

Only two White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) were seen on our trips and one other was heard. Both specimens were taken and proved to be of the resident race *tenuissima*. If there had been any migration of *nelsoni* through the yellow pine belt in 1949, the birds must have passed on before our visits.

Pigmy Nuthatches (*Sitta pygmaea*) were abundant throughout the pine belt. At its upper limit, from a loose flock of this noisy little bird, we took seven specimens. These do not appear to differ significantly from the birds of northwestern and central-eastern Arizona. They are at least as brown on the hind-neck beside the concealed whitish spot as are the Arizona birds, despite their current recognition as a distinct race (*canescens*) on the basis of grayer head and hind-neck. The crown becomes grayer (less brown) with wear.

Although we were constantly on the lookout for Brown Creepers (*Certhia familiaris*), none was seen or heard. The weather was crisp and cold, and snow lay on the ground at elevations as low as the piñon-juniper belt. It is doubtful, however, that severity of the weather was at all extreme for these birds or that there had been any considerable migration. It would seem that this species must be quite rare in Kyle Canyon, if indeed it winters there.

A flock of Golden-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus satrapa*) was discovered almost immediately on our arrival at the upper picnic area at the upper edge of the yellow pine belt. It was estimated that there were about a dozen in the loose flock. Seven specimens taken are greenish-backed birds, one or two females being pale enough for *R. s. umoenus*; the others do not differ greatly from fresh fall specimens of *R. s. apache*. So far as we are aware, this species has not been recorded before from this range nor from Clark County. Previous Nevada records are all from the northeastern part of the state, much farther north (Linsdale, Pac. Coast Avif. No. 23, 1936:100). Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*) were more generally distributed.

Although the Cassin Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) was recorded as common by van Rossem (*op. cit.*: 52), we found only one flock of about a half dozen birds; this was on October 21, in the mountain mahogany belt below the ranger station. At the upper picnic area the same day, one or two Pine Siskins (*Spinus pinus*) were heard flying overhead. Aside from this we noted no other finches, nor any other fringillids except *Junco* and *Zonotrichia*.—WARREN M. PULICH, Boulder City, Nevada, and ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, Tucson, Arizona, December 15, 1950.

The Identity of Two Asiatic Birds Recorded, from Nunivak Island, Alaska.—On the basis of specimens taken in 1927 by C. G. Harrold for the California Academy of Sciences, Swarth (*Proc. Calif. Acad. Sci.*, ser. 4, 17, 1928:251) recorded an Old World warbler and an accentor from Nunivak Island as additions to the list of North American birds. While the specific identifications were valid when published, more recent studies have divided both into subspecies, so that it has become important to compare the original specimens again with series from eastern Asia. Dr. Robert T. Orr of the Academy has kindly forwarded the skins to Washington for examination, since comparative material was not available in California.

The first of these birds, taken on Nunivak September 15, 1927, was reported as Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler, *Locustella ochotensis* (Middendorff). Two forms are now recognized, differing mainly in length of bill, the culmen from the base in *L. o. ochotensis* measuring 15.5 to 17 mm., and in *L. o. pleskei* Taczanowski 18.5 to 20.0 mm. The Nunivak specimen, having the culmen 15.8 mm., belongs definitely with typical *ochotensis*.

Meise (*Ornith. Monatsb.*, 46, 1938:173) considers *ochotensis* conspecific with *Locustella certhiola* (Pallas), but it seems to the writer better to await more detailed information before accepting this proposal. There is no question but that *certhiola* and *ochotensis* are closely related, as indicated by form, size, and tail-markings. They differ definitely, however, in the markings of the dorsal surface, this region being prominently streaked in *certhiola* and almost uniform in *ochotensis* (including *pleskei*). The birds marked by the two kinds of pattern seem to approach one another rather closely in breeding range without evident variation toward one another in the specimens seen. It is quite possible that they may overlap when their distribution is better known. It seems preferable for the present to maintain them as separate species, at least until more definite data on which to unite them is available. The bird from Nunivak therefore is identified as *Locustella ochotensis ochotensis* (Middendorff).

The second specimen, an accentor, recorded as *Prunella montanella* (Pallas), was taken on Nunivak on October 3, 1927. The species as a whole breeds in Siberia north to the limit of trees, its range extending from the Urals to the Pacific Coast, and south to Altai, Transbaikalia and Ussuriland. It winters south to China and Japan. Portenko (Compt. Rend. Acad. Sci., U. S. S. R., 1929, A, no. 9:220) has separated the birds of the Pacific coastal area breeding from the Chokotski Peninsula south to extreme eastern Manchuria (Lake Khanka) as *Prunella montanella badia* (type locality "Tschuktschenland" = Chokotski Peninsula; type in Zoological Museum, Leningrad). In *P. m. montanella* the general appearance of the dorsal area is grayer, and the feathers of the back have distinct dusky shaft streaks. In *P. m. badia* the general appearance is darker, the back being more reddish brown, without dusky shaft streaks and with less evident buffy edgings on the feathers. The specimen from Nunivak agrees with the latter, though very slightly intermediate toward *montanella*. It is identified as *Prunella montanella badia* Portenko.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., February 5, 1951.*

Pebble-dropping by House Sparrows.—During my high school days at West Point, Nebraska, my father was a merchant occupying a building of two stories with a long pebble-covered, tarred roof sloping to the rear. Forming a short walkway behind the rear entrance were two sloping doors, which, when opened up, admitted entry to the basement stairway. Over a period of several days in mid-May of 1903, I noticed many small pebbles scattered about on these doors. I also heard from time to time the sound of small objects falling on the doors. Efforts to find the pebble-droppers were of no avail until one day when I happened to approach the rear of the building from the alley. My position some fifty feet from the building now permitted me to see several House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) bringing small stones to the edge of the roof and dropping them. As each pebble was dropped the bird involved turned its head to one side, apparently the better to listen to it and to watch it as it struck the door. It may have been a sort of bird pastime; it certainly was an activity of no evident value. After about a week I saw no more of it.

In later years I had begun to doubt the correctness of my boyhood observations until a second viewing of this same phenomenon was made on April 10, 1950, in Riverside, California. On this occasion the sparrows were dropping small bits of crushed stone from the roof of a one-story building onto a cement walk. In the first instance six or eight birds were involved; in this recent observation but two birds were "amusing themselves" with pebble-dropping.—EDMUND C. JAEGER, *Department of Zoology, Riverside College, Riverside, California, January 12, 1951.*

Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the San Bernardino Mountains, California.—On June 2, 1950, I observed a Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) near Lake Arrowhead, San Bernardino County, California. The area was typical of the upper Transition Zone on the desert slope of the mountains. The bird was approached easily to a distance of about thirty feet as it foraged in manzanita and buckthorn bushes. This sight record is quite unusual, not only for its location but for the altitude of the station which was approximately 5000 feet.—JOHN H. BAUMGART, *Pasadena, California, January 15, 1951.*