

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Recent Bird Records from Southeastern New Mexico.—The birds listed here were observed in the past six years in conjunction with my field work as a biologist employed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. A number of these records represent, to the best of my knowledge, second and third specimen records for the state. Others represent interesting seasonal and/or distributional records for the southeastern section of New Mexico. Unless otherwise noted, all specimens are in the collection of the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque.

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Nyctanassa violacea. Yellow-crowned Night Heron. An adult male was taken at Lake McMillan, 15 miles north of Carlsbad, Eddy County, on August 27, 1962. It was accompanied by two immature birds, apparently of this species. There were about ten Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) in the vicinity at the time. The three Yellow-crowned Night Herons were first observed by R. C. Brummett and the writer on August 24. On August 28, 1962, a lone immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron was taken at a dirt livestock tank on the Rubert Madera Ranch in southern Lea County. The immature bird was identified in Washington by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel. The adult bird is in the collection at Western New Mexico University, Silver City. There is only one previous sight record of this species for New Mexico, although it is observed regularly in Midland, west Texas.

Anser albifrons. White-fronted Goose. A single bird was observed with a flock of Snow Geese (*Chen hyperborea*) at Bitter Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, near Roswell, on November 28, 1957, and another single bird was seen with Snow Geese at Lake McMillan on December 31, 1958. This species is also seen regularly in west Texas.

Chen caerulescens. Blue Goose. Although this goose is also recorded as "rather rare in the state" by Ligon (New Mexico Birds, 1961:39), it is evidently more common than the White-fronted Goose. On November 1, 1957, I observed five Blue Geese in a flock of approximately 125 Snow Geese at the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge on the Rio Grande near Socorro. Two Blue Geese were recorded in a flock of approximately 300 Snow Geese on Lake McMillan, December 12, 1961. At least four Blue Geese, including one white-bellied individual, were seen in a flock of about 225 Snow Geese on Lake McMillan, January 31, 1963.

Mergus serrator. Red-breasted Merganser. On March 7, 1963, a flock of at least 23 birds, including ten males, was located by R. C. Brummett and me at Harroun Lake, Eddy County, about ten miles southeast of Carlsbad. There are few other definite records for the state.

Buteo platypterus. Broad-winged Hawk. A single bird was carefully observed at Washington Ranch, Eddy County, on April 15, 1962. Records for the Broad-winged Hawk in New Mexico are few, but the bird is observed "every second or third year" at Midland, Texas, according to the Midland naturalists. Midland is less than 200 miles east of Carlsbad.

Falco femoralis. Aplomado Falcon. On May 11, 1962, I observed a pair of Aplomado Falcons on the San Simon Ranch, Lea County. The birds were perched on large mesquite trees, and I had an excellent opportunity to study them for nearly fifteen minutes, at distances from 75 to 35 yards under ideal light conditions. They did not appear to notice my presence at any time and I moved about in plain sight of the birds. The birds were perched together in the same tree and I was able to compare coloration and pattern of both sexes. There are few records of this species in New Mexico.

Gallinula chloropus. Common Gallinule. On July 7, 1961, an adult was observed on a pond 25 miles east of Carlsbad. An immature was taken on the Pecos River below Carlsbad on September 23, 1962, where at least two birds were observed. The Common Gallinule is evidently establishing itself on the Pecos River. It has been recorded a number of times on the Rio Grande below Socorro.

Bartramia longicauda. Upland Plover. This species was first noted August 14, 1958, at Elida, Roosevelt County, after which six additional sight records were made. In 1961 birds were recorded

on the Madera Ranch, Lea County, on 12 occasions in the month of August. In 1962 the first plovers were noted on July 24 on the Madera Ranch. From that date until September 24, I made more than 35 observations in the course of 15 days in the field. One bird was collected from a flock of nine found at Otis, near Carlsbad, on September 17. Once a nesting species in New Mexico, this bird is evidently coming back as a migrant, after an extended period when few were noted.

