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Karl W. Haller, Editor

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ADDITIONS TO THE EASTERN PANHANDLE BIRD LIST

by

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In looking through past issues of THE REDSTART it was surprising to find so many published sectional bird lists for West Virginia: (1), (4), (6), (10), (12), (13), (14), (15), (22), (24) and (25). In view of this work, which deserves at least some recommendation, it seemed that a revision of the "Eastern Panhandle" list (18) might be worthwhile.

The value of sectional lists has been seriously questioned by some and a certain amount of it is probably warranted. It is admittedly a bad practice to attempt to group members of a fauna under political boundaries, but, as exact natural boundaries of the region are unmapped, and since the line has to be drawn somewhere, there is scarcely any other choice. In addition, such lists have been encouraged, (5), and if enough regional lists are worked out it seems that a lot of valuable information will have been amassed.

It hardly seems necessary to repeat a description of the Panhandle region as this has been done in other papers (20), (18). The original list included 197 species and subspecies. The additional birds, continuing the original numbering, are listed below:

198. Holboell's Grebe - Colymbus griseigena holboelli. Flower (7) reports this species from Cacapon State Park, Morgan County, March 26, 1938. On March 20, 1940, one was seen on the Shenandoah River south of Charles Town, Jefferson County.

199. Double-crested Cormorant - Phalacrocorax a. auritus. Mr. Eugene Surber, biologist in charge of the Leetown Hatchery, watched two cormorants feeding extensively on the fish in one of the hatchery ponds (May 31, 1940). He attempted to kill both birds but succeeded in getting only one of them. Several days later the bird was given to me and a skin was prepared which is now in my collection.

200. Least Bittern - Ixobrychus exilis. A male and female were collected by Dr. G. M. Sutton at Leetown, on July 15, 1937, (9).

201. Whistling Swan - Cygnus columbianus. Mr. John Poland saw two of these birds (March 19, 1939), on the Potomac River, above, Shepherdstown, Jefferson Co. On March 30, 1941, five were seen at the same place. Mr. Surber and several of the hatchery employees saw six "white swans" on the reservoir, April 8, 1940.

202. Canvas-back - Nyroca valisineria. This species has been recorded five times in the panhandle. Four times on the Shepandoah River and once on the Potomac. They were seen on the 1st, 2nd, and 8th of April, 1939, and on December 15, 1940.

Scaup Ducks - Nyroca sp. In the original paper (18), the Scaup Ducks were lumped together, as no specific determinations had been made. Since then, however, they have been identified on occasions:

203-a. Greater Scaup Duck - N. marila. Rather common throughout the winter; particularly on the Potomac River.

203-b. (24) Lesser Scaup Duck - N. affinis. Most abundant of the two and is the only one visiting the Hatchery.

204. White-winged Scoter - Melanitta deglandi. Miss Eleanor Sions and I saw a female in company with a group of Scaups on the Potomac just below Shepherdstown, February 16, 1941. The thickened base of the beak, the white patch on the wings, the two facial spots, and the general shape of the bird were the field marks particularly noticed.

205. Goshawk - Astur atricapillus. Haller, (9) saw an adult near the Reservoir at the Hatchery, October 20, 1939.

206. Eastern Pigeon Hawk - Falco c. columbarius. One female collected at Leetown September 15, 1939.

207. Ring-necked Pheasant - Phasianus colchicus torquatus. An adult male flew against a house in Martinsburg and was killed (March 11, 1939). On April 1, 1939, a male was seen in a wheat field south of Shepherdstown, Jefferson Co.

208. Florida Gallinule - Gallinula chloropus cachinnans. An adult male collected at Leetown on June 4, 1940.

209. Piping Plover - Charadrius melodus. Mention has been made in several publications (2), (10) of a Plover reported by A. S. Morgan from Putnam County. In the first publication concerning the bird (2) it is listed as Aegialitis hiaticula. It is highly improbable that this Old World Species would be found in West Virginia but Bibbee listed it anyway.

A more recent interpretation (10) of the bird in question is that it is referable to the present species. Since C. hiaticula (the generic name of the Ringed Plover having been changed to Charadrius) more closely resembles C. semipalmatus than it does C. melodus it would seem more likely that Morgan's bird was semipalmatus, or at least the situation should be considered as a questionable one. However, a female was taken at Leetown on April 14, 1940, and is now in my collection.

210. Black-bellied Plover - Squatarola squatarola. Two were seen at Leetown on August 19, 1939, and one was collected (16).

211. White-rumped Sandpiper - Pisobia fuscicollis. Haller and the writer saw an individual with a flock of Semipalmated Sandpipers on May 31, 1939 at the Hatchery. The bird was collected by Haller (9).

