

First North American Sighting of Brown Shrike, (*Lanius cristatus*) and Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*), and second record of Red-throated Flycatcher (*Ficedula parva*)

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THE FOLLOWING SIGHTINGS were made by the authors while leading birding tours near Gambell, St. Lawrence Island in the northern Bering Sea in June 1977. Scientific nomenclature follows Vaurie (1959) and English names are those of King and Dickinson (1975).

Brown Shrike, *Lanius cristatus*. A single bird was observed on June 4, 5 and 6, 1977 about 0.7 km east of Gambell. All observations were within a radius of 300 m on level gravel containing some grass up to 25 cm high, and adjacent to a boulder-strewn tundra-covered hillside. The bird chose exposed perches on knolls and boulders. It was quite shy but well observed through several 20x-40x spotting scopes at distances of 30 - 100 m by 27 observers. Its description from notes made in the field, is as follows: about 20 cm (8 in) in length; shrike-like in appearance, shape and behavior; tail rather long; upperparts brown with a rusty tinge, the crown (but not nape) and tail rufous-brown; black band through eye, separated from crown by narrow white eyebrow; no white patch or spot in wing; throat and belly white; breast bright buff; flanks rusty buff. King has seen this bird commonly in eastern and southern Asia.

Comparison of our field notes with specimens in the American Museum of Natural History suggests that our bird was most likely *Lanius cristatus cristatus*, which breeds in northeastern Siberia (but usually

not reaching the coast), to the mouth of the White River in Anadyr' Valley and upper reaches of the River Achay-Vayam in Koratskaya Zemlya, and occurs sporadically in Kamchatka (Dement'ev *et al.*, 1968 and Ivanov, 1976). We could not see any white frontal band in the field. *L. c. cristatus* has a narrow inconspicuous frontal band whereas all three of the other races listed by Vaurie (1959) have broad, more conspicuous ones

Dusky Warbler, *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
One was seen about 4 km south-southeast of Gambell on June 6, 1977 by about 15 observers. We watched it for about 1½ hours through scopes and binoculars generally at a distance of 30 - 40 m, but several times as close as approximately 7 - 8 m. It was on open tundra and preferred small hummocks. Its description from notes made in the field, is as follows: small, approximately 12.5 cm (about 5 in); very active, with quick movements, continually on the move, constantly flicking its wings; upperparts dark dusky brown, without any trace of a wingbar, inconspicuous buffy eyebrow, barely visible behind eye; dark eyeline; bill dark, the mandible basally dull orange-yellow; underparts dusky white, with a faint grayish or brownish wash on breast; sides and flanks brownish buff; under tail coverts bright deep buff; tail cut straight across (not notched) and slightly rounded on corners.

Lack of wingbar, bright deep buff under tail coverts and slightly rounded tail

eliminate all other *Phylloscopus* species, except Radde's Warbler, *P. schwarzi* and Yellow-streaked Warbler, *P. armandii*. Radde's Warbler is larger with a "heavier" look (than Dusky warbler), has a stouter bill; has slightly paler, warmer-brown upperparts with an olive tinge; has longer, broader, paler eyebrow that is especially conspicuous behind the eye; has cinnamon tinge to buffy under tail coverts. The Yellow-streaked Warbler (which has not occurred in Siberia) is close enough to Radde's Warbler to be distinguished from Dusky by the same field marks. King has seen both Dusky and Radde's Warblers frequently in Southeast Asia, and during recent field work near Bangkok noted the constant wing flicking of *P. fuscatus*. Bill color of the Gambell bird was consistent with a series collected in Thailand from 1964 to 1967. The species breeds in Siberia as close to St. Lawrence Island as lower Anadyr', Koryatskaya Zemlya and northern Kamchatka (Ivanov, 1976).

