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the

Colorado Field Ornithologist

CONTENTS

COVER PHOTO: Adult Hairy Woodpecker feeding on spruce beetles.
(Editor's Note: The Editor apologizes for the printer's error in placing the cover photo "out on a limb"!)

April 9, 1973

Letter to the Editor:

In order to clarify the relative status of Tennessee and Orange-crowned Warblers in Colorado, I wish to submit banding data that may be helpful. I know of no better means of determining rather accurately the comparative abundance of the two species.

As previously mentioned (Colorado Field Ornithologist No. 14:3,4), my personal banding records show that I have banded only four Tennessee Warblers in Colorado over a period of years - 14 years, to be exact. Two Tennessees were banded in spring, (May), two in fall, (Sept.). Certainly such small numbers provide no index to abundance in one season or the other. What these figures do indicate is rarity, since I banded nearly 40,000 birds of all species during that period.

Through those same 14 years, I banded 517 Orange-crowned Warblers, including 68 banded in 1972, (figures not yet published by Western Bird Bander). One of the four Tennessees was also banded last year.

Of the 517 Orange-crowned Warblers, 64 were banded in spring, 453 were banded in fall. So a "guess" that over half of this species are banded in spring is in error (Remsen, Colorado Field Ornithologist No. 15:4). Most of my banding is done in the Longmont area. There is a remote possibility that the Tennessee - Orange-crowned ratio varies in different regions of the state.

The experienced bird bander, with a live bird in his hand, is very much aware of subtle variations in plumage and barely visible identification marks that might be overlooked by an observer with binocular, at even fairly close range. The advice to "look carefully at each bird" undoubtedly applies to these superficially similar warblers, so that among the numerous Orange-crowned, we do not overlook the rare Tennessee.

Allegra Collister
706 Hover Road
Longmont, Colo. 80501

April 15, 1973

Mr. David W. Lupton
Head, Serials Section
Colorado State University Libraries
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Dear Dave,

Please refer to the Colorado Field Ornithologist, Number 15, March 1973, page 12 concerning the report of the Blue-throated Hummingbird. Under a Post Script designated as "Editor's Note", the observation is made that "the 1970 sightings reported by Winston W. Brockner, 'Blue-throated Hummingbird in Colorado', Colorado Field Ornithologist, 9:27-28, July 1971 must be considered invalid". Since the CFO Official Records Committee is still undecided as to what to do with "one-observer" reports and as such has not had an opportunity to formally review Mr. Brockner's report, I feel that it can not arbitrarily be ruled as invalid. Until the Committee decides exactly how it wants to handle and classify such reports, I personally feel that they should be held in abeyance, being neither valid nor invalid. Hopefully the Committee will address itself to this rather perplexing problem during its deliberations next month at the CFO Annual Convention when we will sit down together for the first time since our formation.

Sincerely yours,
Jack Reddall
Chairman
CFO Official Records Committee
4450 South Alton Street
Englewood, Colo. 80110

Editor's Note: It has come to the Editor's attention that Mr. Brockner's published sightings of the Blue-throated Hummingbird in 1970 and the possible sighting by Mrs. Merle Barbour in 1967 or 1968 are not the first Colorado observations. The first recorded observation is that of Mr. H. B. Alsebrook, deceased, who carefully observed a female on September 1, 1958 or 1959 (?) near Estes Park, Colorado, in Rocky Mountain National Park. See Alsebrook, H. B., "Hummingbirds by the Dozen", Audubon Magazine 65 (4):246-247, July-August 1963.

WOODPECKERS: MOST IMPORTANT PREDATORS OF THE SPRUCE BEETLE

Calvin L. Massey and Noel D. Wygant
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Woodpeckers are the most important predators of the spruce beetle. In some areas, they have destroyed as much as 75 percent of the bettle population. Three species frequently congregate to prey on spruce beetles, especially during beetle outbreaks, in Colorado: the Northern Three-toed Woodpecker, Picoides tridactylus; the Hairy Woodpecker, Dendrocopos villosus (cover photo) and the Downy Woodpecker, Dendrocopos pubescens.

Baldwin (1968a) states that, of the three species of woodpeckers, the Three-toed is almost entirely restricted to spruce stands and is the most important spruce bettle predator. He further states that woodpecker activity and abundance appear correlated with beetle abundance. He found that woodpecker abundance in autumn varied with beetle availability and abundance, and ranged from one or two birds per 100 acres to as high as 30 to 45 per acre when infested trees were numerous.

Woodpecker nesting showed an increase as the beetle population increased. Analyses of bird stomachs showed a lower percent of spruce beetles during summer when other prey was available, but increased to as high as 99 percent during the winter when other food sources were less abundant.

Beetle density was also associated with the woodpeckers' efficiency as predators. At populations of 400 to 1,000 beetles per acre, woodpecker feeding accounted for 28 percent mortality. At outbreak levels of 160,000 beetles per acre there was 84 percent mortality, while at epidemic populations of 1,600,000 beetles per acre, woodpeckers accounted for 53 percent mortality.

Baldwin (1968b) also found that, in a declining beetle infestation, woodpeckers effectively reduced beetle populations even on the under sides of fallen trees, when the bark surface was 6 inches or less above the ground.

During summer, pairs of Hairy and of Three-toed Woodpeckers work over trees infested with the spruce beetle. A pair may confine its activities to a small area of an infested stand. In fact, one pair worked a group of only seven or eight trees for several weeks. Many infested trees are completely stripped of bark by the birds, and the mortality of beetle brood in these trees approaches 100 percent. In trees moderately worked by woodpeckers there is a large reduction in beetle populations. This is due

partly to feeding of the birds and partly to the drying of the bark. Populations were counted on numerous trees on which woodpecker work varied from slight to heavy (Table 1).

The data indicate that a slight amount of woodpecker work reduced the population by nearly half, but in trees heavily worked by the birds, the beetles were almost completely destroyed.

Table 1. Reduction in spruce beetles caused by the feeding of woodpeckers.

Woodpecker feeding	No. of trees sampled	Adult beetles remaining per square foot	Reduction
			Percent
None	37	162	0
Slight	10	90	44
Moderate	38	41	75
Heavy	20	4	98

During the summer of 1947, a study was initiated on the White River and Grand Mesa National Forests in Colorado to determine the food habits of the birds. Stomach contents of 135 woodpeckers and sapsuckers were examined in the laboratory.

To determine also whether the birds fly from one area to another during a day's feeding, individuals were collected in areas heavily infested with bark beetles, in areas only slightly infested, and in areas containing no spruce beetles. The collections were made in a small part of the forest area. Only a few birds were collected where there were no spruce beetles, although the birds were numerous in slightly infested areas, and abundant in heavily infested areas.

The presence of the spruce beetles in the stomach contents of the birds decreased sharply when they fed outside heavily infested areas. Only a few were taken from birds collected in the slightly infested areas, and none from those collected where no infestation was known. For the most part the food content consisted of other wood-infesting insects, such as carpenter ants and larvae of the Cerambycidae.

