

to this state on "largely presumptive" basis. He thought that "many winter birds and early spring migrants are much darker-breasted than are the breeding birds of our own mountains," and he cited in particular one specimen (no. 19709, Mus. Vert. Zool.) as being "as dark as any specimen from Vancouver Island"—hence, by implication, to be referred to *caurinus*. A recent, much more authoritative record is contained in Hellmayr's "Part VII" of his "Catalogue of Birds of the Americas" (Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Publ. 330, Zool. Ser., 13, 1934, p. 353). Definitely specified, out of four specimens of *caurinus* listed as in the Field Museum, are three from "California (Nicasio, 1; Sevaive Flats, 2)." By inference from these records, by Dawson and by Hellmayr, one must conclude that the Northwestern Robin is at least partially migratory, individuals reaching even to southern California. Since this conclusion would mean adding a subspecies to our "State List," I deemed it desirable to verify the identifications.

By courtesy of Director S. C. Simms, of the Field Museum, the three specimens of that source are now before me. The data borne by their labels are as follows: Field Mus., no. 70130, Nicasio [Marin Co.], Calif., Feb. 16, 1911; collected by C. A. Allen; ♂ [as marked on original label, though "♀" on museum label]. Field Mus., nos. 70128-29, ♂ and ♀; San Sevaive Flats [head of San Sevaive Canyon, 5 miles or so NNE of Etiwanda], San Bernardino Co., Calif.; Dec. 27, 1915; collected by Halsted G. White. No. 70130 is an adult male, showing but little wear and probably only slightly faded; it has the depth of color below, and minimum of white scalloping, usual for male robins over one year old; wing 131.5 mm. No. 70128 is a first-winter male, in fresh, very slightly abraded plumage; white scalloping beneath, conspicuous; wing 133 mm. No. 70129, marked female, is, I judge, in first-winter plumage, little abraded or faded; wing 137.5 mm.

The Dawson-recorded bird above referred to (no. 19709, Mus. Vert. Zool.) was taken by me March 9, 1911, at Tracy, San Joaquin Co., Calif. It is in "high" male plumage—black head, deep red breast, etc.; just the amount of wear had taken place to "reveal" the ground-colors in clearest tone, with the result that it is, in truth, about the richest colored bird in our entire California-taken series. Its wing measures 143.0 mm.

Now to the point: None of these four birds recorded from California as "*caurinus*" are, in my judgment, really of that race; all are *Turdus migratorius propinquus* that is, of this race as represented by robins which breed within the boundaries of California. My reasons for this determination are as follows:

*Caurinus*, like many other passeriform races of the northwest coast region, is small. Using wing-length roughly as an index to general size, I find that eleven males at hand from Vancouver Island show this measurement to average 130.8 mm.; extremes, 125.9 and 134.8. The Californian examples are larger. Then the dorsal darkness of true *caurinus* is marked as compared with all Californian birds; furthermore, even in worn summer plumage, this dorsal color is of a deep olive-gray tone rather than deep mouse gray. In the winter plumage of *caurinus* (for example, adult male from Vancouver, B. C., January 28, 1929, collected by R. A. Cumming) the deep olive tone of the mantle (inclusive of "edgings" of wings) is notably different from the hair brown tone of the California-taken "*caurinus*" now under scrutiny.

I am now sorry that I did not ask also to see the Washington example Hellmayr listed under "*caurinus*." Perhaps that one, too, was really *propinquus*—in which case I suspect Hellmayr's mistake was due to his lack of opportunity to compare with true *caurinus*. At any rate, it now appears that, as far as shown by material examined by me, the race *caurinus*, if migratory to the southward at all, does not reach as far as California. As to the status of robins in Washington and Oregon, I have insufficient information for warranting any general statement. Here is something for northwestern bird-students to look into: the winter-summer status of robin populations there, and the respective subspecific identification of these.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, February 17, 1935.*

**Snow Buntings Perching on Trees.**—During last January, in common with most of North America, we in Saskatchewan experienced some very severe weather. This severe weather caused many of our winter birds to seek shelter around the ranch buildings. While feeding my cattle in a yard sheltered by willow bushes I was interested one day in watching a flock of about forty Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) which were attracted by the seeds in the hay. Now and then buntings would circle

overhead and settle in a cluster on the willows. This was the first time in my experience of some thirty Canadian winters that I have seen Snow Buntings perch on a tree or bush, though they will frequently settle on buildings, haystacks or wire fences.