Red-throated Flycatcher, *Ficedula parva*. A male was observed approximately 3 km southeast of Gambell on June 5. It was on a boulder-strewn tundra hillside, partially covered with snow, which dipped into a large frozen lake. When first seen it was perched atop a large boulder at lakeside. It kept to exposed perches on boulders. About 20 observers watched it for 2 hours at ranges of 5 - 50 m with spotting scopes and binoculars. Its description from notes taken in the field, is as follows: small, approximately 12.5 cm (about 5 in); perching posture more nearly horizontal than vertical (at perhaps a 30° angle), with the tail usually cocked, and often being flicked up and down; upperparts gray-brown; tail black, the white bases of the outer pairs of tail feathers conspicuous in flight; throat orange-rufous, surrounded by grayish cheeks and breast; remaining underparts white with brownish buff flanks. Finch took a series of photographs, which in the aggregate confirm the identification. Finch heard the bird singing a song suggestive of that of a Lincoln's Sparrow. There is no other Asian species with which the Red-throated Flycatcher can be confused. King has observed this species frequently in southern Asia. It breeds as far northeast in Siberia as upper Anadyr'

(Markov Village), Koryatskaya Zemlya (Achay-Vayam River) and Kamchatka (Ivanov 1976). The details of the first North American record, a specimen collected in the western Aleutians a few days earlier, will be published separately.

The weather for several days preceding these finds was cloudy, rainy and foggy with the wind out of the north. Late on the evening of June 3 or early on the morning of June 4, the wind shifted to southwest and varied to south-southwest on June 4 - 6. These days were mostly clear and sunny, with the cliffs of the Chukotskiy Peninsula of Siberia 40 miles distant, clearly visible. Most of the rarer Siberian species seen on St. Lawrence I., in the full week there appeared these three days. A 6 a.m. check June 4 of the area where the Brown Shrike was later found showed little change from a 10 p.m. check the previous night. However at about 10 a.m., a Temminck's Stint, *Calidris temminckii*, Dusky Thrush, *Turdus naumanni eunomus* and two Gray-tailed Tattlers, *Tringa brevipes*, were seen in a boneyard close to Gambell. Boneyards are areas in which eskimos have traditionally left animal bones and which contain many small pools surrounded partially by short vegetation, the result of recent excavations for artifacts. These birds had not been present as recently as two hours earlier. Moving east to another boneyard, a Bluethroat and the Brown Shrike were found, neither of which had been present earlier that day.

We were on St. Lawrence from June 1 - 7 and checked several areas near Gambell 3 - 6 times per day. There seemed to be little change between the late evening check (8-11 p.m.) and the early morning check (6 a.m.) the following day. Rather, most new birds appeared during the day. Occasional clearly migrating birds were noted coming from the west and southwest across the Bering Sea at all hours of the day. These observations would seem to indicate that a major portion of spring migration in this area is carried out by day rather than during the short and not-so-dark night. It is interesting that such typical Siberian birds as are mentioned above should be flying onto St. Lawrence Island on a clear day. With the exception of the Bluethroat, none of these birds has been

known to nest in Alaska. The winds, while favorable for flying northeast, did not seem severe enough to force birds off course. Other Siberian species seen from June 4-6 were: several Bean Geese, *Anser fabalis*, two Mongolian Plovers, *Charadrius mongolus*, several Rufous-necked Stints, *Calidris ruficollis*, three breeding plumaged Ruffs, several Wood Sandpipers, *Tringa glareola*, one Common Sandpiper, *Tringa hypoleucos*, a Gray Wagtail, *Motacilla cinerea*, on June 6, one Olive Tree-Pipit, *Anthus hodgsoni*, on June 6, 18 Common Rosefinches, *Carpodacus erythrinus*, on June 6 (!) following a steady build-up from one female on June 1 to 11 females and 7 males on June 6.

Other observers who saw one or more of the three new species reported here were: Ebbe Banstorp, Joe Burgiel, Shirley Doole, Elnor Elder, Dr. and Mrs. Nicholas Greene, Alexander Griesman, Raymond Hannikman, Thomas Heatley, Douglas Kraus, Dell Lacy, Thomas LePage, Roy and Martha Lound, Thompson Marsh, Sene and Edwin McKnight, Cortland Myers, Larry Peavler, Jack Ross, Arnold Small, David Smith, Shumway Suffel, and Helen Wallace.

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