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County Md.

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THE FAMILY MNIOTILTIDAE IN BALTIMORE COUNTY.

BY J. HALL PLEASANTS, JR.

(Abstract of an address delivered before the Baltimore Naturalists' Field Club, March 13, 1894.)

Up to the present time, some thirty-three species of warblers have been taken in Baltimore County and doubtless this number will be increased by future investigation. Of the two hundred and twenty-five, or more, species of birds going to make up the avifauna of this region, no family is as largely represented as the Mniotiltidae. Yet, with the exception of a few species, the average observer is entirely unconscious of the presence here, in immense numbers of these interesting, and for the most part highly colored, birds. This can to a certain extent be attributed to their retiring habits and diminutive size, few species exceeding six inches in length. If we wish to study the members of this group, they must be patiently and carefully sought after. They do not thrust themselves upon our attention. Largely migratory at this elevation and latitude, the majority pass through the county during late spring to their more northern breeding grounds, to return southward again in early autumn. Many species remain here during the summer months to breed, and one, at least, spends the winter occasionally with us. During the periods of migration the warblers are very generally distributed throughout the county, local conditions, such as differences in the flora and topography, playing but a comparatively small part in their distribution at this time. In the case of the summer residents, however, these factors enter largely into the choice of breeding places. Thus the district to the west of the city exhibits numerous peculiarities in its avifauna as well as in its geology. Here the blue-winged warbler (*Helminthophila pinus*), nowhere a common species, has been several times found nesting. Many similar cases could be cited. Moreover many species occurring throughout the entire county are especially abundant in certain sections. There also seems to be considerable fluctuation from year to year in the number of individuals of some species.

Migration is generally performed at night, the greater part of the day being spent in procuring food. During the first three weeks in May and all through September the warbler migration is at its height. Some species however, as the Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*), arrive much earlier and remain longer than this.

In the following list the relative abundance, and the length of the stay of the various species with us, will be indicated briefly. In the case of a

few rare species, the dates of their occurrence will be added. It is to be regretted that lack of space prevents as full a treatment of local distribution as is desirable.

Mniotilta varia.—Black and White Warbler.

Summer resident. Especially abundant during migration. It arrives about the middle of April, and leaves early in October. It is very generally distributed over the county in summer, and its nest has several times been found.

Helminthus vermivorus.—Worm-eating Warbler.

Summer resident. Rather common. Arrives early in May. It has been found breeding in various parts of the county. Several pairs nest along the range of hills extending from Towson to Loch Raven.

Helminthophila pinus.—Blue-winged Warbler.

Summer resident. Uncommon. Mr. Geo. H. Gray during the past few years has found them breeding west of the city.

Helminthophila chrysoptera.—Golden-winged Warbler.

Rare migrant. Only three specimens have been observed; May 7th, 1892, May 29th, 1892, and September 5th, 1893.

Helminthophila ruficapilla.—Nashville Warbler.

Uncommon migrant. It has been several times observed in May, and once in September.

Helminthophila peregrina.—Tennessee Warbler.

Extremely rare autumn migrant. But two have been observed at this season, and it has not as yet been found in spring. All the members of this genus are comparatively rare birds here.

Compsothlypis americana.—Parula Warbler.

Summer resident. It has been noted several times during the summer months, but is comparatively rare at this season. As a migrant it is abundant, arriving the last week in April. By the third week in May the majority have passed to more northern breeding grounds. In the fall they are abundant again from September 1st to October 15th.

Dendroica tigrina.—Cape May Warbler.

Migrant. Only two specimens have been taken. One of these was shot by Mr. Arthur Resler, October 22d, 1890; the other by Mr. W. N. Wholey, October 21st, 1893.

Dendroica aestiva.—Yellow Warbler.

Summer resident. Locally distributed. Many nest in the heart of the city. It arrives about the 20th of April, and remains until late in September.