During the summer months the birds consumed more adults than other stages of the beetle. A total of 2,387 adults were taken from the stomachs

of 115 birds collected from July through the middle of September, or an average of 20.7 beetles per stomach. The stomachs also contained a total of 498 larvae that were definitely known to be those of the spruce beetle, or an average of 4.33 per stomach.

The number of adult beetles consumed per month by the birds varied considerably. In July the collections averaged 11.82 beetles per stomach, in August 29.11, and in September 13.15. The number of larvae consumed varied similarly: in July, there were 2.56 larvae per stomach, in August 1.35, and in September 12.42. This variation is probably due to the fact that adult beetles are more readily obtainable during the early and middle part of August, when many beetles leave the bole to hibernate in the base of the tree. Large numbers congregate in very small areas during this period. The larvae are more readily obtainable in September, as they feed close to the surface of the outer bark.

Of the insects found in the stomach contents of the woodpeckers, 65 percent were spruce beetles, 13 percent were other Scolytidae, 12 percent were Formicidae, and 6 percent were Cerambycidae.

A list of the insects contained in the woodpeckers' stomachs follows on the next page. All were adults unless otherwise specified. The determinations of the Scolytidae are as accurate as the circumstances permitted; many of them were in the last stages of digestion. Some determinations were made on the basis of the insect species known to be in the area.

Common (Red-shafted) Flickers, Colaptes auratus cafer, are plentiful in areas infested with the spruce beetle, but their value as a predator of this insect is questionable. Fourteen of these birds were collected, but there was no sign that any of them had fed on Scolytidae; the food content of their stomachs consisted only of ants. The Williamson's Sapsucker, Sphyrapicus thyroideus, and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, S. varius, are seen infrequently in the areas infested with the beetle, and are unimportant as predators.

Literature Cited

Baldwin, P. H. 1968a. Predator-prey relationships of birds and spruce beetles. N. Cent. Br. Entomol. Soc. Am. Proc. 23:90-99.

Baldwin, Paul H. 1968b. Woodpecker feeding on Engelmann spruce beetle in windthrown trees. U.S. For. Serv. Res. Pap. RM-105, 4 p. Rocky Mt. For. and Range Exp. Stn., Fort Collins, Colo.

Insects Eaten by Woodpeckers	Number
HEMIPTERA	13
HOMOPTERA: Aphidae	82
COLEOPTERA:	
Carabidae	1
Cleridae --	
Adults	8
Larvae	9
Ostomidae -- Larvae	15
Nitidulidae -- *Epuraea* sp.	1
Ceramybcidae --	
Tetropium (larvae)	202
Undetermined larvae	39
Scolytidae --	
Scolytus piceae (Sw.)	10
Polygraphus rufipennis (Kirby)	33
Dendroctonus rufipennis (Kirby) --	
Adults	2,387
Larvae	499
Scierus annectens Lec.	14
Trypodendron bivittatum (Kirby) sp.	2
Pityophthorus sp.	46
Ips borealis Sw.	213

Insects Eaten by Woodpeckers	Number
Ips pilifrons Sw. --	
Adults	43
Larvae	59
Dryocoetes affaber (Mann.)	1
Dryocoetes sp.	2
Undetermined larvae	167
Undetermined coleopterous larvae	12
LEPIDOPTERA	17
DIPTERA: Undetermined --	
Adults	15
Larvae	1
HYMENOPTERA:	
Formicidae --	
Camponotus sp.	277
Lasius sp.	264
Undetermined parasites	2

CORVIDS IN COLORADO SPRINGS IN THE WINTER OF 1972-73: RESULTS OF A PUBLIC APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

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The winter of 1972-73 was severe in the Pikes Peak region, with frequent and heavy snows. (The same weather prevailed widely in the Rockies and on the western Great Plains.) The first snow, in October, brought three species of the family Corvidae into easterly sections of Colorado Springs (pop. 170,000; alt. 1,850 m)--sections that are more or less remote from the species' normal ranges (nearby mountains and foothills) and, furthermore, are ecologically inappropriate. The three species were Clark's Nutcracker (Nucifraga columbiana), Steller's Jay (Cyanocitta stelleri), and the Scrub Jay (Aphelocoma coerulescens). The incursion seemed to abate in February, when the weather improved; but all three species were still present at the end of March (time of writing).

Methods

On 1 February 1973 I appealed in a newspaper, the Colorado Springs Sun, for information about these birds. Because this sort of appeal may be useful to other workers (see "Conclusions"), I reprint it here--just as it was rewritten, somewhat inaccurately, from my release, under the head "Local Ornithologist Seeks Information":

> Sam Gadd, a local ornithologist, is seeking information about three birds, the scrub jay, the Steller's jay, and the Clark's nutcracker.
>
> These birds have been wandering, especially this winter, from their normal homes in the trees into the city and suburban gardens and parks. Steller's jay is deep blue with a black crest; the scrub jay is light blue above and white below with a long tail. It lacks a crest. Clark's nutcracker is a chunky, pale gray bird with black and white wings and tail.
>
> Anyone who has seen these birds at some distance away from the foothills is urged to call Gadd at 473-0627.

(I did not solicit information about other garruline corvids seen more or less regularly in Colorado Springs--the Blue Jay [small resident population], the Pinon Jay, and the Black-billed Magpie--because these species seemed stable in the winter of 1972-73. Nor did I inquire about the increased numbers of the Common Crow in the city - this is being investigated by R. Beidleman.)

The response to the appeal was most gratifying. I received, by telephone, 54 replies from Colorado Springs and its suburbs and 9 replies from elsewhere in the region (Palmer Lake to Fountain to near Cripple Creek). The average conversation lasted about 10 minutes, because the callers enjoyed the opportunity to talk about birds as much as I did. Each caller gave some or all of the following information:

1. Location, by street address, and telephone number.
2. Description of the species. I determined whether or not the informant was familiar with the species and whether or not he owned a bird book. In a few instances the caller consulted his book while I commented on field marks and vocalizations.
3. Numbers and approximate dates of occurrence of the species.
4. Bird-feeder offerings at the location and the food preferences of the corvids.
5. Trees and shrubs (deciduous, evergreen) on and near the property.
6. Prior occurrence of the species at the location.
7. Length of time (years) the informant had lived at the address.

I tabulated the information received; filed the informants' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, with a view to making further inquiries, in late spring, as to the duration of the corvid incursion; and mapped those locations that were clearly outside the species' normal ranges (Fig. 1).

Findings

The tabulation showed that at least 36 of the 63 reports were of birds seen at feeding stations; that information as to food preferences was scanty or of little apparent value, except in the case of Clark's Nutcracker (see below); and that the birds did not seem dependent on familiar vegetation (spruce, fir, and pine, for the Nutcracker; pine, for Steller's Jay; oak brush, for the Scrub Jay)--which, anyway, does not exist in substantial pure stands amid the deciduous plantings (maple, elm, ash, cottonwood, crab, lilac, etc.) of residential neighborhoods of Colorado Springs.