Shortly after, I received a letter from a friend living thirty miles distant, who is a close observer of birds and has lived all his life in Saskatchewan. He remarked on this same phenomenon on his farm at the same time, and asked me if I had ever noted it before.

T. S. Roberts in "Birds of Minnesota" says "the Snow Bunting is a ground-loving bird, seldom alighting in trees." On the other hand, in "Manual of British Birds," by Saunders and Clarke, we read that "the Snow-Bunting has frequently been observed to perch on trees." Cameron, in his most interesting notes on Montana birds (Auk, 24, 1907, p. 405), says: "Snowflakes perch on corrals here, but I have never observed them to perch in trees, although this is a well known habit referred to by many ornithologists in different parts of the world."

This peculiar aversity for trees seems to be shared by birds of various kinds, but in varying degree. It naturally affects chiefly the ground-frequenting and ground-nesting species, and those that prefer the open spaces away from bushes or trees of any kind. As a group, the longspurs would not be expected to perch on trees, and I have never seen a longspur in such a situation. But Roberts writes of the Lapland Longspur alighting on small oaks. I once saw a flock of Rosy Finches (*Leucosticte*) settle in a clump of bushes, and Cameron (as above) mentions their doing so. In "Birds of California" Dawson says: "I never save once saw the *Leucostictes* alight in a tree, and I have an idea they feel very ill at ease in such a situation."

Of all North American land-birds, perhaps, the Horned Lark (*Otocoris*) has the least use for a tree or bush. This trait probably is common to larks of all species, with the exception of the Wood Lark of Europe; and to all the pipit family, excepting the Tree Pipit.

Turning to a different Order, the pigeons, which may be considered truly arboreal, an outstanding exception is the Rock Pigeon; of this bird Howard Saunders says: "it has a marked objection to alighting on trees—a peculiarity which is to a great extent shared by its domesticated relatives." Among the owls, the Snowy and the Short-eared seldom appear to favor anything taller than a fence post, though either may be seen on top of a haystack; a Burrowing Owl in a tree could scarcely be imagined. Of the diurnal birds-of-prey the Marsh Hawk alone prefers the ground to rest upon at all times. Apparently it has not the habit of surveying the landscape from an elevation which is so noticeable a custom with so many of the raptors.—LAURENCE B. POTTER, *Gower Ranch, Eastend, Saskatchewan, Canada, March 9, 1935.*

**A Second Occurrence of the White-fronted Goose in Arizona.**—Swarth says of this species (Pacific Coast Avif. No. 10, 1914, p. 14): "Status—Coues (1866a, p. 98) found it abundant on the Colorado River. There is no published statement of its occurrence in the region since that time."

On the night of October 3, 1934, the authors were encamped on the shore of Parks Lake, a little-known body of water in southeastern Graham County, twenty miles north of San Simon and thirteen miles west of the New Mexico-Arizona boundary line. The lake lies in the San Simon Valley at an altitude of 3400 feet, and was on that date perhaps one and a quarter miles in length by one mile in width, and a good resting place for waterfowl on account of its shallow margins and vegetated bordering flats.

Just before sunrise on October 4 a flock of about thirty geese was noticed coming in from the west. They alighted down the lake opposite camp and swam about in the rays of the rising sun. Though they appeared to show too much white, it was supposed they were Canada Geese, but the distance was too great for certain identification. They finally came to rest on the opposite shore, where they remained while we began a leisurely circuit of the lake, intent on the interesting birds near at hand.

What was our surprise when we drew nearer, to discover they were certainly not Canada Geese! Then began a stalk in earnest and we were fortunate enough to come within about fifty yards before they took flight. Thus, both being provided with binoculars, we were able to make positive identification of them as White-fronted Geese, *Anser albifrons*. Failing to collect a specimen, the subspecies is a matter of uncertainty.—CHARLES T. VORHIES and WALTER P. TAYLOR, *University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, December 15, 1934.*