

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Spotted Owl Nesting in Colorado.—One specimen taken and three sight records have established a place for the Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis*) in the Colorado state list. C. E. H. Aiken had a specimen brought to him in 1875 that was killed near Colorado Springs; this is now in the Colorado College collection. He also saw one in the same region in June or July of 1873. From this latter observation Aiken assumed that the species probably bred that year. Two other sight reports come from the extreme southern and western parts of the state (La Plata and Costilla counties).

These data have led many subsequent authors (A.O.U. Check-list, F. M. Bailey, Peterson, Sclater, and others) to assume broadly that the Spotted Owl ranges north to include southern Colorado. Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 170, 1938:207) has regarded the presence of this bird in the state list as resting on "slender evidence."

Consequently it was with great interest that I found two juvenal Spotted Owls in a live animal exhibit near Hartsel, Park County, in the very center of Colorado, on September 1, 1941. The birds were being exhibited as "Rock Owls," and I was told by the owner that they came from a ranch approximately forty miles north of Hartsel, where two boys had taken them from the nest. The nest location was described as "back in the timber where there are plenty of rocks," obviously in the Transition Zone, or higher. No more could be learned about the conditions of the find.

I took careful notes at the time. The young birds were of fairly large size, though not as large as the abundant Horned Owls; the large head, at this stage heavily downed, the black irises, dark feathers of the breast, and white in the wings, along with the familiar build of a Barred Owl, made the identification quite positive.

The interest in this observation lies in the fact that it is the first definite indication of the Spotted Owl nesting in Colorado and that it comes from what is best described as north-central Colorado, more than 180 miles north of the New Mexico line. The locality is in the Transition Zone, the lowest life-zone in the area. The record may be of some value also in confirming the assumptions that the Spotted Owl occurs in the more southerly portions of the state.—SAMUEL W. GADD, *Colorado Springs, Colorado, October 4, 1941.*

Another Wilson Snipe Perches on a Telephone Pole.—The recently published record by Messrs. Cottam and Williams of a Wilson Snipe (*Capella delicata*) perching on a telephone pole (Condor, 43, 1941:293) recalls a corroborative observation by the writer. The field notes covering this record are summarized herewith: on June 8, 1941, about one mile north of the town of Glacier Park, Montana, I noted, with surprise, a Wilson Snipe which flew up from a marshy meadow adjacent to the highway and perched on the top of a telephone pole approximately 20 feet in height. While perched there the bird continually gave vent to its characteristic "guinea hen" call—the notes being rapidly uttered about 12 times followed by a pause and then a repetition of the same. It was 11:40 a.m.; cloudy and cool. Passing cars did not frighten the snipe, but when the observer's car was driven to within 75 feet, the bird flew from the pole back into the marshy meadow once more, where, now out of sight, it continued to give its call.—E. LOWELL SUMNER, JR., *Fish and Wildlife Service, San Francisco, California, November 26, 1941.*

Green Heron at Tacoma, Washington.—While observing birds on September 7, 1941, on the tide-flats at Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington, the writer was surprised to flush a Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) from one of the brackish tidal sloughs draining the area. The "fly-up-the-creek" did just that, keeping out of gunshot by moving on each time I came into sight, despite careful stalking. At one time it was watched through binoculars as it caught a minnow in the shallows of a mud bar, appearing scarcely more impressive than two neighboring Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*). Finally it perched on a wooden bridge about a quarter of a mile from where it was first seen. By circling widely I was able to place the timbers of the bridge between us, and so at last got within easy range. The bird proved to be a female of the year, of the race *anthonyi*, with the following dimensions: length, 18.67 inches; wing, 7.60; tail, 2.50; culmen, 2.09; weight, 7.7 ounces. Dissection showed it to be quite fat, and the stomach contained one two-inch sculpin (cottid). The skin is now in my collection.

This specimen constitutes the first record of the species in Pierce County. The species has been collected but once before in the state of Washington; a juvenal male was taken August 20, 1939, two miles west of Chinook, Pacific County, by Hubert C. Hall (Larrison, Murrelet, 21, 1940:1-2). In addition to these there are sight records of Green Herons for King (April 1, 1916; August and September,

1939, 1940, 1941), Thurston, Cowlitz (May 31, 1938), and Walla Walla counties (*ibid.*; and Slipp, MS).