Findings as to species distribution and behavior follow.

Clark's Nutcracker

See Fig. 2. The most unusual occurrence of Clark's Nutcracker was in open country about 5 km east of the town of Fountain, which is some 20 km southeast of Colorado Springs and at least 15 km east of the species' normal range. (This bird was reported by Elinor Wills, of the Aiken Audubon Society.) Within the city the Nutcracker was reported at 20 locations, at distances up to 16 km east of the normal winter limit of distribution. At none of the mapped locations had the Nutcracker been seen in past years

by my informants. In all, about 45 birds were seen, singly or in parties of 2 to 8 birds. Almost invariably they were attracted to suet at feeders; some took sunflower seeds. Expectably, the Nutcracker was most numerous in the Broadmoor and Ivywild sections of southwestern Colorado Springs; i.e., closest to the foothills. However, 6 occurrences were well within the city. The map pattern suggests that the birds seen in mid-city may have interrupted investigative overflights from the foothills to Palmer Park and Austin's Bluffs, which together make up a sandstone promontory, covered with ponderosa pine, in northeastern Colorado Springs. This possibility is strengthened by a remark in C. E. H. Aiken and E. R. Warren's The Birds of El Paso County, Colorado (1914: Colorado College Pub., Science Series 12[13,II]:540): "In winter [Clark's Nutcracker] is found about the foothills and at Austin's Bluffs, and probably wanders and straggles over most of the region where there are trees." Austin's Bluffs was then some 4 km beyond the city, whereas today the promontory has become an island in a sea of houses; but the attraction noted by Aiken and Warren may persist. The broader implication of Aiken and Warren's account comports well--as of 60 years ago--with the following note on the Nutcracker in W. L. Sclater's A History of the Birds of Colorado (1912: Witherby, London; p. 296): "It is a great wanderer, and has not infrequently been met with on the plains in winter ..., and localities in western Kansas and Nebraska." (In the latter connection see below, "Exceptional occurrences of corvids elsewhere.")

Steller's Jay

See Fig. 3. This species was reported at 41 locations. At 27 of these locations Steller's Jay had never been seen before by my informants; and only 9 of the informants had seen the species before in the 30-year period 1942-1972*/. Sometimes a single Steller's Jay appeared; more often there was a small to sizeable flock (5 to 15 or more birds). Steller's Jay was reported most often from the northern and eastern parts of the city--notably in or near Monument Valley Park, which is in north-central Colorado Springs. (My own records say of 2 birds of this species, in Monument Valley Park on 11 January 1942: "First ever seen in the park"; and, although I have birded there rather frequently over the years, I did not see another Steller's Jay in the park until 23 January 1973--when I saw 11.) There were, however, 20 reports of Steller's Jay between Fillmore Street on the north and Fountain Boulevard on the south and between Nevada Avenue on the west and Academy Boulevard on the east; i.e., across the center of the city. This distribution suggests that the birds came from Palmer Park (which has a resident population of Steller's Jay) as well as from the foothills--or, perhaps, more numerously from Palmer Park.

*/ Here and in the findings on the Scrub Jay the discrepancy between the number of reports and the instances of "never seen before" and "seen before" is owing to imperfections of data: some informants had not lived for a significant period of time at their addresses, and others could not give firm information on prior occurrence or nonoccurrence.

Scrub Jay

See Fig. 4. The Scrub Jay was reported at 24 locations. One or two birds at a time were usual. At 11 locations the species had never been seen before; at 5 locations there were reports that it was "occasional in past years", and the like. Several informants remarked that the Scrub Jay and Steller's Jay appeared on the same day or within a day or so of each other. The Scrub Jay normally inhabits scrub oak (Quercus gambelii), which extends some distance from the foothills and from Palmer Park and Austin's Bluffs, unlike the conifers that sustain Clark's Nutcracker and Steller's Jay. Thus the Scrub Jay seemed the least venturesome of the three species: most of the occurrences were within comparatively short distances of scrub oak tracts. However, there were 12 reports from well within the city (Fillmore to Fountain and Nevada to Academy). Three reports of the Scrub Jay southeast of the city, in the Security-Widefield suburb, were notable.

Conjecture

Unlike the winter of 1972-73, the winter of 1971-72 was quite mild in the Pikes Peak region, with little snowfall. Furthermore, the cone crop in ponderosa pine, limber pine, bristlecone pine, blue spruce, and Engelmann spruce was unusually good in the fall of 1971, according to H. Swift, owner of Western Evergreens Nursery, at Golden (the leading collector of conifer seeds in Colorado); and scrub oak acorns, although quite scarce, were not as rare as in the fall of 1972 (Swift).*/ Under these conditions Clark's Nutcracker and Steller's Jay may have had a high survival rate through the winter of 1971-72 and, concomitantly, an augmented breeding population in the summer of 1972. If breeding success was at least average (and it may have been well above average, given the abundance of food), both species could have achieved irruptive status in the region by the beginning of the severe and early winter of 1972-73--which was also a lean winter, in that the 1972 crop of conifer seeds was extremely poor and acorns were almost nonexistent (Swift). A combination of food scarcity and deep snow at a

*/ Here and beyond, confirming opinions were given by D. Musso and R. B. Poole, foresters, Pikes Peak District, U.S. Forest Service, and by R. Beidleman, ecologist, Colorado College.

Douglas fir cone crops (1971, 1972) are not mentioned because this tree bears rather consistently from year to year. Pinon pine is not mentioned because it grows at elevations below the normal winter limits of Clark's Nutcracker and Steller's Jay; however, Clark's Nutcracker does make forays into the pinon pine zone, some winters, and did so in the winter of 1972-73 (e.g., in the Garden of the Gods, in west-central Colorado Springs--occurrences that were not really exceptional and therefore were not mapped).

time of intense intraspecific and interspecific competition may, then, have driven numbers of Clark's Nutcracker and Steller's Jay out of the mountains and foothills in quest of subsistence. (The wandering of the Scrub Jay is less readily explained.) It is possible that the well-known curiosity and "intelligence" of corvids may have led the birds to feeding stations in follow-the-leader fashion: bold explorers first, with watchful members of any of the three species coming close behind.

Exceptional occurrences of corvids elsewhere

Merely local conditions, however, do not seem to account fully for the excursive distribution of corvids in western North America in the winter of 1972-73 (and perhaps earlier; e.g., records of the magpie in Minnesota). The next issue of American Birds, covering the 1972-73 winter period, is expected to contain numerous extralimital records of Clark's Nutcracker and Steller's Jay. Meanwhile, the following reports, supplied to me by the persons named, may serve to indicate that the situation was indeed odd:

Clark's Nutcracker -- Colorado: in Pueblo and near La Junta (D. Griffiths). Elsewhere: in Kansas (D. Griffiths); in Iowa (M. Speers); and 200 km east of the Canadian Rockies in north-central Alberta (R. Lister, Edmonton).

