

76. *Icteria virens*.—In the fall of 1889 the first appeared Oct. 26. For two weeks they were not uncommon and then disappeared entirely, not being seen again until March 1, 1890. They were tolerably common until the 5th, when I took the last, a female. For the spring of 1889 I have only one note, that of a female taken Feb. 15.

77. *Sylvania pusilla pileolata*.—First seen Oct. 27 (1889), by Nov. 20 they are quite common, and throughout December are the most abundant Warbler. Saw the last March 6.

78. *Sylvania canadensis*.—The first I saw at San José was a female picked up in the street on the morning of Sept. 29, 1889. They were not uncommon from that date until Oct. 6 when I found them abundant along the river banks. None appeared in the spring.

79. *Setophaga ruticilla*.—I have no notes for the spring of 1889. The first for the fall is that of a female Aug. 13; the second, also a female, was seen on the 20th; the first male was noted on the 23d; on the 27th I saw the second and last male noted, although the females were tolerably common until March 6 when the last was seen.

80. *Turdus fuscescens*.—I have seen only a single example, brought in the flesh to the museum Oct. 14, 1889, by Señor Manuel Caranza.

81. *Turdus ustulatus swainsonii*.—There is one specimen in the museum collection, labelled "San José, Nov. 7, 1887. A. Alfaro."

NOTES ON HABITS OF A FEW BIRDS OF ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA.

BY D. MORTIMER.

Ardea herodias. GREAT BLUE HERON.

THE Great Blue Heron is commonly rather wary, but I have noticed one or two singular exceptions to this rule. On June 23, 1888, my brother and I were fishing in a small creek that drains from the great prairie on the west shore of Lake Jessup. We had shifted our position to a certain point when we noticed that some creature was splashing about just around the nearest bend. Watching for a moment, we soon saw a Great Blue Heron busily engaged in catching a lunch. It was wading in water that reached above the joints of its legs, and its mode of proceeding was to lift one foot after the other slowly and deliberately clear of the surface, thus moving steadily and silently. Frequently it struck

to the right or left, first pausing and apparently taking careful aim. Occasionally it wished to reach some object at a distance out in the stream, when it plunged bodily forward and stretched its neck to the utmost, though it could no longer touch bottom with its feet. At these times it always spread its wings, and with their aid floundered backward to its former position in shallow water. The manœuvre was decidedly awkward, though apparently always successful, as the bird could be observed swallowing what it had secured. We watched it for some time as it waded up and down the shore, and were surprised that it was not disturbed by our presence and conversation. Finally, to test its unconcern, my brother sculled the boat past it, keeping to the opposite shore, which, however, was less than twenty yards distant from the bird. After he had passed the Heron, we talked back and forth past it, but the only notice it took of us was to stand motionless once or twice and look at us. It displayed the greatest proof of confidence as my brother was returning, for, as he was about opposite to its station, it made one of its comical plunges into deep water. We finally left it still pursuing its nourishment.

Himantopus mexicanus. BLACK-NECKED STILT.

It is interesting to note the ability of this extraordinary Wader to swim when pressed by necessity, though it probably never exercises itself in this way under ordinary circumstances. While on the St. John's River in April, 1888, in company with my brother, we wounded a Black-necked Stilt that was yet able to use its legs and ran some distance along the shore; but being pressed by our pursuit, it took to the river and swam for the opposite bank. One returned to the place where we had stepped ashore, to get the boat, while the other remained to watch the bird and direct the continuation of the pursuit. Before the boat could be brought up to the scene of action, the Stilt had crossed the river, but there it lost strength and lay helpless under the bank. In swimming, the Stilt had proceeded in a sort of sidling manner, and rising in the water with each stroke of the feet, and continually turning its head from side to side, it presented a foolish aspect, but its progress was remarkable when its ill adaptation to swimming is considered.

Buteo lineatus alleni. FLORIDA RED-SHOULDERED HAWK.

This is the most troublesome of the Hawks among young chickens in Orange County. The numerous bay tree swamps are its favorite residence, as they serve as a safe stronghold, and also harbor myriads of cotton rats which are a favorite prey with it. It would appear that this Hawk is not in the habit of molesting the common small birds, as I have observed numbers of Blackbirds fly into the same tree with one, neither party paying any attention to the other. The bold little Sparrow Hawk has no difficulty in driving this larger species, and I have seen a pair of Quail rout a Red-shoulder that had made a sally upon their brood.

