

ately as a Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquata*). I had recently seen this species, as well as all other North and Middle American kingfishers, except *Chloroceryle inda*, numerous times in tropical Mexico and in museum study collections.

At frequent intervals from November 16 through December 11 others familiar with the species in life—William S. Jennings of the Texas Game and Fish Commission, Mr. and Mrs. Fred S. Webster, Jr., and Armand Yramategui—also viewed the bird through binoculars and a 30× telescope at distances ranging from 30 feet to 80 yards.

I asked each person who studied the kingfisher to make his own notes and drawings of it without referring to illustrations or descriptions for aid. Mr. and Mrs. William D. Anderson, Frances J. Gillotti, Emma L. Purcell, and Mr. and Mrs. Fred S. Webster, Jr. complied. A summary of their extensive notes follows. The bird somewhat resembled nearby Belted Kingfishers (*Megaceryle alcyon*) but was larger and had a much heavier bill. Upperparts and chest were blue-gray; the tail was crossed by a number of white bars. Throat, collar, and a narrow band marking the lower border of the chest were white. The remainder of the underparts, including the crissum, was rufous. Webster described the call note as a "rusty *cla-ack* or *wa-ak*." Emma L. Purcell once watched the bird "dive into the water in the same manner as a Belted Kingfisher."

In addition to the fact that fish-eating kingfishers are seldom kept in captivity, the Austin individual showed no signs of having been caged.

The bird seen at Austin appears to be the northernmost Ringed Kingfisher on record. The next most northerly seems to have been one George B. Benners collected on the Rio Grande about one mile downstream from Laredo, Texas, June 2, 1888 (Witmer Stone, 1894. *Auk*, 11:177). Laredo is 219 airline miles southwest of Austin. I find only two other published reports of *Megaceryle torquata* in the United States. At the San Benito Resaca, Texas, 286 miles south of Austin, Luther C. Goldman discovered an individual on March 15, 1953. With C. E. Hudson he saw the bird again on March 19. (1953. *Audubon Field Notes*, 7:224). Lawrence Tabony watched another at Brownsville, Texas, 303 miles south of Austin, on August 29, 1952 (1952. *Audubon Field Notes*, 6:290).

Three of the four Ringed Kingfishers mentioned above were in female plumage; the sex of the individual seen at Brownsville is not stated. Perhaps females wander more often than males. Future observers of extralimital members of the species should note sex differences. Individuals with the rufous of the underparts extending over the chest and with the crissum white, are in adult male plumage.—EDGAR B. KINCAID, JR., 702 Park Place, Austin 5, Texas, March 14, 1956.

Sandhill Cranes killed by flying into power line.—On March 22, 1954, I was watching Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) on the North Platte River, four miles northeast of Hershey, Lincoln County, Nebraska. On the previous day we had counted and estimated 24,038 cranes roosting on a shallow, sandy stretch of river in this area. Most of them left the roost at daylight or shortly afterwards, flying to old cornfields to the south, southeast and southwest. In the evenings, just prior to dark, they flew back to the river, roosting on sand bars or in shallow water.

The morning of March 22 was clear with no fog. At 8:45 a.m. as I drove along an east-west road about one mile south of and parallel to the river where the cranes roosted, I came upon five Sandhill Cranes, all but one dead, lying in and at the south edge of the road. The fifth bird died during the day. A two-wire power line ran east and west 20 feet north of the highway. The wires, both on the same plane, were about 30 feet from the ground. Apparently before it was entirely light, these low-flying cranes

had flown into the power line in passing southward from their roost. They were still warm when I found them. One bird had a wing sheared off; one lost a wing and leg; another lost both legs. All five were saved as specimens. W. E. Eigsti and I examined the stomachs, weighed the birds, froze them and shipped two to Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne, University of Michigan, Museum of Zoology and three to Dr. George H. Lowery, Jr., Louisiana State University.

The stomachs had the following contents: (1) 13 kernels of corn; several weed seeds; some fine gravel. (2) 28 kernels of corn; corn hulls, sand; fine gravel. (3) 8 kernels of corn; corn hulls, weed seeds; coarser gravel. (4) 3 kernels of corn; corn hulls. (5) 5 kernels of corn; many oat hulls; gravel.

Two of the birds were males and three, females. Walter J. Breckenridge spent several days on this same area during late March, 1945. On March 28 he collected ten specimens, five males and five females. The average weight of these seven males was 3936.28 grams (range, 3402-4337) or 8 lbs., 10.8 oz. (7 lbs., 8 oz.-9 lbs., 9 oz.). The eight females averaged 3241.37 grams (2835-3856) or 7 lbs., 2.3 oz. (6 lbs., 4 oz.-8 lbs., 8 oz.).

The wing spans of five males taken by Breckenridge averaged 184.1 cm. (177.8-191.8) and those of six females averaged 168.8 cm. (152.4-182.9).

Thus all 15 specimens, ten collected by Breckenridge on March 28, 1945, and five that I found dead on March 22, 1954, were all Lesser Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis canadensis*).—LAWRENCE H. WALKINSHAW, 1703 Wolverine-Federal Tower, Battle Creek, Michigan, March 1, 1956.

Lark Sparrow collected in Rhode Island.—On November 12, 1955, at Newport, Newport County, Rhode Island, a Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) was observed feeding with Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) along the edge of a field adjacent to Newport's famed Ocean Drive. Since there was no previous specimen record for Rhode Island, the bird was collected. It was a male with the skull fully ossified; it weighed 31.7 gms. and was very fat. Its apparent good physical condition makes all the more curious the molt that the bird was undergoing.

The feathers over most of the body appeared fresh, but those of the posterior half of this sparrow were found to be in various stages of molt and replacement. The upper tail coverts on the bird's left side were fully grown and were slightly worn and ragged. There was one small feather on this side that was beginning to break out of the sheath. The upper tail coverts on the right side were all sheathed and about one-half grown. Two adjacent rectrices, lying to the right of the central pair, were normal in length but were worn, although not excessively. The remaining rectrices were all about the same length, sheathed and about one-half grown. All of the undertail coverts and many of the contour feathers on the right flank were still in sheaths and about one-half grown. There were fewer sheathed feathers on the left flank.

The specimen (JB no. 146) was identified by Dr. John W. Aldrich as the Eastern Lark Sparrow (*C. g. grammacus*).—JAMES BAIRD, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Newport, Rhode Island, March 22, 1956.

Records of the Buff-breasted Sandpiper from Alabama.—Buff-breasted Sandpipers (*Tryngites subruficollis*) were never collected in Alabama prior to 1955, although H. S. Peters took one near Pensacola, Florida, a short distance east of the Alabama border on September 2, 1936, and T. D. Burleigh took another from Deer Island, Mississippi, a few miles west of the state line, on September 6, 1940. A. H. Howell's "Birds of Alabama," published in 1924, does not list this species as occurring in Alabama. The only known records are those of Henry Stevenson, who noted them near Northport, in