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NOTES ON THE WINTER BIRDS OF NORTHERN  
LOUISIANA.

BY ARTHUR H. HOWELL.

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During a recent trip in northern Louisiana in the interests of the Biological Survey, about 200 specimens of birds were collected, and many notes on their distribution and abundance secured.

Upon working over this material several species and subspecies not recorded in the most recent State list\* were found, and many apparently new facts with regard to the distribution of species were brought to light. It seems desirable, therefore, to publish a list of all the species observed.

The localities visited are as follows: Clarks, Caldwell Parish, in the heavily timbered portion of the State, January 6-8, 1908; Alexandria, January 9; Lecompte, 15 miles south of Alexandria, January 11-15 and February 10-12; Natchitoches, January 16-22; Mansfield, DeSoto Parish, January 23-25; Shreveport,† January 27-31; Belcher, Bossier Parish, February 3-7.

The following species and subspecies are here recorded for the first time from Louisiana:

*Sturnella neglecta.*

*Agelaius phoeniceus arctolegus.*

*Coturniculus savannarum bimaculatus.*

*Melospiza lincolni.*

*Toxostoma rufum longicaudum.*

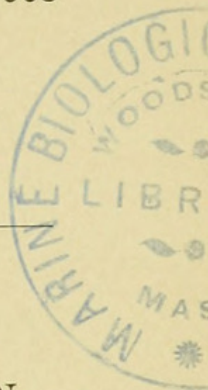
*Penthestes carolinensis agilis.*

*Planesticus migratorius achrusterus.*

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\* See "The Avifauna of Louisiana," by Geo. E. Beyer, Proc. Louisiana Soc. of Naturalists, 1897-1899 (1900), pp. 75-120.

† All the records from Shreveport were made on Mr. Henry Carlton's farm in Bossier Parish about 5 miles east of Shreveport.





The only previous record of the Northern Flicker (*Colaptes a. luteus*) from Louisiana appears to be that given by P. A. Taverner (under the name *Colaptes auratus*) of a tagged Iowa bird shot at Many, Louisiana, December 25, 1905.\*

The specimens collected have been identified by H. C. Oberholser of the Biological Survey.

**Ardea herodias** Linn.

One seen in a swamp at Lecompte, January 11.

**Gallinago delicata** (Ord).

Two seen at Shreveport, January 28 and 29.

**Oxyechus vociferus** (Linn.).

A flock of 50 or 60 fed in the fields at Lecompte and a flock of 100 or more in the fields near Shreveport.

**Colinus virginianus** (Linn.).

Common at Natchitoches, Shreveport, and Belcher; one flock seen at Clarks. Two specimens, Clarks and Shreveport. The quail of this region appear smaller in life than birds from the northeastern States but comparison of specimens reveals no differences of importance.

**Zenaidura carolinensis** (Linn.).

Scarce. Only two small flocks seen — one at Lecompte and one at Natchitoches.

**Cathartes aura septentrionalis** Wied.

Common at all localities visited.

**Catharista urubu** (Vieillot).

Common at Alexandria, Lecompte, and Natchitoches; one seen at Clarks.

**Circus hudsonius** (Linn.).

One seen at Lecompte, January 13 and 15.

**Falco sparverius** Linn.

Scarce; seen at Clarks, Lecompte, Natchitoches, and Mansfield.

**Syrnium varium alleni** Ridgway.

One seen at Lecompte. There is a specimen of this form in the Biological Survey Collection from Eldorado, Louisiana.

**Otus asio floridanus** (Ridgway).

Scarce; heard at Shreveport and Belcher.

**Ceryle alcyon** (Linn.).

One seen at Clarks, two at Lecompte.

**Dryobates villosus auduboni** (Swainson).

Three specimens, Natchitoches, January 17, 20, 21.

**Dryobates borealis** (Vieillot).

One taken at Clarks.

**Sphyrapicus varius** (Linn.).

A few observed at each locality visited.

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\*Auk, XXIII, 1906, p. 232.



**Melanerpes erythrocephalus** (Linn.).

Rather common at Lecompte; a few at Clarks and Belcher.

**Melanerpes carolinus** (Linn.).

Numerous at Lecompte; a few at Natchitoches, Mansfield, Shreveport, and Belcher.

