

October, 1924, and brought to Mr. John R. Moses of North Head, Grand Manan.

The bird, a female of the species, was preserved and was examined by the writer at the home of Mr. Moses on the 20th of November, 1924. Reference to Macoun's *Catalogue of Canadian Birds* reveals the interesting fact that a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was taken at Clarendon Station, Queens County, New Brunswick, on the 21st of May, 1906, by Mr. G. S. Lacey. It is believed that these two comprise the only records of the species in the Maritime Provinces.—R. W. TUFTS.

THE STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) AT GUELPH, ONTARIO.—On March 23, 1924, seven Starlings appeared in Guelph, Ontario. Five of these moved on elsewhere and one pair remained to breed. They nested in an old Flicker cavity some forty feet up in a maple stub. There were two broods during the season. On the opposite side of the street a Screech Owl holed up during the day time, the Starlings not being in the least disturbed over the close proximity of this nocturnal chap. When the Flickers arrived, in April, they had quite a lively time while attempting to reclaim their old nesting-site, but their attempt was not successful.—ROBERT E. BARBER.

THE WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE IN ALBERTA.—During the last few years the White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons* subsp.?) has become a fairly regular fall migrant through Central Alberta. While it has not been reported in the spring migrations, it is possible that it returns via this route, although it could not be expected to be observed at that time of the year as readily as during the shooting season. Previous to the fall of 1922, these Geese were unknown to our oldest hunters, and they were unable to recall ever having seen them before.

On the 7th of October, 1922, twelve Gray Wavies, as they were called, were shot out of several flocks, near Beaver Lake, there being at least a thousand seen at that time. On the 14th of the same month, the writer secured two very fine birds out of a flock of about fifty, and observed during that day several other flocks, estimated to number 25 to 50 each. These Geese were feeding

in wheat fields which had been cleared of stooks, were in excellent condition, and decoyed as readily as do the Canada Geese. During the same month a considerable number were killed in the Sullivan Lake country. In 1923 they do not appear to have passed through in the same numbers, although a few were reported.

On the first of October, 1924, the writer, with two friends, killed four White-fronted Geese out of a flock of one hundred birds, on his farm, a few miles south of Camrose. These were feeding in a wheat field, amongst the stooks which had not as yet been removed. This is quite different from the habits of the Canada Geese, which rarely, if ever, feed among stooks, always selecting for feeding purposes fields which have been cleared. This is one instance where the White-fronts use less caution than do their larger relatives. While hunting at Manitou Lake, Saskatchewan, just across the border from Alberta, in the last week in October, 1924, the writer saw hundreds of White-fronted Geese, and secured seven one morning. One flock was unusually susceptible to decoying, and was called back over the pit three times, before it finally left the field.

The breast plumage of the White-fronted Goose varies exceedingly in color and form, no two of those which have the black blotches being exactly similar. The majority of those killed had only the pale gray breasts, and these all seemed to be the smaller birds. Would these latter be the birds of the year? Out of a considerable series of White-fronts weighed, the heaviest, a richly blotched bird, tipped the scales at six pounds and ten ounces. The plain-breasted birds averaged about five pounds each.

These Geese are known to migrate through Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan regularly, and it would be interesting indeed to know for what reason they have changed their usual course five hundred miles during recent years.—FRANK L. FARLEY.

NOTE—*The Canadian Field-Naturalist* is much indebted to Mr. P. B. Philipp for meeting the expense of publishing the illustrations accompanying his paper in this issue.—Editor.

## BOOK REVIEW

BIRDS AND MAMMALS OF THE SKEENA RIVER REGION OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA.  
By Harry S. Swarth. University of California, Publications in Zoology, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 315-294, Plates 9-11, 1 figure in text. Univ.

of Cal. Press, Berkeley, Cal., 1924.

This is another of the admirable faunal papers from the painstaking pen of Mr. Swarth, published under the auspices of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California. It is one of a series of Northwest Coast brochures made possible

through the generosity and interest of Miss Annie Alexander.\*

The work upon which this publication is founded was performed from May 25 to September 26, 1921, in the neighborhood of Hazelton, British Columbia, by Mr. Swarth and Mr. Wm. D. Strong. Hazelton is roughly as the Crow flies about 130 miles northeast of Prince Rupert, on the National Transcontinental line, latitude about 55°15' North and, except in Alaska, the most northern railroad point on the continent, being about on a line with the mouth of James Bay.†

The scope and treatment of the work is indicated by the division headings. Introduction, consisting of personnel of party and acknowledgements; Itinerary and Description of Localities; Zonal and Faunal Position of the Skeena Valley; Check-List of the Birds; General Accounts of the Birds, an annotated list, giving critical accounts of relationships and occurrences; Check-List of the Mammals; General Accounts of the Mammals, similar to those of the birds; and Literature Cited.