Ereunetes pusillus. Semipalmated Sandpiper. On May 1, 1962, one was collected at the Dexter Fish Hatchery, Chaves County, evidently the second record and specimen for the state. The specimen is in the Western New Mexico University collection, Silver City, where it was identified by Dr. Dale A. Zimmerman.

Crocethia alba. Sanderling. I have recorded the Sanderling as a regular fall migrant for the past six years, and two specimens in fall plumage have been taken. Spring records for this species are regarded as unusual in this region, thus the following may be of interest. Single birds in winter plumage were observed at Lake McMillan on April 2 and 21, 1963. Two birds in breeding plumage were taken at Lake McMillan on May 17, 1963.

Lobipes lobatus. Northern Phalarope. I have three records for the fall of 1962. On September 20 a single bird was collected at Lake McMillan, and on September 24 another was observed at Lake Avalon. On October 4 two birds were observed, and one collected, from a dirt livestock tank on the Madera Ranch, Lea County. There are few other records for this species in New Mexico, but it is seen regularly in west Texas in Midland County.

Columba fasciata. Band-tailed Pigeon. An interesting record of this species far from its usual habitat is that of a single bird which came to a baited quail trap on the Madera Ranch, Lea County, on September 30, 1961. This location is at least 70 miles from the nearest pine belt in the Guadalupe Mountains, where Band-tails occasionally nest.

Zenaida asiatica. White-winged Dove. Two records of far-wandering birds were obtained in 1962. On May 10, 1962, I collected a calling male at Lake Avalon, near Carlsbad (testes 7×13 and 8×17 mm.). During the first week in September another White-winged Dove was observed on the Madera Ranch in Lea County. These individuals were at least 250 miles from their known breeding range in Hidalgo County, although the species has been recorded summering, but not nesting, at El Paso, Texas. Ligon (*op. cit.*:134) records a White-winged Dove at Corona, some 150 miles northwest of Carlsbad.

Myiarchus crinitus. Great Crested Flycatcher. On September 8, 1962, one was collected at Washington Ranch in Eddy County. This is evidently the second specimen and record for the state (see Hubbard, Condor, 65, 1963:237).

Sayornis phoebe. Eastern Phoebe. Apparently a regular migrant and winter resident in small numbers in southeastern New Mexico. I have records for December from Christmas Bird Counts at Washington Ranch, five miles south of the Carlsbad Caverns National Park, in 1957, 1958, 1960, and 1961. Late winter records were obtained at Washington Ranch on January 22, 1959, and March 25, 1962. On January 4, 1959, two birds were observed at Lake McMillan when the temperature registered 12° F. and there was one-half inch of ice around the shore of the lake.

Sialia sialis. Eastern Bluebird. Two birds were taken from a group of five found at Washington Ranch on December 19, 1962. There is only one other record for New Mexico (Hubbard, *op. cit.*:237) although the species is observed "every two or three years" in Midland County, Texas, about 175 miles east of Carlsbad.

Bombycilla garrula. Bohemian Waxwing. On February 10, 1962, one was observed with approximately 30 Cedar Waxwings (*B. cedrorum*) at the Carlsbad Game Farm. Two Bohemian Waxwings were observed in Carlsbad on March 16, 1962, also in association with Cedar Waxwings. The Bohemian Waxwings were undoubtedly strays from huge flocks which invaded northern New Mexico during this period.

Dendroica caerulescens. Black-throated Blue Warbler. An immature male observed at Stevens Tank, Lea County, on October 17, 1962, was collected the following day. There are apparently only two other specimens from New Mexico. One was found dead near Anthony, Dona Anna County, December 8, 1953, by Marian Delp.

Dendroica virens. Black-throated Green Warbler. On May 11, 1962, two birds were observed at Stevens Tank, Lea County, and a male was collected. There are only two other specimens from New

Mexico: John Durrie collected a bird on October 24, 1958, at Bernardo, Socorro County, and Allan R. Phillips took an immature male near Anthony, November 1, 1954. The specimen taken by Durrie is in the University of New Mexico collection; the bird taken by me was deposited in the collection of Western New Mexico University, Silver City.