Steller's Jay -- Colorado: east of its usual range in the Denver region (S. Merrick); in the city of Pueblo for the first time (D. Griffiths); and at Rocky Ford (R. Beidleman). Elsewhere: in Arizona at Phoenix and Tucson (K. Blackshaw).

Scrub Jay -- Colorado: more seen on the plains near Pueblo than ever before (D. Griffiths).

Conclusions

Colorado Springs' incursion of corvids could be documented by means of a public appeal for information. Conversations with informants, followed by mapping, showed that the presence of Clark's Nutcracker was, apparently, unprecedented in the past 30 years or so and that the distribution of Steller's Jay and the Scrub Jay was highly unusual.

The appeal also elicited information about the extent of bird-feeding in Colorado Springs. Furthermore, many informants had questions or observations about birds other than the corvids; this yielded information about Bohemian Waxwings, Red Crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, and other species of interest.

The appeal resulted in pleasant acquaintance with persons who in future can be expected to ask or tell their new-found "bird man" about unusual birds or strange behavior of familiar ones. Such persons could be candidates for membership in a bird club, potential allies in civic enterprises (parks, nature-study programs), and supporters of conservation and environment-protection campaigns. Demonstrably, the benefits of seeking ornithologic information from the general public go beyond mere corvidizing.

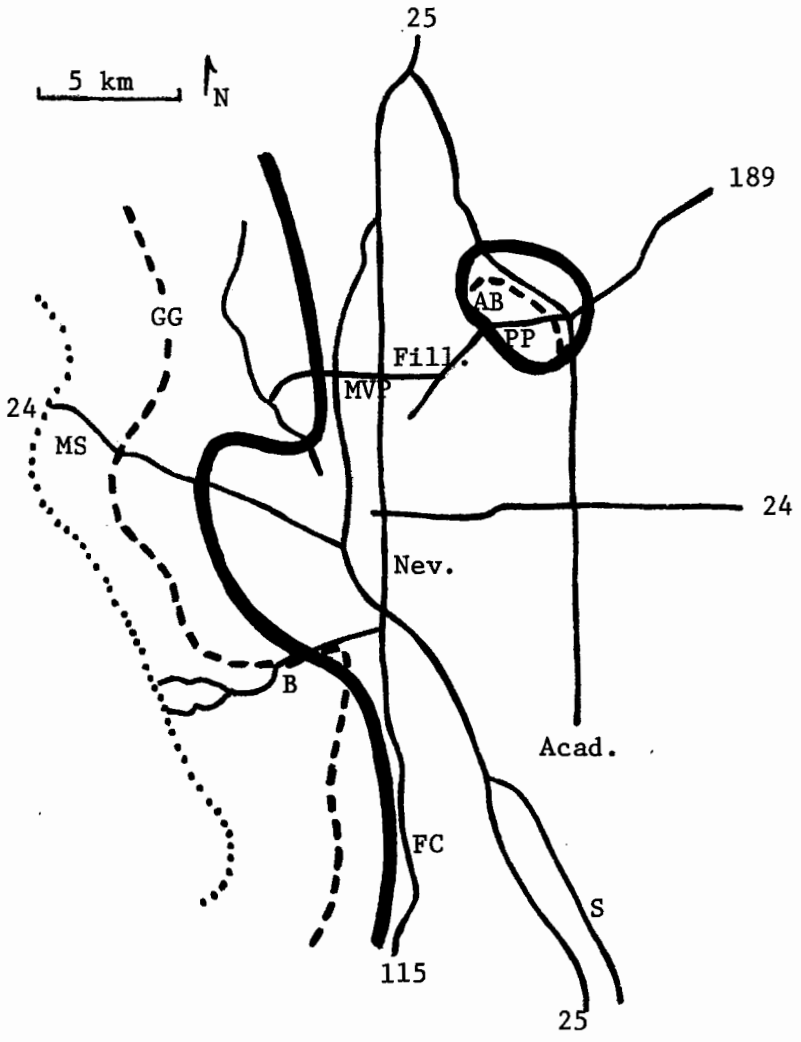

Fig. 1. Approximate normal ranges of Clark's Nutcracker (dotted line), Steller's Jay (dashed line), and the Scrub Jay (solid line) in Colorado Springs. Lines at left show eastern limits in or near the foothills; for Clark's Nutcracker this is the lowest normal limit in winter (but see footnote, p. 12). Isolated ranges to the northeast are those of Steller's Jay and the Scrub Jay resident at Austin's Bluffs and Palmer Park.

In all figures the main thoroughfares are marked with highway numbers; also, Fill. = Fillmore Street, Nev. = Nevada Avenue, Acad. = Academy Boulevard. Parks and suburbs are AB = Austin's Bluffs, PP = Palmer Park (continuation of Austin's Bluffs), MVP = Monument Valley Park, GG = Garden of the Gods, MS = Manitou Springs, B = Broadmoor, FC = Fort Carson, S = Security-Widefield.