**Colaptes auratus luteus** Bangs.

Occurs in small numbers in all timbered regions; particularly common at Lecompte. Five specimens, four from Lecompte, one from Belcher. Taken also at Mansfield, April 27, 1907.

**Sayornis phœbe** (Latham).

A few seen at each locality visited.

**Cyanocitta cristata** (Linn.).

Common at Lecompte and Belcher; rather uncommon at other localities. Three specimens, Belcher.

**Corvus brachyrhynchos** Brehm.

Common in open farming country; one specimen, Shreveport.

**Molothrus ater** (Bodd.).

A few noted at nearly all localities visited.

**Agelaius phœniceus phœniceus** (Linn.).

Common at Natchitoches, Shreveport, and Belcher; 16 specimens from these localities. Observed in small numbers at Lecompte and Mansfield. At this season the males greatly outnumber the females. This was especially true of the large flocks seen at Belcher in February which were composed almost entirely of males.

**Agelaius phœniceus arctolegus** Oberholser.

Two specimens, Natchitoches, January 20, and Belcher, February 4.

**Sturnella magna magna** (Linn.).

Common in open country. Seven specimens from the following localities: Clarks, 1; Lecompte, 1; Shreveport, 5.

**Sturnella magna argutula** Bangs.

Four specimens: Lecompte, 1; Natchitoches, 1; Belcher, 2.

**Sturnella neglecta** Aud.

One specimen from Lecompte, January 13, and one from Shreveport, January 29. Probably not uncommon in the northwestern part of the State, though no songs were heard and identification in the field was therefore impossible.

**Euphagus carolinus** (Müll.).

A flock of about 30 seen at Lecompte, January 15. None seen at other localities except a single specimen shot from a flock of *E. cyanocephalus* at Natchitoches.

**Euphagus cyanocephalus** (Wagler).

Abundant near Shreveport, January 27-31; small flocks seen at Natchitoches and Belcher.



**Quiscalus quiscula æneus** Ridgway.

Small flocks seen at Clarks, January 5 and 6; a few were observed at Belcher, February 5, flying to roost with other blackbirds.

**Carpodacus purpureus** (Gmelin).

Scarce; a few seen at Clarks, Lecompte, and Shreveport.

**Astragalinus tristis** (Linn.).

A few at each locality visited.

**Poœcetes gramineus gramineus** (Gmelin).

Common at Natchitoches, January 17–21; not seen elsewhere except a few at Mansfield, January 24. Six specimens from above localities.

**Passerculus sandwichensis savanna** (Wilson).

Common at Lecompte in January; seen in small numbers at Alexandria, Natchitoches, and Shreveport. Fourteen specimens from above localities.

**Coturniculus savannarum bimaculatus** (Swainson).

One taken at Natchitoches, January 21; the only one seen.

**Ammodramus lecontei** (Aud.).

One taken at Natchitoches, January 17.

**Zonotrichia leucophrys** (Forster).

A small flock seen at Natchitoches, January 17, and a few at Shreveport, January 27. One specimen, Natchitoches.

**Zonotrichia albicollis** (Gmelin).

Common at nearly all localities visited.

**Spizella socialis** (Wilson).

A few seen at Clarks, January 7, and a few at Mansfield, January 23.

**Spizella pusilla pusilla** (Wilson).

Abundant at Natchitoches, January 17–21; fairly common at Mansfield; rare at other localities visited. Seven specimens from various localities.

**Spizella pusilla arenacea** Chadbourne.

Two specimens: Natchitoches, January 17, and Belcher, February 6. Although not included in Mr. Beyer's list, this form had been recorded from Mandeville, Louisiana, by Mr. F. M. Chapman.\*

**Junco hyemalis** (Linn.).

A few observed at Clarks, Lecompte, and Mansfield.

**Peucaea æstivalis bachmani** (Aud.).

Not observed on the present trip; it was common at Mansfield, however, in late April and early May, 1907.

**Melospiza melodia** (Wilson).

A few were observed at nearly every locality visited, but they were nowhere common.

**Melospiza lincolni** (Aud.).

One taken at Mansfield, January 24. This appears to be the first record of its occurrence in the State.