212. Baird's Sandpiper - Pisobia bairdi. A male was taken September 12, 1940 at Leetown.

213. Stilt Sandpiper - Micropalama himantopus. Female collected at Leetown August 19, 1939 (16).

214. Ohio House Wren - Troglodytes aedon baldwini. Haller states (11) that this race is the breeding bird at Leetown. His basis for this being birds taken during July and August, 1936-37. A citation for the Eastern race T. a. aedon was given in the original paper, (18) and in Haller's paper (11).

215. Long-billed Marsh Wren - Telmatodytes p. palustris. Two were seen at the Reservoir on September 9, 1938 (19). Haller has collected specimens from the Marsh just south of Charles Town, Jefferson Co. (9).

216. White-eyed Vireo - Vireo g. griseus. One seen at the Hatchery, September 9, 1938 (19).

217. Sutton's Warbler - Dendroica potomac. Assuming this to be a valid species, it most certainly should be included in the Panhandle list. Two collected by Haller, May 30, 1939 and June 1, 1939 (8).

Grackles - Quiscalus quiscula subsp. In the original paper (18) Purple Grackle was listed, however, specimens show that two races occur in the Panhandle, (17):

(175) Stone's Grackle - Q. q. stonei. Collected at Leetown and near Martinsburg.

218. Ridgway's Grackle - Q. q. ridgwayi. One taken near Martinsburg.

219. Eastern Lark Sparrow - Chondestes g. grammacus. Three birds were seen in a pasture west of Leetown on June 14, 1940. A male with enlarged testes was collected. Another male was taken from the same locality three weeks later.

(188) Bachman's Sparrow - Aimophila aestivalis bachmani. This bird was included in the former list on the basis of an unquestioned record by F. E. Brooks made in 1910. A more recent observation was made by Boggs (3). He heard and saw a male along Sleepy Creek in Morgan Co., May 24, 1939.

220. Lincoln's Sparrow - Melospiza lincolni. One seen at close range October 8, 1939 at Leetown.

221. Mississippi Song Sparrow - Melospiza melodia euphonia. Wetmore (24) and Haller (9) tell of collections of this race in the Panhandle.

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 EDITORIAL

It has been but a year since the "editorial destinies" of THE REDSTART were placed in our hands, it has been but a year since a dream of six years materialized, it has been but a year since, in our first editorial for the journal, we enthusiastically pledged our "interest and time and effort" toward the objective outlined. The dream is still as bright and the enthusiasm is still as high, but the effort, and especially the time, are not at our disposal. And thus it is that to resign is best.

To the members of the Executive Committee and their respective sub-committees must go a large portion of the credit for the preparation of some of the material and all of the mechanical labor employed in the cutting of stencils

and the mimeographing of copies during the past few months. It has been impossible for the Editor to attend the regular meetings of the Club and of the committees. If, in "handing the torch" to the new Editor we were to be permitted to coin a motto, or give in a word what seems to us most likely to be the key to success in helping the new officer, we would suggest the word "Cooperation." Cooperation from corresponding members by the forwarding of material for consideration for publication and by active participation in club events; cooperation from active members in the actual preparation and mimeographing. It cannot be over emphasized.

To Karl W. Haller we offer our heartiest congratulations upon his election to the Editorship of THE REDSTART and wish him success in his every undertaking.

--J. H. O.

DENVER IS HOST TO THE A. O. U.

For the first time in fifty-nine years the American Ornithologists' Union let down the bars to hold its annual meeting between Chicago and the West Coast. Heretofore, eastern United States and the shores of the Pacific have always seemed to be the favored spots.

At the Phipps Auditorium of the Colorado Museum of Natural History, Denver, Colorado, from September 1 to 6, 1941, where the convention was held, Dr. James P. Chapin, Curator of Old World Birds, American Museum of Natural History, called to order the assembly of nearly 200 members. The doors were open to the general public. Two evening sessions gave the people of the Denver area the opportunity to witness some of the bird color films. The nightly showings proved rather fruitful, because 650 persons were in the audience Tuesday and 750 on hand Thursday evening.

General headquarters were set-up in the Cosmopolitan Hotel, Broadway and 18th Street. The Silver Glade Room of the hotel was the scene of the best of banquets, with the role of toastmaster assumed by Dr. Chapin. He gave an account of ornithologists in other parts of the world, particularly those in the sections affected by the international conflict. The forty-five papers, usually accompanied by Kodachrome movies or slides brought to light the work and study undertaken by our foremost ornithologists within the past year.

Two all-day field trips gave the visitors an idea of the Colorado territory and bird life. About 125 eager observers took part.

The first excursion on Friday, September 5th, was taken to Mt. Evans, (elevation 14,260 feet) via Red Rocks Park, Bear Creek Canyon, Echo Lake (10,600 ft.), where noon lunch was eaten, and Summit Lake (12,740 ft.). This is a region of white fir, lodge-pole pine, Engleman spruce, bristle cone pine and timberline. We found here such birds as the Ptarmigan, Dusky Grouse, Rocky Mountain Jay, Clarke's Nutcracker, Long-tailed Chickadee, Raven, American Pipit (Colo.), White Crowned Sparrow, Gray-headed Junco, and the Leucosticte. The little

coney, an alpine representative of the rabbit family, continuously gave his squeaky nasal call as he scurried for cover among the rocks and boulders. A herd of Rocky Mountain sheep was also seen by many members of the party.