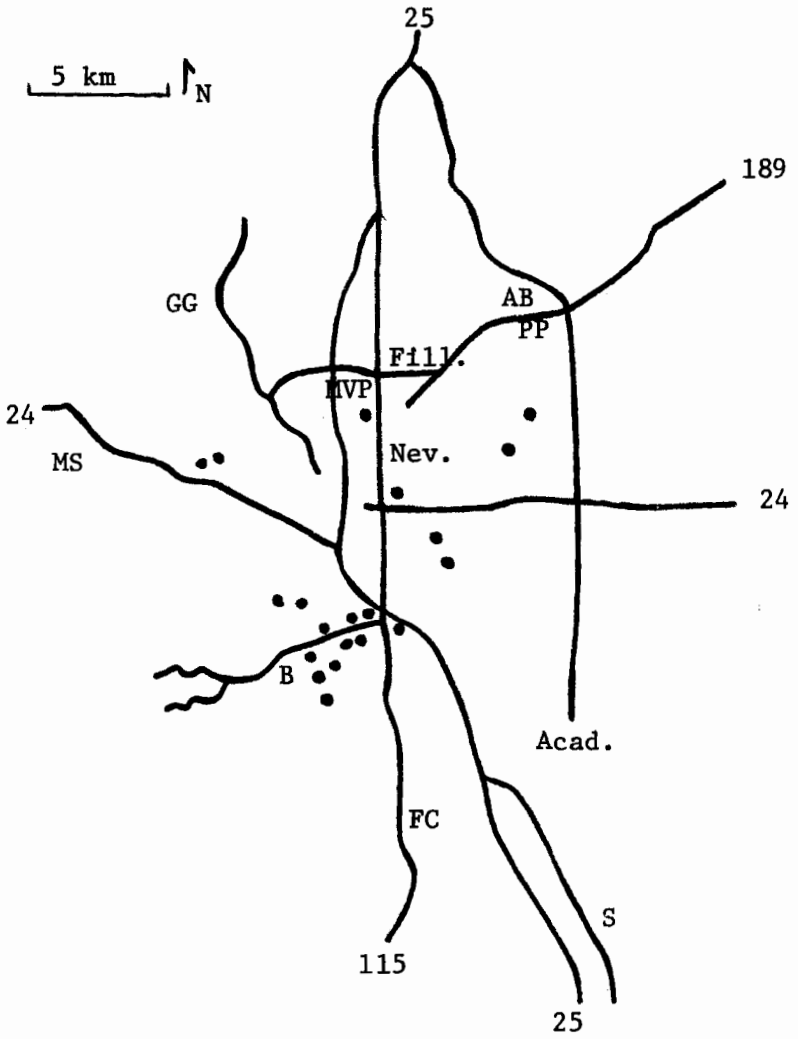

Fig. 2. Clark's Nutcracker occurrences (dots) beyond normal range.

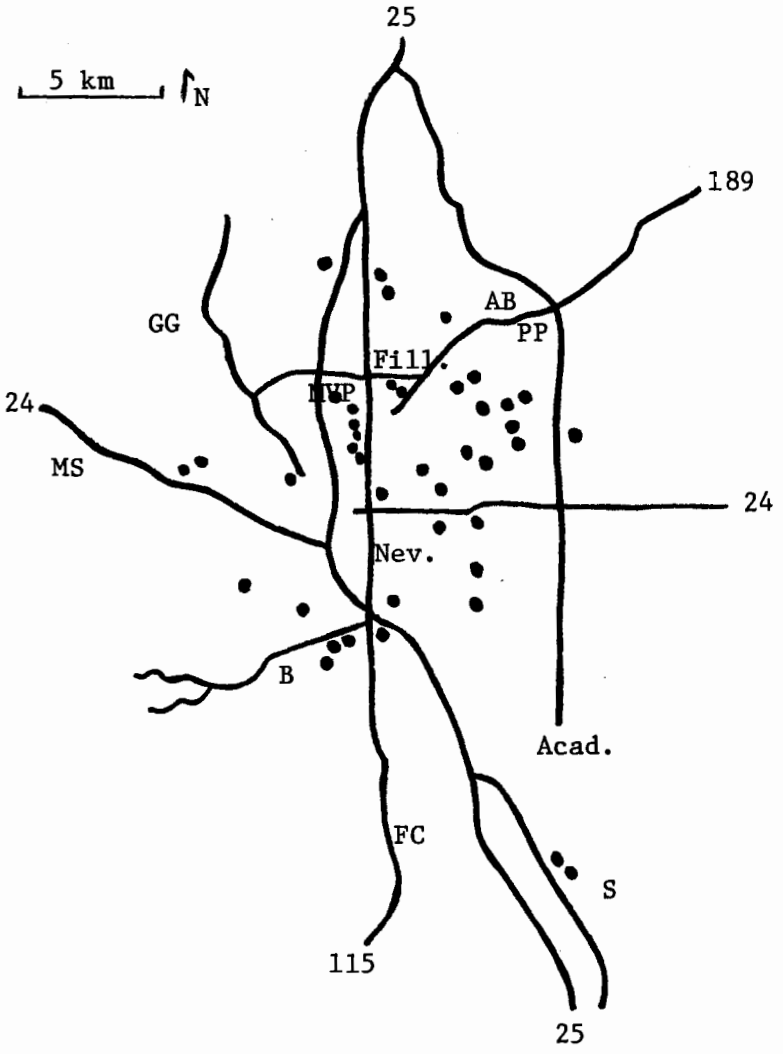

Fig. 3. Steller's Jay occurrences (dots) beyond normal range.

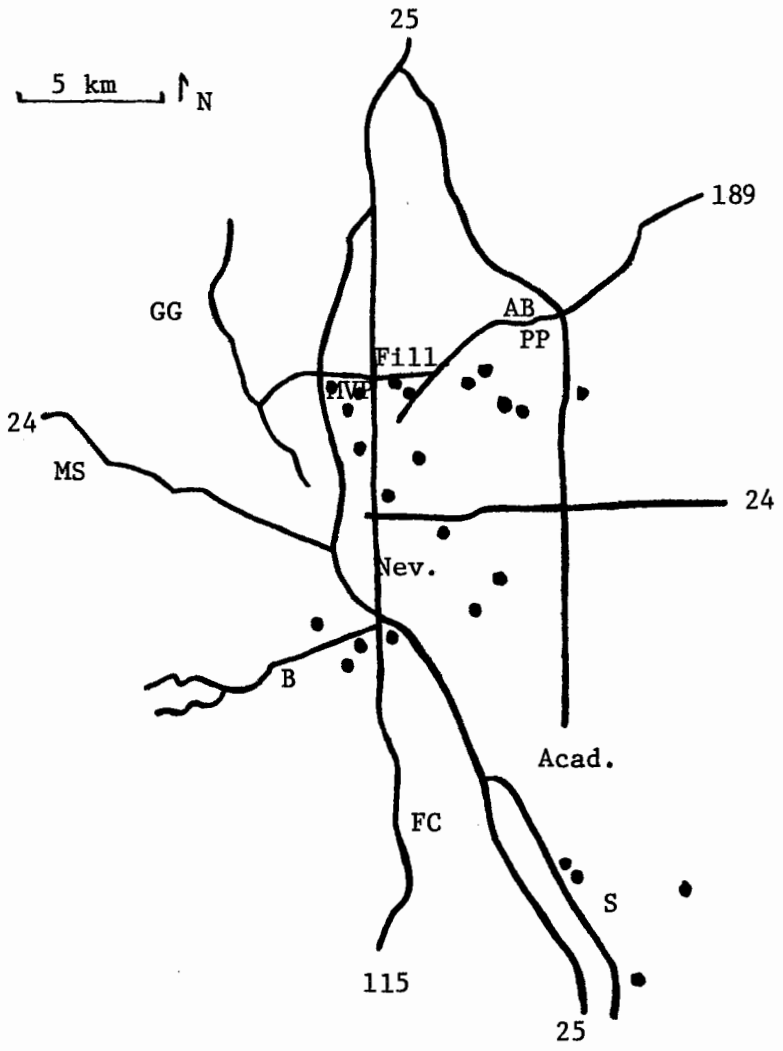

Fig. 4. Scrub Jay occurrences (dots) beyond normal range.

FIRST OBSERVATION OF COWBIRD PARASITISM ON LARK BUNTINGS IN COLORADO

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The Brown-headed Cowbird (Molothrus ater) is known to parasitize the nests of a number of ground-nesting birds, including the Lark Bunting (Calamospiza melanocorys). Friedmann (Auk 88:247, 1971) reported that Lark Bunting nests containing cowbird eggs have been found in North Dakota and Montana and more recently in Saskatchewan. The following summary deals with what is apparently the first reported instance of this phenomenon in Colorado and, therefore, represents the most southerly record of nest parasitism for these species.