Ceophlæus pileatus. PILEATED WOODPECKER.

The Pileated Woodpecker is among the birds most limited in the variety of their notes, and indeed its only cry seems to be the wild clatter that has been so often described. On one occasion I discovered a pair of birds of this species apparently at play amongst the trees of a dense hummock. Wishing to secure them, I shot the female as she clung to a broken limb on a large oak. The male, who had been making a great noise, was silent a minute upon the report of the gun, but directly began again, and at the same time flew about rapidly as if trying to discover his mate. Presently he alighted on the very limb from which the other had fallen, and then I fired at him in the midst of one of his outbursts. Although he fell, he did not pause in his clatter for an instant, but came tumbling down until he caught in some moss at a distance from the ground, where he continued to vociferate without apparently allowing himself to draw a breath. Very soon he fell to the earth, but became quiet only when I pressed my hand upon his lungs. It would seem that this bird must have felt pleasure, fear, and pain during the time I observed him, all of which he expressed by the same sounds.

Melanerpes carolinus. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER.

Possessing very full testimony regarding this bird's habit of eating oranges, as noticed with interest by Dr. Warren and Mr. Brewster, I offer my observations made near Sanford. During

February and March, 1889, while gathering fruit or pruning orange trees, I frequently found oranges that had been riddled by this Woodpecker, and repeatedly saw the bird at work. I never observed it feeding upon fallen oranges. It helped itself freely to sound fruit that still hung on the trees, and in some instances I have found ten or twelve oranges on one tree that had been tapped by it. Where an orange accidentally rested on a branch in such a way as to make the flower end accessible from above or from a horizontal direction the Woodpecker chose that spot, as through it he could reach into all the sections of the fruit, and when this was the case there was but one hole in the orange. But usually there were many holes around it. It appeared that after having once commenced on an orange, the Woodpecker returned to the same one repeatedly until he had completely consumed the pulp, and then he usually attacked another very near to it. Thus I have found certain clusters in which every orange had been bored, while all the others on the tree were untouched. An old orange grower told me that the 'sapsuckers,' as he called them, never touch any but very ripe oranges and are troublesome only to such growers as reserved their crops for the late market. He also said that it is only within a very few years that they have shown a taste for the fruit; and I myself observed that, although Red-bellies were very common in the neighborhood, only an individual, or perhaps a pair, visited any one grove. In one case a pair took up their station in a dead pine near a grove and made excursions after the fruit at all hours of the day, being easily located by the noise they kept up.

Tyrannus tyrannus. KINGBIRD.

Flocks of Kingbirds wintering in Orange County are very fond of frequenting the lakes that abound there. About Lake Ada, a large, clear-water pond, it is common to find Kingbirds in great numbers, reaching even into the hundreds. They always seem in high spirits and full of play. Continually uttering their note, they pursue one another, and frequently dip in the water like Swallows. Whenever an opportunity offers they indulge in their favorite trick of abusing any Crow that comes along.

Corvus americanus floridanus. FLORIDA CROW.

This variety of the American Crow seems to be more familiar with man and sociable among its feathered neighbors than its Northern relative. It is common to see it feeding about the streets and vacant lots of Sanford, especially when the palmetto fruit is ripe enough to eat. It associates freely with the Boat-tailed and Florida Grackles, and also with the Red-winged Blackbird and the Rice-bird, and I have seen flocks including all these species enjoying themselves about the town. It always retreats before any small bird that undertakes to chase it, though it does so apparently because it is too indolent to drive off its assailant, and not on account of timidity. Omnivorous in the fullest sense, it is always on the lookout for any edible morsel. I have seen Florida Crows attach themselves to the Osprey as soon as the latter captured a fish, and tag it about as if to secure any scraps that might fall during the meal. The Osprey is disturbed by this intrusion and tries to strike the Crows with its wings if they come too close.