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\* Auk, VIII, 1891, p. 318.



**Melospiza georgiana** (Latham).

Fairly common about the cultivated fields at nearly every locality visited.

**Passerella iliaca** (Merrem).

A few seen at Clarks, Natchitoches, Shreveport, and Belcher.

**Pipilo erythrophthalmus** (Linn.).

Present in small numbers at nearly all localities.

**Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis** (Linn.).

Common at all localities. Thirteen specimens, which show no approach to *C. c. magnirostris* Bangs.

**Ampelis cedrorum** (Vieillot).

Abundant at Alexandria and Natchitoches. Their principal food at this season is hackberries (*Celtis*), and the birds visit the hackberry groves in immense numbers. They present an easy mark for the amateur gunner, and in some localities thousands are shot daily for food. As I stood under a tree in which a large flock of waxwings was feeding, skinned hackberries were falling to the ground like hail. The birds' mouths, gullets and entire intestinal tracts were filled with *entire* hackberries. Apparently some of the berries are swallowed whole while others are partially skinned.

**Lanius ludovicianus migrans** Palmer.

Fairly common at all localities visited. Seventeen specimens, from every locality excepting Clarks; all prove to be typical *migrans*.

**Lanivireo solitarius** (Wilson).

One taken January 11, at Lecompte.

**Dendroica coronata** (Linn.).

Common at all localities, both in timber and fields. They have a special liking for swamps, feeding in brush close to the water.

**Dendroica vigorsi** (Aud.).

Observed in small numbers at Clarks, Natchitoches, Mansfield, and Belcher.

**Geothlypis trichas brachidactyla** (Swainson).

One taken at Lecompte, January 11; another seen there January 14.

**Anthus pensilvanicus** (Latham).

Observed at all localities visited. Most abundant at Alexandria, Lecompte, and Shreveport, at each of which localities flocks of 200 or more were seen.

**Mimus polyglottos** (Linn.).

Common at all localities visited; four specimens.

**Toxostoma rufum rufum** (Linn.).

Two specimens, Clarks and Belcher. Rather common at Lecompte. A few observed also at Natchitoches, Mansfield, and Shreveport.



**Toxostoma rufum longicaudum** (Baird).\*

Five specimens (Lecompte, 4; Belcher, 1) have been identified by Mr. Oberholser as this form.

**Thryothorus ludovicianus** (Latham).

Fairly common at all localities; 12 specimens.

**Thryomanes bewicki** (Aud.).

Observed in small numbers at all localities visited excepting Clarks and Lecompte. Seven specimens: Alexandria, 1; Natchitoches, 2; Mansfield, 1; Shreveport, 1; Belcher, 2.

**Nannus hyemalis** (Vieillot).

Two specimens, Clarks, January 6, and Lecompte, January 14. One seen at Mansfield.

**Sitta carolinensis** Latham.

A pair taken at Belcher, February 4.

**Bæolophus bicolor** (Linn.).

Fairly common in all timbered regions; 8 specimens.

**Penthestes carolinensis agilis** (Sennett).

Fairly common at all localities visited; six specimens from five localities all prove to be of this form.

**Regulus calendula** (Linn.).

Rather common at all localities visited.

**Hylocichla guttata pallasi** (Cabanis).

Common in all timbered regions; fifteen specimens, from all localities visited except Alexandria.

**Planesticus migratorius** (Linn.).

Present at all localities visited; very abundant at Natchitoches, January 17 and 18. They are attracted by groves of hackberry trees, the fruit of which furnishes their principal food at this season. They become very fat and are much prized for food, many thousands being shot by the local hunters.

The habit of roosting at night in the canebrakes also leads to their destruction, for they are often sought out by men and boys with lanterns, who knock down and kill hundreds of the birds with clubs. Three specimens: Alexandria, Lecompte, and Natchitoches.

**Planesticus migratorius achrusterus** (Batchelder).

Six of the seven Robins taken at Natchitoches prove to be of this form.

**Sialia sialis** (Linn.).

Observed in small numbers at nearly all localities.

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\* *H[arpophynchus] longicauda* Baird, Rep. Pacific R. R. Surveys, IX, 1858, p. 353.



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