the specimen here recorded is in perfect agreement. I have also compared it with the topotype series. Briefly and especially, it stands out from *breweri* by reason of its small, blackish bill, darker colored feet, broader black streaking on upper surface, generally grayer, less clay-color or buffy toned ground-color both above and below, and, notably, by reason of the decided indication of shaft-streaking on the chest and sides.

In the *Auk* (XLV, 1928, pp. 509-510) Mr. Ludlow Griscom published a note concerning "*Spizella taverneri* on Migration in Montana." Since this was the first ascription of this form to the United States, my curiosity to see the specimen upon which it was based led me at once to ask for the loan of it. This, Mr. Griscom kindly saw

to in 1928, and just now (June, 1932) I have again been accorded the privilege of examining it.

This specimen is now no. 237986 in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge. It was collected by Mr. Griscom himself, on September 14, 1927, near Cameron in Madison County, Montana, where it was one of a small company which had been seen almost daily since the 4th of September in a growth of rose bushes and willows within, I judge from the account, the Transition life-zone not far from the nearest tongue of Canadian.

After repeated comparisons of this bird with considerable series of *Spizella* of wide geographic representation in western North America, I conclude, first, that it is not an "immature" but an adult in the sense of being more than one year old. This is shown by the un-sheathing remiges. I would thus be inclined to think that all the birds Griscom saw, September 4 to 16, were still on or very near to their breeding grounds. Then, as to subspecies it is certainly not good *taverneri* but, rather, essentially *breweri* in the features of the population occurring in northern parts of the United States. An almost duplicate of Griscom's bird is no. 228731, Biol. Surv. coll., U. S. Nat. Mus., an adult female taken by Alex Wetmore near Moran, Wyoming, September 3, 1910. These northern birds as compared with *breweri* from typical sage-brush territory (Nevada and eastern and southern California) do show certain minor tendencies toward *taverneri*, but they do not show the complete combination of characters shown by the New Mexico bird.

An interpretation here offered is that these northern United States birds are in the nature of intergrades toward *taverneri*, though in relatively slight degree. This idea has been expressed elsewhere concerning a breeding specimen from the high Transition or low Canadian life-zone close to Lassen Peak in northern California (see Grinnell, Dixon and Linsdale, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 35, 1930, p. 427). More "typical", that is, southern *breweri* over vast areas is associated in the breeding season with the sage-brush (*Artemisia tridentata*). At least two of the aberrant birds were recorded as from a quite different habitat—which may be of some significance.

The type locality of *Spizella breweri* Cassin is probably now satisfactorily established as the Black Hills, South Dakota (see Stone, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1899, p. 30, and Grinnell, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 38, 1932, p. 323). Hence that name would apply, on geographic grounds, to an intergradient population. I have tried out the idea suggesting itself that three races of *S. breweri* might be recognizable—(1) *taverneri* proper, (2) a northern United States race to which the name *breweri* might be restricted subspecifically, and (3) an unnamed southwestern race, slightly smaller, paler and more narrowly streaked above than the middle one, on an average of characters. But, as intimated above, I do not now find good ground for any such action. A best course would appear to be to consider all breeding birds up at least to the Canadian boundary as *S. b. breweri*, though in some specimens showing appreciable tendencies toward the extreme northern racial manifestation of the species, *S. b. taverneri*.

To return to the New Mexico bird, it, then, is typical *taverneri* without any doubt at all, and indicates a point far south along the migration route of that race, possibly terminal and hence a wintering station. Reference to Mrs. Bailey's "Birds of New Mexico" (1928, p. 748) reveals that some "Brewer Sparrows" (which might include this form) remain within that State through the winter, though apparently the great majority move farther south.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, June 26, 1932.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

An article of extraordinary interest to students of bird behavior appeared in the June issue of the *Wilson Bulletin* (vol. XLIV, 1932, pp. 65-75) under the title "Winter Starling Roosts of Washington." The author, Mr. E. R. Kalmbach, therein describes most vividly the way in which the introduced European Starlings congregate at night for roosting in certain places

within the city of Washington, D. C. Among other traits, remarkable ability and tenacity is shown by these birds individually, to return night after night to particular roosting spots within the general locus of the aggregation, and to space out, each bird in its own position on a given perch. What seems to be vast confusion resolves itself finally into a degree