No very revolutionary discoveries are made. On the whole, the author finds upper Skeena fauna and flora to be of the interior rather than of the coast type, though certain coastal species occur farther inland here than in the Stikine Valley, the locality most likely to be compared with it. It is slightly more humid, but in many respects similar to that valley.

Some interesting occurrences are noted and the ranges of several forms and species extended. Fleming's Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus flemingi*) extends this far south. The Willow Ptarmigan is referred to *alexandrae* and a Rock Ptarmigan, the female with a tail white at the base like that of *Lagopus hyperboreus* of Spitzbergen, is described and figured but not named. An interesting point brought out is that within a small area within this locality are found six species of Grouse—Ruffed, Blue and Franklin's and three Ptarmigan, an association that has heretofore not been equalled in this country. Both Eastern and Western Goshawks were taken and Eastern and Black Pigeon Hawks, the latter marking a considerable northern extension of range. The Vaux's Swift is probably also a northern record. Two Eastern Kingbirds were taken. A Red-winged Blackbird is referred to *arctolegus*. Strangely enough, Brewer's Blackbird is absent and its place is taken by the Rusty, a species from the east. The most northern record of the Evening Grosbeak (*brooksi*) was also made.

\*Others in the series have dealt with the fauna of the Alaskan coast, Vancouver Island and the upper Stikine River. A review of the latter is to be found in these pages, Vol. XXXVII, 1923, pp. 32-4.

†A short list of the summer birds of this same region has previously been published by Taverner, *Condor*, XXI, 1919, pp. 80-86.

The Purple Finch is the eastern form. All three Longspurs were secured. For Smith's Longspur it is the second record for the province, for the Chestnut-collared it is the first. A White-throated Sparrow is a notable occurrence. Three forms of Junco were collected. Mr. Swarth refers the breeding bird to *shufeldti* and migrants to *hyemalis* and *connectens*; the latter as defined in his *Birds of the Stikine River*. The Eastern Fox Sparrow was taken for the second time in the province but *allivagans* is given as the breeding form. A Catbird and a Western House Wren form northern records for their respective species. The Brown-headed Nuthatches he refers to *columbianus*.

The typographical and general appearance of this report is up to the usual high standard of the series and denotes careful work on the part of author, printer and proof-reader. The stock and workmanship show no lowering of quality, even in these days of high printing costs.—P. A. T.

Field notes and critical notes on taxonomy are given for the 21 species of small mammals listed, based on 265 specimens collected. The expedition was hardly far enough afield to be in the big game country, and the larger fur-bearers are difficult to observe at the season when the field operations were carried on, consequently only a few of the larger mammals are casually mentioned in the introduction.—R. M. A.

#### THE AUK, April, 1924

NESTS AND NESTING HABITS OF THE AMERICAN EAGLE. By Francis H. Herrick, pp. 213-231, continued pp. 389-422 and 517-541.

This is a very complete and intimate study, well illustrated with photographs, of the nesting of a pair of Bald Eagles. A most important paper to any one who is studying this species.

NESTING RECORDS OF THE WANDERING TATTLER AND SURF-BIRD IN ALASKA. By Olaus J. Murie, 3 plates, pp. 231-237.

Gradually we are getting exact data on the nesting areas of these birds, which have so long eluded us. It has long been felt, through a process of elimination, that they must nest in the mountain interior of Alaska. Our suppositions are being verified. In the summer of 1923 nests and eggs of the Wandering Tattler were found on gravel bars along small tributaries of the Tenana River, near Fairbanks, directly north of Prince William Sound. The exact locality is difficult to place on the map unless one is very familiar with Alaska or has maps that are more detailed than those generally accessible and it would be very helpful if authors who refer to such out-of-the-way places would state their latitude and longitude.



Anderson, Rudolph Martin. 1925. "Birds and Mammals of the Skeena River Region of Northern British Columbia, by Harry S. Swarth [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 39(4), 87–88. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.338517>.

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