FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Possible Desert Flight Line of the American Redstart.—Because of its characteristic actions and the virtual absence of other redstarts in the desert areas west of central Arizona, the American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) may be recognized readily at some distance. A westward extension of the breeding range carries it through the Rocky Mountain-Great Basin region, as is true of several other eastern birds of different families. All of the latter, however, migrate due east before turning south to their winter ranges and are thus absent or at most accidental to the south of their westernmost breeding outposts. The Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*), Veery (*Hylocichla fuscescens*), and Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) are all examples of this latter type of migration.

The migration of the American Redstart appears to differ somewhat from this usual pattern. It is true that west of extreme eastern Arizona the species is extremely rare. In the great amount of field work done by many ornithologists from the San Pedro River westward beyond Tucson, Arizona, no records have yet been obtained since the time of H. Brown and W. E. D. Scott (Auk, 5, 1888:36). Neither are there any records for the Sacaton, Camp Verde, Flagstaff, or Grand Canyon regions, all of which have been centers of ornithological activity at one time or another. Considering the great amount of field work done in coastal California, the species may also be considered casual there.

Between these two regions, however, lie the main deserts of the Southwest. Here resident ornithologists are few. Yet in spite of great distances and paucity of observations a truly surprising number of records has already been obtained in and around the lower Colorado River valley. This, in our opinion, indicates that these deserts serve as an incipient migration route for part of the birds of the westernmost breeding colonies. With the generous assistance of Gale Monson, Mrs. Nora Poyser, Russell K. Grater, and Mrs. James Cox we have assembled a number of records of the American Redstarts in this region.

Starting at the north, on May 21, 1942, one was seen on the desert about nine miles northeast of Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada (Broadbooks, Condor, 48, 1946:141-142). The greatest concentration of known records is at the recently established desert oasis of Boulder City, 24 miles to the east of Las Vegas—a circumstance probably due to the isolation of the area, its prominence on the barren hilltops, and the presence at times of qualified observers. There are already eleven records of the American Redstart for Boulder City and its immediate vicinity. Russell K. Grater (Prelim. Bird Check-list of the Boulder Dam Recreational Area, U.S.D.I., Nat. Park Service, 1939: supple. list mimeogr.) on August 25 and 29, 1939, reported the first one seen in the area. On August 18 and 19, 1949, an adult male was observed near Lake Mead. During the fall migration of 1950, six observations were reported as follows: an adult male was seen on August 27, and female-plumaged birds were seen September 3 (one), September 9 (two), September 19 (one), September 25 (one), and finally October 21 (one). The fall migration of 1951 was not as striking as that of 1950. Only one bird was seen, this in female plumage, on September 9 by Pulich at his home. There are only two spring records for the area. These were single birds reported by Mrs. James Cox in 1950 and 1951 but unfortunately no specific dates are available.

A final and important point regarding the American Redstart's occurrence at Boulder City is that no qualified observer has ever lived in Boulder City for any length of time *without* seeing this species pass through.

In the northern part of the Hualpai Mountains, about 14 miles south-southeast of Kingman, Mohave County, Arizona, a first-year male was collected in a Gambel oak grove at 6200 feet elevation on May 27, 1949, by Phillips.

On the California side of the lower Colorado River there has been no resident ornithologist. The Needles-Topock area, however, is visited weekly by Gale Monson, refuge manager of the Havasu Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Here there are already two records. On September 22, 1948, Monson saw a young female in athel trees some six miles below Needles, San Bernardino County, California. The second record is an adult male observed by Monson and Pulich on September 13, 1951, on the immediate area of the refuge about three miles above Topock, Mohave County, Arizona. This bird was foraging in willow association within the swamp area of the refuge.

East of the southern part of the Hualpai Mountains, a young female was found four miles south

of Wikieup P. O., on the Big Sandy River, Mohave County, Arizona, September 24, 1951, by Phillips. No other records, however, have yet been obtained in the lower Colorado River valley or its vicinity north of the Imperial Wildlife Refuge above Yuma, Arizona. Here an immature male was seen along the shore of Martinez Lake on September 22, 1942, by Monson (Condor, 46, 1944:22). Also "in the valley" near Yuma, Herbert Brown (MS) records under the very early date of April 30, 1905: "Saw a Redstart but did not succeed in getting it."

Farther west, but within the deserts and possibly forming a part of this pathway, are four records. The northernmost is a female taken at Fish Lake, Esmeralda County, southern Nevada, May 30, 1928, by Seth Benson (Linsdale, Pac. Coast Avif. No. 23, 1936:111); at Twentynine Palms, San Bernardino County, California, on May 28, 1935, a female or young male was observed (F. Carter, Condor, 39, 1937:216); an immature female was taken near the southern end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County, California, October 3, 1948 (Cardiff and Cardiff, Condor, 51, 1949:45); and one was "in almost continuous song" at Imperial (State) Refuge Headquarters, Salton Sea, May 27 and 28, 1951, as noted by William Anderson (Small and Pyle, Audubon Field Notes, 5, 1951:276).

In summary, therefore, the American Redstart has been found at every point in the lower Colorado River valley and vicinity from which we have known, continuous observations except for the Parker area, Arizona, where Monson has not yet found it. It has also been found at other points where observations have been made only briefly. Our records indicate a definite preference by this species for broad-leafed deciduous trees, which may explain the numerous records for Boulder City, Nevada. This town is virtually a desert oasis of deciduous cover surrounded by nearly barren desert mountains. The dates of occurrence are from April 30 and May 21 to May 30 and from August 18 to October 3 and 21. Most of the records are for fall migration. While this article cites 22 records, the species can only be considered rare; only once has more than one individual been found at a time. This is nevertheless quite different from its status both east and west of the lower Colorado River valley and adjacent deserts. For this reason, the deserts of the lower Colorado River basin may be an incipient line of migration for the western populations of *Setophaga ruticilla*.—WARREN M. PULICH, *Boulder City, Nevada,* and ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona, May 6, 1952.*

A Wild Hybrid Between Branta and Anser Obtained in Japan.—Mr. Keisuke Kobayashi of Kobe, Japan, has sent me the skin of an immature wild goose for identification. It was selected and purchased out of some fifty geese (most of them are *Anser albifrons* and a few of *A. fabalis*) that arrived at Kobe city market on February 19, 1952, from Ishinomaki, Miyagi, northeast Hondo.

I have carefully examined and compared the skin with *Branta canadensis leucopareia, Anser albifrons frontalis,* and *Anser anser rubrirostris* in the collection of the Yamashina Museum and have come to the conclusion that this goose is no doubt an example of a wild hybrid between *Branta canadensis* subsp. and *Anser* sp. [possibly *albifrons*].

Differential measurements (mm.) of the three forms of geese and the hybrid may be tabulated as follows:

Forms	Location	Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Culmen	Height of both mandibles	Number of "teeth" of upper mandible	Number of rectrices
Anser anser	Eurasia	398–482	150–160	64–81	53 –76	37–39	24–27	16–18
A. albifrons frontalis	Japan and Korea	368–440	118–135	64–79	43 –57	25–30	26–33	16–18
Branta-Anser hybrid	Ishinomaki	440	117	78	48.5	25.5	30–31	16
B. canadensis leucopareia	N. Amer. and Japan	364–456	108–147	69–86	31.1–45.5	21–23	21–22	14–16