

Cassin's Sparrow in Cleveland County, Oklahoma.—On November 21, 1952, in the South Canadian River bottomlands just west of the town of Noble, Cleveland County, Oklahoma, I saw a small sparrow atop one of the small, shrubby trees lining the river bed. I collected the bird, which seemed reluctant to fly, finding it to be a Cassin's Sparrow (*Aimophila cassini*). It was an immature (the skull was incompletely ossified) female in extensive molt. I wish to describe the plumage in detail for little has been written about the molt of this species.

The flight feathers are molting symmetrically on both sides, and the major tracts of the body are studded with pin-feathers. The first three primaries and their coverts are old, worn, and brownish-gray edged with tan. They are noticeably different from the inner six primaries and their coverts, and the tertials, all of which are dark gray edged with light brownish gray. The fourth and ninth primaries (counting from the outside) are considerably shorter than the others. The tail is markedly graduated, the longest rectrices being the two innermost pairs. These four feathers are still sheathed at the base; the longest falls one millimeter short of the lowest tail measurement given by Ridgway (1901. *U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull.*, 50:253) for adult females of this species. The fourth pair of rectrices (counting from the outside) are about midway in length between the longest and the third pair. The latter are about one-half as long as the median four. The second pair of rectrices are about midway in length between the third pair and the outer-most pair which are as long as the upper tail coverts.

This bird was probably in a normal postjuvinal molt, for according to Phillips (1951. *Wilson Bull.*, 63:324) the species molts rather late. Swarth (1908. *Condor*, 10:114) states that an immature female taken by him in Arizona on October 26 was in the midst of a molt, covered with pin feathers, and that other Cassin's Sparrows which he observed during the first week in November were quite as ragged in appearance. It is interesting that this molting bird should be found in late November in central Oklahoma, for the species has previously been reported only from western Oklahoma (Cimarron, Jackson, and Harmon Counties), where it is reported to breed (Nice, 1931. *Publ. Univ. Okla., Biol. Surv.*, 3 (1):185).—JEAN W. GRABER, *University of Oklahoma, Norman, April 5, 1953.*

Red Crossbill in Oklahoma.—Criscom (1937. *Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 41:165) stated that there were no records of the Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*) for Oklahoma. Subsequently the species has been recorded a few times. During the extensive invasion of the plains and eastern states by this species in 1950-51, birds were seen in several north-central localities in Oklahoma (see *Audubon Field Notes*, 1951, 5:4, 27, 192, 214). Dr. F. M. Baumgartner has kindly informed me that, so far as he knows, no specimens were collected in Oklahoma during this invasion.

It therefore seems worthwhile to place on record my notes on this species in the Black Mesa country of Cimarron County, made during a four and a half day collecting trip (November 28 to December 2, 1952) in the vicinity of Kenton.

Though piñon-juniper is the dominant tree growth of the area, there are many fine western yellow pines (*Pinus ponderosa*) about six miles southeast of Kenton on the Regnier Ranch. I encountered crossbills only in the vicinity of these pines. On December 1, I collected one of two males which were sitting quietly (not feeding) in a large pine. The following morning I saw and heard two crossbills flying over, and later in the morning, a single crossbill with a flock of House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*).

My specimen, on the basis of both plumage and skull ossification characters (see Tordoff, 1952. *Condor*, 54:200-201) is an adult. The testes were considerably enlarged (approximately 5 mm. in length). The color is predominantly red, though there are many orangish feathers scattered throughout the plumage. The *brightest* red feathers on the bird are pinkish or rose colored, it being, then, a pale example of the species. It is also a rather large crossbill. Using Griscom's (*op. cit.*:138) system, it measures: wing, 92; tail, 55; culmen, 20; and bill depth, 10 mm.

With an understanding of the possible fallacy of placing a single vagrant crossbill subspecifically, I still feel that it is worthwhile to assign it a trinomial, since the specimen is so decidedly like *benti* in color and size characters. Though the culmen length is slightly over the size range given by Griscom for *benti*, the specimen is easily separable from a good series of Mexican specimens (*stricklandi*), from the Sutton Collection, on the basis of its paler color and smaller bill-depth, characters which should also separate it from *grinnelli*.

The specimen is in the Museum of Zoology, University of Oklahoma. My thanks are due Dr. George M. Sutton for the use of comparative material from his collection and the Oklahoma Collection.—RICHARD R. GRABER, *Museum of Zoology, University of Oklahoma, Norman, February 20, 1953.*

Sharp-tailed Sparrow in Oklahoma.—Although there are several records for the Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacuta*) for the adjoining states of Arkansas (see W. J. Baerg, 1951. *Univ. Arkansas, Agric. Exp. Sta. Bull.* 258, revised) and Kansas (W. S. Long, 1940. *Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci.*, 43:455), this rather secretive species has not been reported from Oklahoma. In the fall of 1952, while collecting for the Oklahoma Biological Survey, I made a concentrated effort to find Sharp-tailed Sparrows.

Due to drouth conditions in Oklahoma in the summer and fall of 1952, marshy places were especially scarce. There were however, a few places along the South Canadian River in Cleveland County which looked as though they would be attractive to marsh-loving birds. These were rather dense stands of three-foot high grasses, actually standing in an inch or two of water. Two grasses, barnyard grass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*) and gray leptochloa (*Leptochloa fascicularis*), were conspicuous in these stands, and in them I frequently encountered Swamp Sparrows (*Melospiza georgiana*) and Long-billed Marsh Wrens (*Telmatodytes palustris*). Though I visited such habitat frequently from mid-September, I failed to find either Sharp-tailed Sparrows or the similarly inconspicuous Leconte's (*Passerherbulus caudacutus*) until October 14. On this date I saw four Sharp-tails (two collected) and three Leconte's (one collected), about a mile west of Noble.

Both of my specimens of *Ammospiza* were fat males with incompletely ossified skulls. Neither resembles at all closely any of the several specimens representing the races *caudacuta*, *subvirgata*, and *diversa* in the Sutton Collection. One (RRG 1881) in a typical dark-backed, generally richly colored example of *nelsoni*; the other (RRG 1880) may also fall within the limits of this form, though it approaches specimens of *altera* collected in the fall at Ithaca, New York, in grayness of back and cheek-patch and in the paleness of ventral streaking. I prefer not to assign a trinomial to this second specimen until I know more about the range of color variation of immature *nelsoni*.

The specimens are now in the Museum of Zoology, University of Oklahoma. I wish to thank Dr. George J. Goodman for his identification of the grasses, and Dr. George M. Sutton for the use of the comparative material in his collection.—RICHARD R. GRABER, *Museum of Zoology, University of Oklahoma, Norman, January 16, 1953.*