

considerable growth of fir (*Abies sp.*). Near the top of Gaudineer, on a very steep slope, is a small stand of virgin spruce, a part of the locally famous Hamilton "wedge." Here the spruces tower to a hundred feet or more, and it was in the tops of these trees that the Crossbills found the cones on which they fed. In addition to the height of the trees and the steepness of the slopes, a further hindrance to collecting is offered by the dense undergrowth, masses of rhododendron, stunted spruces, and tall ferns in the slight openings.

Since no specimens were secured, it was, of course, impossible to determine the race or races of the Crossbills which we saw. Our purpose in publishing this rather indeterminate record is to call attention to three interesting possibilities which may account for the presence of the birds in the region, a territory in which they have not been previously noted.

1. The birds may have been part of a population nesting somewhere to the north or west.

2. They may have been stragglers from the more or less permanent Red Crossbill population in the mountains of eastern Tennessee.

3. They may have been part of a previously undiscovered permanent population in the Cheat mountains region.

As for the first of these possibilities, it seems unlikely that wanderers from more northern points would have concentrated here without being noted in other regions outside the normal range of the species. If such observations have been made, we have not learned of them.

Consideration must be given to the second possibility. Mr. Arthur Stupka, Park Naturalist of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, (in correspondence) states that during the six months prior to April, 1938, Red Crossbills were plentiful in the spruce-fir zone of that mountain region. He believes that the species bred there during the late winter of 1938. This period corresponded with a particularly heavy cone crop on the evergreens. Since that period, however, the birds have become scarce and scattered, following lighter crops of cones on the spruces and firs. It seems entirely possible that the Crossbills, finding food scarce in Tennessee, moved the few hundred miles north into the West Virginia mountains.

The third possibility is, perhaps, the most plausible of all. The Cheat mountain area is a vast expanse of high country, sixty to seventy miles in length, and eight to ten miles in breadth. All of it lies above 3,000 feet elevation, and there are numerous points above 4,000 feet and up to 4,800. Practically all the higher portions, and many of the lower, are clothed with a dense growth of red spruce, most of it of a size to produce cones.

Only three roads traverse this range in fifty miles of its extent and there are many high peaks which are seldom if ever visited by scientists or field observers. In fact, only within the last few years has the Gaudineer area been made accessible through the construction of a U. S. Forest Service road. It is entirely credible that a small permanent Crossbill population has been overlooked within this wilderness expanse. The presence of streaked juveniles lends support to the idea that the birds may have bred close by. It was impossible to determine whether any of the juveniles had uncrossed mandibles, a point which Griscom (*Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 41, 1937:114) considers *prima facie* evidence of local breeding.—MAURICE BROOKS, *Division of Forestry, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia*, and GEORGE MIKSCHE SUTTON, *Department of Zoology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*.

Upland Plover—a Correction

On page 217 of the December, 1939 *Wilson Bulletin* we made the statement that "Forbush (1912) reports the Upland Plover feeding extensively on crowberries (*Empetrum nigrum*) while in Labrador." This is a misquotation. The statement refers to the Golden Plover.—Irven O. Buss, Madison, Wisconsin.