Dendroica caerulescens.—Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Abundant migrant. It is found in spring from the last week in April until May 20th, and again in autumn, from the last of August to the middle of October. It frequents thickets in woodland.

Dendroica coronata.—Myrtle Warbler.

Winter resident. It has been found from the first week in October to May 20th. They are quite abundant in the spring and fall, frequenting orchards and open woods.

Dendroica maculosa.—Magnolia Warbler.

Migrant. Abundant from May 1st to 25th, and again in autumn from the last of August to the first week in October. This is chiefly a woodland bird.

Dendroica cærulea.—Cerulean Warbler.

July 14th, 1893, I obtained an adult and two young near Towson. The former had been heard singing about a week previous. This species has never before been found in summer east of the Alleghanies. This is the only record of its occurrence in Baltimore county.

Dendroica pensylvanica.—Chestnut-sided Warbler.

Migrant. Abundant from the last of April to May 25th, and again from the 15th of August until the middle of October. This is distinctively a woodland species.

Dendroica castanea.—Bay-breasted Warbler.

Migrant. It occurs sparingly in May and September.

Dendroica striata.—Black-poll Warbler.

Migrant. In spring during May, and in autumn from September 15th to the middle of October. Quite common in woodland during some seasons.

Dendroica blackburniae.—Blackburnian Warbler.

Migrant. Rather common in spring during the first three weeks of May, and again from the last of August until the second week in October.

Dendroica virens.—Black-throated Green Warbler.

Migrant. Very abundant in woodland from April 20th to May 15th, and from late August to the third week in October.

Dendroica vigorsii.—Pine Warbler.

Summer resident. This is a very uncommon bird. It doubtless breeds here in suitable localities. Mr. A. Resler has several times observed it, once June 29th, 1892, when it was probably nesting.

Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea.—Yellow Palm Warbler.

Migrant. In spring during the greater part of April, and in autumn from the last week in September to the third week in October.

Dendroica discolor.—Prairie Warbler.

Summer resident. It arrives the 20th of April, and remains until September. During this period it frequents chiefly scrub-pines.

Seiurus aurocapillus.—Oven-bird.

Summer resident. Abundant from the 10th of April until early in October. It spends most of its time on the ground, frequenting chiefly damp woodland hill-sides.

Seiurus noveboracensis.—Water Thrush.

Migrant. Rather uncommon. In spring from the last of April to the third week in May. In fall from September 1st to October 15th. This and the next species are found in the immediate vicinity of running water.

Seiurus motacilla.—Louisiana Water Thrush.

Summer resident. Rather common, from early in April to the third week in September.

Geothlypis formosa.—Kentucky Warbler.

Summer resident. Not uncommon at this season in swampy woods.

Several nests have been found.

Geothlypis agilis.—Connecticut Warbler.

Autumn migrant. A few have been observed in late September and early in October. It has not yet been found here in spring.

Geothlypis philadelphia.—Mourning Warbler.

Migrant. Very rare. It is found chiefly in swampy thickets. Six specimens in all have been observed, one as late as June 3d by Mr. George H. Gray.

Geothlypis trichas.—Maryland Yellow-throat.

Summer resident. Very common in swampy thickets and briar patches, from the middle of April until about October 20th.

Icteria virens.—Yellow-breasted Chat.

Summer resident. Common from late in April until September. This is a noisy and conspicuous species. It is frequently heard singing at night.

Sylvania mitrata.—Hooded Warbler.

Migrant. It has been found in small numbers in May and September.

Sylvania pusilla.—Wilson's Warbler.

Migrant. Not common. It passes through in May and again in September.

Sylvania canadensis.—Canada Warbler.

Migrant. Common in spring during the month of May. In autumn it returns early, about the second week in August. It leaves for the south the third week in September.

Setophaga ruticilla.—Redstart.

Summer resident. It occurs chiefly as a migrant, but a good many spend the summer with us. They arrive the last week in April and remain until the middle of October. This and the three preceeding species are called the fly-catching warblers. They are found for the most part in woodland thickets.

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