On 20 June 1972, two assistants, Martin Brandt and Stephen Henry, and I were searching a pasture on the Pawnee National Grassland in north-central Colorado for nests of Brewer's Sparrows (Spizella breweri). The area was an ideal habitat for them as it was densely covered with Four-Wing Saltbush (Atriplex canescens). From under one of these shrubs at close range, I flushed a female Lark Bunting. Closer inspection revealed she had been incubating a nest containing three pale-blue eggs of her own and one white and brown spotted egg of a Brown-headed Cowbird.

On 23 June, I returned to the site and found that all four eggs had hatched successfully, probably on the previous day. However, only two nestlings were present on 28 June and only one on 29 June. The nest could not be checked again until 5 July; it was empty so it was not known if the last nestling has fledged successfully. The pattern of nestling disappearance was like that observed at other Lark Bunting nests which were preyed upon by Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrels (Spermophilus tridecemlineatus).

This field work was supported in part by National Science Foundation Grant No. GB-31862X as part of the avian populations study for the Grassland Biome, U.S. International Biological Program.

REPORTS FROM THE CFO OFFICIAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

Jack Reddall, Chairman
CFO Official Records Committee
4450 South Alton Street
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ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD - - - - *Selasphorus sasin*

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed the documentation submitted regarding the report of an occurrence of an Allen's Hummingbird along the Gold Camp Road near Colorado Springs in El Paso County on August 15, 1972. Two males and one female were reported on this date at hummingbird feeders. The CFO Official Records Committee has ruled that this report is unsatisfactory due to the great difficulty of field separation of this species and the Rufous Hummingbird which it greatly resembles. The documentation unfortunately was too sketchy and therefore not convincing enough for the Committee to find acceptable. The Allen's Hummingbird remains an invalid species for the state of Colorado.

Chairman's comment:

A brief dissertation on the difficulties of separating Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds in the field accompanied the report of the occurrence of an Allen's Hummingbird in the Colorado Springs area from July 30 through September 5, 1972. The CFO Official Records Committee also turned down this report (see *Colorado Field Ornithologist*, No. 15). It is quite possible that the addition of the Allen's Hummingbird to the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado will depend on an exceptionally good *color* photograph with detailed written documentation or the collecting of a specimen.

March 3, 1973

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD - - - - *Amazilia yucatanensis*

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed the documentation presented to support the sighting of an adult Buff-bellied Hummingbird near Golden in Jefferson County on August 7, 1970. After reviewing the data presented by the two observers involved, the Committee concluded that the record must be rejected on the grounds that (1) the descriptions lacked sufficient details and did not, in fact, really describe a Buff-bellied Hummingbird; (2) the observers missed key field marks. Therefore, the Buff-bellied Hummingbird remains an invalid species for the state of Colorado.

Chairman's comment:

The probability of this Mexican and Central American species occurring in our state must be regarded as bordering on the incredible, since it barely reaches the United States in very limited numbers only in extreme southern Texas. The Committee requires that each and every Sight Report be a carefully and completely recorded document of what was actually seen by the observer(s) and where rare species such as the Buff-bellied Hummingbird is concerned, a full report covering all key field marks is mandatory. Regrettably, this was not the case in this matter. The observers reported watching a "large (?) hummingbird which came to feed on yellow daisies (*Anthemis*) for a period of thirty seconds". The following key field marks were either missed or observed but not reported by both observers: (1) green throat, (2) notched, cinnamon-rufous tail, (3) faintly decurved red or pinkish bill. Furthermore, the reference to a "large" hummingbird suggests that the bird in question was somewhat bigger than the normally expected hummers. Actually Buff-bellied Hummingbirds average approximately the same size as the abundant Broad-tailed Hummingbird (4"-4 1/2").

Unquestionably, what caught the eyes of the observers was what one reported to be as a "gleaming yellow bill" and the other "a large, bright bill", neither of which befits the bill of a Buff-bellied Hummingbird. Nevertheless, the presence of a "yellow-billed" hummer is certainly unusual and of interest. On October 8, 1972, Van Remsen wrote the Chairman from his residence at Berkeley, California as follows:

> "Ten minutes ago I saw a hummingbird here with a yellow base of the bill. It was a male Anna's (*Calypte anna*) with either some sort of bright, lichen-like growth on the proximal half of its bill or a pigment deformity. It was striking. I knew it would be of interest to you in light of the Buff-bellied Hummingbird report from Colorado. At least we know for sure that some type of abnormality can occur. It all brings home the fact that all field marks of very rare birds must be seen in order to count it."

Bright, lichen-like growth, pigment deformity, maybe even pollen from yellow daisies--whatever, all of us must certainly be careful and critical observers of what we see.

April 15, 1973

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH - - - - *Seiurus motacilla*

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed the documentation submitted regarding the report of an occurrence of a Louisiana Waterthrush along Beaver Creek near its confluence with the south fork of the Republican River at Hale in Yuma County. This sighting was made on May 11, 1968, and accounts listing the pertinent details were published in the *Colorado Field Ornithologist*, Number 6, Summer 1969, page 26; *The Monthly Report of Field Observations of the Denver Field Ornithologists* (now the *Lark Bunting*), Volume 3, Number 9, June 1968; this species is also listed in the "Summary of Colorado's 1968 Spring Count" as published in the *Colorado Field Ornithologist*, Number 4, Summer 1968, page 10. Both accounts listed above credit the Louisiana Waterthrush as being number 443 on the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado.

The CFO Official Records Committee after reviewing the documentation surrounding this report, has ruled the sighting as unsatisfactory and consequently should be removed from the Official State List. The Committee in its deliberations felt that this species is extremely difficult to distinguish from the similar appearing Northern Waterthrush, and unless a specimen is obtained or extremely good color photographs taken, acceptance of a sight report must depend upon detailed records submitted by a number of qualified observers who had a good deal of time to study the bird.

Chairman's comment:

From the documentation that was presented, it was obvious that the observer saw a waterthrush. The question is which species--Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) or Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)? Separation of the two North American species is extremely difficult both in the field as well as in the hand. These difficulties are most certainly inadequately covered in most of the popular field guides, and unless the observer is thoroughly familiar and experienced with both species, field identification can prove very tricky. A thorough treatise on separating these waterthrushes appeared in *California Birds*, Volume 2, Number 1, 1971, pages 1 through 10, by Dr. Laurence C. Binford. Anyone interested in further information on the identities of these two species is urged to read Dr. Binford's article.