Icterus cucullatus. Hooded Oriole. A male was observed at Washington Ranch on April 4, 1962, and one was seen there on May 5, 1963.

Euphagus carolinus. Rusty Blackbird. One was collected at Stevens Tank, Lea County, on October 31, 1962. This evidently constitutes the first specimen for the state, although there are several sight records, and a bird was banded by James Travis at Los Alamos on November 29, 1957.

Passerina versicolor. Varied Bunting. A male was carefully observed at close range at Carlsbad Caverns National Park on June 23, 1962. This bird had been under observation by Park personnel for several weeks, and a female was also reported in the area. There is apparently only one other sight record for New Mexico, a bird seen in Hidalgo County in June, 1962, by Dale A. Zimmerman (personal communication).

Phœticus ludovicianus. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. A male was observed at Stevens Tank, Lea County, on May 10, 1962. On May 20, 1963, an immature male was collected by Benjamin Warfield and me at Sitting Bull Falls, Eddy County. This is the first known specimen for the state, although sight records are available.

Zonotrichia albicollis. White-throated Sparrow. On November 19, 1962, a single bird was observed at Stevens Tank, Lea County. On December 19, 1962, another was seen at Washington Ranch.

Rhynchophanes mccownii. McCown Longspur. One bird was collected from a flock of 17 discovered at Lake McMillan on November 26, 1962. On February 14, 1963, another was taken from a flock of nine birds about 40 miles east of Carlsbad, in Lea County. These are apparently the first records for this species in New Mexico since 1940.—BRUCE K. HARRIS, *New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Silver City, New Mexico, September 5, 1963.*

Another Pacific Record of the Black Swift Off México.—On September 20, 1933, a Black Swift, *Nephoecetes* [= *Cypseloides*] *niger*, was collected aboard the S.S. "Antigua" at 12° 52' N latitude and 91° 50' W longitude (Davidson, Condor, 36, 1934:37); the specimen was referred to the migrant race *borealis* on the basis of measurements.

On May 19, 1963, at 3:00 a.m., a Black Swift flew into a cabin aboard the M.V. "Red Rooster," a fishing vessel under charter to the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Biological Laboratory, San Diego. The bird was captured and preserved by the junior author, and presented to the Dickey Collection (no. 51,462) at the University of California, Los Angeles. At the time of capture of this specimen, the "Red Rooster" was lying in waters at 14° 30' N latitude, 92° 34' W longitude, a point approximately 18 miles southwest of Puerto Madera, Chiapas. The bird was a female, the largest follicle measuring less than 1 mm.; it was extremely fat, weighing 41.5 gm.; the stomach was empty. Measurements are: chord of closed wing, 157 mm.; tail, 52.3 mm.; exposed culmen, 6.1 mm.; tarsus, 12.2 mm.; middle toe, 9.3 mm. In view of these measurements, which are intermediate between those of *C. n. borealis* and *C. n. costaricensis* (Ridgway, Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus., 50, pt. 5, 1911:708), racial designation is uncertain. The large amount of fat and the hour at which it came aboard the vessel suggests that the bird was a migrant, probably representing the race *borealis*.

Willis (Condor, 63, 1961:419) reported a Prairie Warbler, *Dendroica discolor*, which flew aboard the M.S. "Oakville" on September 25, 1960, at 12° 37' N latitude and 92° 31' W longitude.

An interesting fact is that all three records occurred in a restricted area comprising less than one degree of longitude and only 1° 53' of latitude. Furthermore, neither species is otherwise known to occur on the Pacific slope of southern México or Guatemala. Although the race *borealis* of the Black Swift winters in México, it has not been recorded south or east of Oaxaca. A possible explanation for the presence of these migrants at this particular location may be found in the presence of off-shore winds that travel in a north-to-south direction over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and which veer both to the west and to the east after crossing the Isthmus. These winds form a potential mechanism for carrying birds from the Gulf of México or the region of the Isthmus over the Isthmus