For several weeks I kept in confinement a Florida Crow that had been injured by a shot. It became quite tame almost at the first and ate every kind of food. It was particularly fond of the larvæ and spiders contained in the nests of the mud wasp and would peck the cells open in order to obtain them. It was very fond of bathing in a pan of water. When it recovered from its injuries I set it at liberty, but was surprised to see that it stayed about for a few days. It entered the house and explored every room up stairs and down, and finding a pail of refuse scraps in the kitchen, returned to feed from it several times after we supposed it had left for good.

The Florida Crow has a peculiar note that I never heard uttered by any Crow at the North. It is a loud, rattling sound something like the cry of the Cuckoo, and puzzled me much as to its source until I detected the bird in the act of producing it.

Quiscalus major. BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE.

Boat-tailed Grackles are great insect eaters. Besides being fond of palmetto fruit and other vegetable substances, they frequent the beds of 'bonnets' or lily pads for the worms, etc., that are to be found there, and I have also observed them pursuing and capturing moths and other winged insects.

Passer domesticus. HOUSE SPARROW.

On account of the extreme rarity of this interesting bird in Orange County, I mention the single instance of its occurrence that came under my notice during a residence of two years and four months. Throughout the latter half of March, 1887, a female House Sparrow frequented the stable on our premises, a mile north of the town of Sanford.

Lanius ludovicianus. LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE.

In March, 1889, two instances of the Loggerhead Shrike killing small birds came under my notice. In both cases the victim was a Grasshopper Sparrow, although birds of this species were few and scattered at that time, while the Savanna Sparrow was very abundant. The Sparrows were impaled by the neck upon orange thorns, and there were no wounds on any other part of the body. The 'Florida Dispatch' cites an instance of the Loggerhead killing a little chicken. This bird impales its prey not only when it wishes to preserve it, but also when it intends to devour it immediately, and the long slivers on fresh pine stumps are commonly selected for the purpose wherever they can be found. The bird flies to a stump with its victim, usually a large beetle, and forces it upon a sliver, just behind the thorax; thus having a convenient place to stand, and a convenient fork to hold the morsel, while he breaks open the hard shell and eats the softer parts. The same stump is resorted to many times by the same bird, so that it is common to find quantities of the legs and wing-cases of beetles about these curious dining tables.

Dendroica coronata. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER.

I have seen Yellow-rumped Warblers eating oranges as mentioned by Mr. Brewster in 'The Auk' (July, 1889). When observed in the act they were feeding on fallen fruit that had been broken open, but, as they also frequented the trees, possibly they extracted pulp through holes made by the Red-bellied Woodpecker. From January 12 to February 8, 1888, this species was extremely abundant all over the region about Sanford. Hummock, bay, pine land, and flat woods swarmed with them, and they also frequented the town, and even entered houses.

Mimus polyglottos. MOCKINGBIRD.

The power of song in this bird is a subject that never ceases to be interesting. My observations on the subject lead me to conclude that the great majority are not very gifted singers, and that the wonderful variety of notes so often described is possessed by a small percentage only.

Surrounded by orange groves, which are a favorite haunt of the Mocker, our home was amongst dozens of Mockingbirds, but only two seemed to be great singers. Later we moved to a new place, two miles further from Sanford, and there there was but one great singer among the Mockingbirds of that neighborhood. The cries of the Sparrow Hawk and the Loggerhead Shrike seem to be possessed by all, but whenever I heard one utter any other note it seemed striking. A Mockingbird that frequented our place imitated the Blue Jay, Bob-white, Sparrow Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Cardinal and Bluebird, besides having its own individual song. The same bird imitated a chicken in distress so perfectly that I several times believed a Hawk had visited the hen-yard.

**DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF *ICTERUS*
FROM ANDROS ISLAND, BAHAMAS.**

BY J. A. ALLEN.

THROUGH the kindness of Mr. John I. Northrop, of the School of Mines, Columbia College, New York, I have the pleasure of making known a new species of *Icterus* from Andros Island, one of the larger islands of the Bahaman group. During four months spent recently on Andros Island, Mr. and Mrs. Northrop devoted much attention to birds, collecting about seventy species, among them several new to the Bahamas, as well as the novelty about to be described, which adds not only a new genus to the Bahaman fauna, but a new species to science. The species is represented by nine specimens, three of which are adult males,



1890. "Notes on Habits of a Few Birds of Orange County, Florida." *The Auk* 7, 337–343. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067554>.

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