March 3, 1973

RARE AND UNUSUAL RECORDS REVIEWED BY THE CFO OFFICIAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

ARCTIC LOON - Gavia arctica

Two, observed at Cherry Creek Reservoir, Arapahoe County, November 8 through 13, 1972; observed by many; written documentation on file submitted by Ward L. Chadwick, MD (original observer), Jim Lane, John Cooper, Harold Holt, Jack Reddall. (File No. 1-72-1)

One, observed at Blue Mesa Reservoir, Gunnison County, September 30 and October 1, 1972 by Dr. A. Sidney Hyde and Don Radovich both of whom submitted written reports. (File No. 1-72-21)

Chairman's comment: The above two records represent the fifth and sixth records of the Arctic Loon for Colorado and only the second and third in this century.

GREEN HERON - Butorides virescens

One, photographed in color at Morrison, Jefferson County, May 9, 1965 by Harold Holt; photographs on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 5-72-28)

One, photographed in color at Bonny Reservoir, Yuma County, May 16, 1970 by Harold Holt; photographs on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 5-72-27)

Chairman's comment: Although there are numerous sightings of this species over the years from around the state, there are no specimens in any of our museum collections; thus these photographs represent the first concrete evidence of its occurrence in Colorado.

LITTLE BLUE HERON - Florida caerulea

One adult, observed and documented by Van Truan at CF&I Lakes, Pueblo County, August 1, 1971. (File No. 5-72-11)

CATTLE EGRET - Bubulcus ibis

One, observed in a marshy tract just to the west of Barr Lake, Adams County from April 20 through May 30, 1971 by many observers; photographed in color by Harold Holt; photographs on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 5-72-29)

Chairman's comment: Of the ten state records, the above represents the first photographic evidence; the remaining records are all sight reports. There are no specimens for the state.

LOUISIANA HERON - Hydranassa tricolor

One, observed at Barr Lake, Adams County, July 25, 1971 (and probably the same bird again on August 1, 1971 at the Mile High Duck Club, Adams County) by Harold Holt, Ward L. Chadwick, MD, Pam and Roy Gruver, Jack Reddall and Van Remsen. Color photographs obtained by Harold Holt and Van Remsen. Mr. Holt's photographs are on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 5-72-31)

Chairman's comment: Besides the above photographic record, there are two sight reports for this species in Colorado.

ROSS' GOOSE - Chen rossi

One, observed at the CF&I Lakes, Pueblo County, April 21 through 23, 1972 by David Griffiths, David Silverman, Van Truan and Sam Gadd. Written documentation submitted by David Griffiths and Van Truan. (File No. 8-72-12)

GREATER SCAUP - Aythya marila

One, picked up dead along the shore of Lake Maria about five miles east of Walsenburg, Huerfano County, November 11, 1972, by David Griffiths; written reports along with sketches submitted. (File No. 8-72-9)

KNOT - Calidris canutus

One, observed at Lake Henry, Crowley County, May 13, 1972 by Van Truan, Joey Truan and Michael Schultz; color photographs obtained by Michael Schultz and on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 19-72-16)

STILT SANDPIPER - Micropalama himantopus

Two, observed at Blue Mesa Reservoir, Gunnison County, September 10, 1972 by Dr. A. Sidney Hyde and David Galinat; color photographs obtained by David Galinat and are on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 19-72-22)

Chairman's comment: This is a rare "western slope" record for this species.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - Tryngites subruficollis

One, observed at the CF&I Lakes, Pueblo County, April 27, 1971 by Joey Truan and Van Truan; written documentation submitted by Van Truan. (File No. 19-72-17)

RED PHALAROPE - Phalaropus fulicarius

One, in winter plumage, observed at the CF&I Lakes, Pueblo County, April 13 through 15, 1972 by many; written documentation submitted by David Griffiths and Van Truan. (File No. 21-72-18)

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER - Centurus carolinus

One, observed at Muir Springs Park, Morgan County, November 4, 1972 by Harold Holt, Jim Lane and Steve Larson; written documentation submitted by Jim Lane and Steve Larson. (File No. 33-72-2)

CAROLINA WREN - Thryothorus ludovicianus

One, observed in the vicinity of 10th and Field Streets, Lakewood, December 11 and 12, 1972; seen by several; written documentation provided by John Cooper and Jim Lane. (File No. 42-72-10)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER - Toxostoma curvirostre

One, observed about 15 miles east of Trinidad, Las Animas County, April 17, 1971 by Van Truan who also submitted a written report. (File No. 43-72-19)

Chairman's comment: The Committee has researched 19 records for this species, all sight reports except for one color photograph report which is currently being circulated to the membership. There are no specimens.

VARIED THRUSH - Ixoreus naevius

One, observed at 1330 Kipling Street, Lakewood, November 27 through December 28, 1972; seen by many observers; first seen by Don Noyce; written reports submitted by Bernice Noyce, Jim Lane, Ray Olson and John Cooper. (File No. 44-72-8)

VEERY - Hylocichla fuscescens

Two, observed at Manitou Lake, Teller County, June 15 through 30, 1972 by Mr. and Mrs. Dominic A. Bartol, Jr. Black and white photographs obtained by Mr. Bartol and are on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 44-72-3)

WOOD THRUSH - Hylocichla mustelina

One, observed at Grand Junction, Mesa County, September 13 through 15, 1972 by Lucy Ela who submitted written documentation to the Committee. (File No. 44-72-35)

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO - Vireo flavifrons

One, observed along the Republican River downstream from Bonny Dam, Yuma County, April 24 and 25, 1971 by Hugh Kingery and Rich Bottorff; written documentation submitted by Hugh Kingery. (File No. 51-72-38)

CAPE MAY WARBLER - Dendroica tigrina

One, adult male photographed in color at Kittredge, Jefferson County, May 10, 1964 by Harold Holt; photographs on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 52-72-26)

Chairman's comment: There are only a few sight reports of this species for the state. Mr. Holt's photographs are the first on record. There are no specimens.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER - Dendroica pensylvanica

One, fall plumaged or immature bird observed about three miles northeast of Durango, La Plata County, September 24, 1972 by Richard Stransky, Pat Roberts and Florence Whiteman. All three observers filed individual written reports. (File No. 52-72-4)

SCARLET TANAGER - Piranga olivacea

One, adult male observed at Castlewood Dam, Douglas County, July 13, 1972 by Mr. and Mrs. Dominic A. Bartol, Jr. Mr. Bartol furnished written documentation. (File No. 55-72-5)

One, observed about five miles northeast of Gunnison, Gunnison County, September 3, 1972 by Dr. A. Sidney Hyde who filed a written report. (File No. 55-72-25)

PAINTED BUNTING - Passerina ciris

One, adult male injured and captured at Pueblo, Pueblo County, May 2, 1972. Released the same day and stayed in the area until May 10, 1972. First identified by Van Truan; seen by many. Written reports submitted by David Griffiths and Van Truan. Color photographs obtained by Robert Bregenzer which are on file with the Official Records Committee. (File No. 56-72-20)

WHITE-WINGED JUNCO - Junco aiken

Two, observed one mile west of Silverthorne, Summit County, December 23 through 25, 1972 by Mrs. Elinor Kingery and Hugh Kingery. Written report filed by Hugh Kingery. (File No. 56-72-36)

SNOW BUNTING - Plectrophenax nivalis

One, observed with a flock of Horned Larks about 10.6 miles due south from the I-80's interchange one mile west of Wiggins, Morgan County, December 31, 1972 by Van Remsen and Jack Reddall both of whom submitted written documentation. (File No. 56-72-34)

Two, observed at Prairie Divide, eight miles north of Red Feather Lakes, Larimer County by Sue and David Bolton, December 31, 1972 and January 1, 1973. Color photographs secured by David Bolton which are on file with the Official Records Committee along with his written report. (File No. 56-72-40)

SNOW BUNTING - Plectrophenax nivalis

One, observed at Denver Federal Center, Lakewood, Jefferson County, November 3, 1972.