Jewett (Condor, 41, 1939:33) and Gabrielson and Jewett (Birds of Oregon, 1940:110) have observed the increasing regularity of the species in western Oregon in recent years, and it seems not unlikely that this heron may in the future extend its breeding range to Puget Sound. So far as I am aware, however, recent records in the latter area are all based on vagrant fall juveniles.—JOHN W. SLIPP, *Washington State Museum, Seattle, October 20, 1941.*

Pigmy Nuthatch in Oklahoma.—Several montane species of birds occur in Oklahoma solely because the Black Mesa, a spur of the Rocky Mountains, extends into the extreme northwestern corner of the Panhandle (see Sutton, Ann. Carnegie Mus., 24, 1934:1-50). The writer is now able, through the courtesy of Mr. George H. Lowery, Jr., of the Museum of Zoology of Louisiana State University, to add another such species to the list—the Pigmy Nuthatch of the race *Sitta pygmaea melanotis*. Mr. Lowery himself took the specimen, a breeding female, with well-defined brood-patch. It was collected near Kenton, Cimarron County, in the very shadow of the Black Mesa, on May 22, 1937. The whole region was swept by a black dust storm on the preceding day—a cataclysm which the writer, who was present at the time, will never forget!—but, granted that the nuthatch could have been blown in, or become lost in the sudden darkness, it is unlikely that it was far from its nest at the time it was collected. It is now at Cornell University, where most of the writer's collections from Oklahoma are housed.—GEORGE MIKSCHE SUTTON, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, November 3, 1941.*

Woodpecker Efficiency.—Recently while working through solid second-growth and slashed forest in central Ontario, I was struck by the universality of woodpecker workings in contrast to the apparent scarcity of woodpeckers themselves. The best part of a day of more than casual observation brought but a single Downy Woodpecker to attention. The next day produced a Pileated vanishing in the distance, but that is a much rarer species, the sight of it being somewhat of a red letter event. Yet every dead stub was more or less riddled with woodpecker excavation, some trunks being worked almost to destruction, and scarcely a dead branch or streak of diseased bark upon living timber had escaped woodpecker scoring. The season of the year, late September, might have something to do with the apparent dearth of the birds, but remembered experience of other days in the same neighborhood indicates that at no other time or season is the woodpecker population very greatly increased. On estimate, and without close censusing, I would say that the average population of woodpeckers in the area would rarely exceed a pair to the square mile, yet it is evident that little timber of prospective productivity escapes their scrutiny and exploration. Undoubtedly the comparatively few woodpeckers present must destroy an important proportion of wood borers and be a very considerable control upon their indefinite increase.—P. A. TAVERNER, *National Museum of Canada, Ottawa, October 2, 1941.*

Some New Bird Records from Oregon.—It is now a little over six years since the manuscript for the "Birds of Oregon" was prepared by Gabrielson and Jewett. With the exception of a few notes and one addition to the list of birds, little was added to the original manuscript before it went to press in March of 1940. Several new races of birds have been taken or reported by different workers in addition to those known in 1935. The following notes add a little more to our knowledge of Oregon birds.

Lophortyx californica brunnescens. Coastal California Quail. On page 603 of the "Birds of Oregon," in the hypothetical list, mention was made of a specimen of this quail (under the name *L. c. californica*) in the U. S. National Museum collected by Newberry in the "Willamette Valley, Oregon." The locality is doubtful in view of the fact that many of Newberry's labels are indefinite and we know he collected many birds in California at about the same time. Furthermore, the race of quail now in the Willamette Valley is not *L. c. brunnescens*. During the early morning of March 14, 1940, while driving east from Coos Bay through the heavy rain forests of the humid coast belt near Bridge, Coos County, Oregon, I picked up a dead adult male *L. c. brunnescens* (for the use of this name see Grinnell, Condor, 33, 1931:37) from the middle of the road where it evidently had been killed by a passing automobile just prior to my arrival on the scene. The body was still warm and limp. The plumage is almost identical with a February male from San Mateo County and with an April male from Alameda County, California. It is the only true example of this race that I have seen from Oregon.

Pluvialis dominica fulva. Pacific Golden Plover. While driving along the west shore of Tillamook Bay a short distance south of Bayocean, Tillamook County, Oregon, on September 28, 1940, I kept a casual lookout for birds. Noting a small flock of Black-bellied Plovers, I stopped the car for a better study of the group through binoculars. No sooner was the glass raised than a Golden Plover