The second excursion on Saturday to the prairie and small lakes, east of Denver, showed considerable contrast with heat of the plains to the coolness of the mountains; with the difference of sagebrush, willows, cottonwoods, cattails and sedges to the conifers of the higher altitudes. With such a distinction in the changes of association, the birds listed this day were ones of the plains and sagebrush regions. A representative list of some of the species observed were: Treganza's Heron, Black Crowned Night Heron, Blue-winged Teal, Shoveller, Scaup Duck, Cinnamon Teal, Ferruginous Rough-legged Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Desert Horned Lark, Ring-necked Pheasant, Greater Yellow Legs, Lesser Yellow Legs, Wilson's Phalarope, Avocet, Long Billed Curlew, Ring-billed Gull, Franklin's Gull, American Magpie, Western Meadow Lark, Yellow Headed Blackbird, Rock Wren, Lark Bunting, Lark Sparrow and McCown's Longspur. The Burrowing Owl and Prairie Dog were apparently using the same homes. With these two living together we naturally looked for the Prairie Rattler of which several individuals were encountered.

The committee on arrangements, Messrs. Alfred Bailey, Chairman and Director of the Museum, Fred Brandenburg, Edwin Kalmbach, Robert Niedrach, Horace Smith and Charles Sperry demonstrated true western hospitality by not overlooking entertainment for the ladies of the convention. The first of the affairs (September 2nd) for the ladies was an informal tea given by the wives of the committee-men at the A. M. Bailey home. The following afternoon, the ladies got together again to make a tour of the beautiful gardens of Mrs. John Evans, Mrs. Lawrence C. Phipps and Mrs. Verner C. Reed. Several members of the committee showed that they too were good photographers with their camera studies of Colorado and other interesting phases of western wildlife.

For those who were fortunate enough to be a part of it, the A. O. U. meeting at Denver was one that should always bring back thoughts of a pleasant and memorable incident. Perhaps the readers of THE REDSTART and members of the Brooks Bird Club, can easily understand the feelings of this reporter when he was able to once more greet old acquaintances such as George Thorpe, Dale Rudert, George M. Sutton, Mrs. James Chapin and Dr. L. E. Hicks. In addition to meeting old friends, many new and happy acquaintances were made among the country's renowned naturalists and ornithologists, who in my opinion are the kind of folks we are glad to know.

--George H. Breiding
Lowry Field, Colorado

FIELD NOTES

Mourning Warbler:

During the early morning spring migration walks, sponsored by the Bird Club on Sunday, May 10th, the entire group observed under good conditions, the Mourning Warbler, Oporornis philadelphia. Not only did the bird remain about for several minutes but all the time continued singing from atop a small tree which first attracted our attention. This makes the third successive year we have seen and heard the Mourning Warbler in the Wheeling area. The observation was made on Stratford Hill.

Terra Alta:

During a weekend visit to the camp at Lake Terra Alta, Terra Alta, W. Va., by six members of the Bird Club, it was our good fortune to make three very fine observations.

On our way to camp on Saturday afternoon, June 29, about half way up Codell Mountain, we all heard the song of the Parula Warbler. Although not a record, the presence of this bird is worthy of a note.

In the woods adjoining camp at the lake, Russell West heard and saw a Pine Warbler, Dendroica pinus. This is the first summer record we have for this bird in Preston County. The observation was made under very favorable conditions.

Also during this stay two observations were made on the Golden-winged Warbler, Vermivora chrysoptera. The birds were seen and heard singing in the bay on the west side of the camp property.

Thrushes:

On Sunday morning, May 25, 1941, while attending a nature walk at Oglebay Park, it was the writer's pleasure, along with other members of the Brooks Bird Club who had fallen behind the main group on the nature walk, to make several good observations, one of which was an only record for Ohio County this year.

Birding on this particular Sunday morning was exceptional, with a good showing of the warblers, perhaps due to the fine cool, clear weather and the early morning sun. As we walked along the trail the song of the Olive-backed Thrush, Hylocichla ustulata came calling out of the deep woods from the hill side above. It was easily the best song we had heard of the Olive-backed this spring. As we listened to the bird sing, other Olive-backed Thrushes joined in and for several minutes were a predominate chorus. Later while this observation was being reported to the main group the same species sang close by.

As we continued along, the writer, serving as leader of the group, heard a soft whistle from across the hollow. The leader pointed out the song to the others while it was repeated several times. Although distant and soft, the song was easily recognized as that of the Hermit Thrush, Hylocichla guttata, the only spring record for Ohio County in 1941.

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