Chairman's comment: Reported sighting REJECTED by the CFO Official Records Committee.

May 22, 1973

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NOTE

The Editors of American Birds have revised the boundaries of the regions used in that publication. Colorado now lies entirely within the Central Rockies/Great Basin region, and all reports should go to Hugh Kingery, 10 Emerson, Denver, Colorado, 80218, for the whole state. The change becomes effective with the breeding season.

No longer will Front Rangers have to ponder to which Region their observations belong.

Regional Editor Hugh Kingery hopes that each town along the Front Range will appoint a local reporter to send in observations to American Birds, as have groups in Fort Collins, Boulder, Denver, Pueblo, Durango, Grand Junction and Colorado Springs.

CFO FIELD TRIP TO CRIPPLE CREEK, 24 FEBRUARY 1973

Helen B. Thurlow
1113 Wood Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

A large number of Rosy Finches spend their winters regularly in the Cripple Creek area, generally moving north by the first of April. They are said to roost in the abandoned mine shafts there. Nona Stodart of Goldfield has been feeding them millet for many years and finds great pleasure in having them around during the winter. This also means there is a strong likelihood of seeing them there in large flocks.

Weather conditions were altogether favorable for the Colorado Field Ornithologists' field trip to this area on 24 February 1973, to see the Rosy Finches. Gene and Robbie Elliott, Helene Maier, and Louise Hering of Boulder, and Terry Cole and Bonnie Staley from Fort Collins, joined ten members of the Aiken Audubon Society of Colorado Springs to make the trip.

The fields were snow-covered and snow was piled high along the roads which were clear and dry. The scenery, with the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the distance, provided a large measure of enjoyment and appreciation as we traveled along and finally made our descent into Goldfield to the home of Nona Stodart. The birds could be observed on the aerial as we approached and Nona welcomed us warmly when we arrived.

The flock was estimated at approximately two hundred birds with the Gray-crowned Rosy Finches predominating, including the Hepburn's form. The Black and the Brown-capped Rosy Finches were also present, perhaps six to eight individuals of each species. The birds were seen at a very close range as they moved about restlessly from one perch or feeding area to another. They move in large close flocks or several smaller flocks until they are all together. A sudden descent upon a spot sounds like hail hitting the ground. They settle for only a few seconds and then take off again, wheeling through the air to return to the same general area. Pictures were taken and we spent over an hour here until everyone had had sufficient time to see all three species.

With a last look at the distant hills, we continued to Manitou Park for lunch. A total of twenty-eight species was observed during the day, including three Mountain Bluebirds. We are glad to report a very successful day.

CFO MEMBERSHIP LIST -- ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

compiled by

David W. Lupton
Colorado State University Libraries
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

NEW MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

General Membership

Galinat, David - Box 194, Palisade, Colorado 81526.
Krieg, Joe - 1030 Hemlock Way, Broomfield, Colorado 80020.

Library Exchanges

Colorado -- Mr. Sean Barron, Editor, Aiken Audubon Society, P. O. Box 501, Green Mountain Falls, Colorado 80819. Publication--Aikorns.

Austria -- Ing. Theo. Mainwald, Public Relations Officer, Österreichischer Falknerbund, Postfach 221, A-1011 Wien, Austria. Publications--Der Falkner, Mitteilungsblatt.

Canada -- Mr. Geoffrey L. Holroyd, Chairman, Long Point Bird Observatory, 116 Three Valleys Drive, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada. Publications--Annual Report, LPBO Newsletter.

Canada -- Dr. John Maunder, Editor, Newfoundland Natural History Society, 7 Maypark Place, St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada. Publication--Osprey.

Czechoslovakia -- Ing. Aladar Randik, CSc, Section for Bird Protection of the CS Ornithological Society, Bohunova 36, 80900 Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. Publications--Sylvia, Zpravy MOS.

England -- Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith, C.B.E., Secretary, British Section, International Countil for Bird Preservation, % British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W. 7, England. Publication--Annual Report.

England -- Sgt. David W. Bodley, Editor, Royal Air Force Ornithological Society, "Downfield", Lower New Road, Cheddar, Somerset, England. Publication--Royal Air Force Ornithological Society. Journal.

Germany -- Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. H. Dathe, Direktor, Tierpark Berlin, Am Tierpark 125, 1136 Berlin - Friedrichsfelde, Germany. Publication--Actitis.

Luxembourg -- Mr. Henri Rinnen, Sekretariat, Ligue Luxembourgeoise pour l'Etude et la Protection des Oiseaux, 32 rue de la Foret, Luxembourg. Publication--Regulus.

Zambia -- Mrs. Deirdre Major, Hon. Secretary, Zambian Ornithological Society, P. O. Box 3944, Lusaka, Zambia. Publication--Zambian Ornithological Society. Bulletin.

CORRECTIONS

General Membership

Carter, Dr. William A. - address correction to: Route 4, Box 468, Ada, Oklahoma 74820. This address change was incorrectly listed as Calder, Dr. William A. in issue No. 14, December 1972, p. 26.

Collister, Mrs. Allegra - change of address to: 812 Park Lane, Longmont, Colorado 80501.

Moody, Miss Virginia - change of address to: 1321 E. 10th Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80218.

Stone, Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. - address correction to: 12355 W. Texas Drive, Lakewood, Colorado 80228.

The Colorado Field Ornithologist is a quarterly journal devoted to the field study of birds in Colorado. Articles and notes of scientific or general interest, and reports of unusual observations are solicited. Send manuscripts, with photos and drawings, to David W. Lupton, Editor; Serials Section, Colorado State University Libraries; Fort Collins, Colorado 80521. Membership and subscription fees: Full member $5.00; Library subscription fees $5.00. Submit payments to Sadie Morrison, Treasurer; 1283 Elizabeth Street, Denver, Colorado 80206. Request for exchange or for back numbers should be addressed to the Editor. Numbers 1-10 are $1.50 per issue; 11 and continuing are $1.25 per issue. All exchange publications should likewise be sent to the Editor's address.

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

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