

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Wheatears in the Mackenzie Mountains, District of Mackenzie, N.W.T.—Towards the end of July, 1944, I had the opportunity of travelling on the Canol Road from Norman Wells into the little-known Mackenzie Mountains, remaining two nights at the pump station at Mile 111, situated in the valley of Bolstead Creek. On July 25 I climbed to the highest summit within reach, lying about 8 miles northwest of the camp, and estimated it to be about 7000 ft. in elevation (roughly $64^{\circ} 20' N$, $128^{\circ} 20' W$). This summit I indicated in pencil on the relevant aerial photograph in Ottawa in 1946, and it may in due course be designated on the topographic sheets. Reference to the botanical collections made there, together with a small-scale map, may be found in Porsild's paper "The alpine flora of the east slope of Mackenzie Mountains, N.W.T." (*Nat. Mus. Canada*, Bull. 101, Ottawa, 1945).

As I came off the main ridge, covered with exfoliated stone blocks at 6000-6500 feet, I had a very good view of a Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) in juvenile plumage, and could hear the familiar 'chack, chack' of one or more others, unseen on the very rough ground. I noted the white rump, with the central shaft of black showing as a narrow wedge forward from the tail. The wheatear has been well known to me since childhood, being an abundant bird in the Yorkshire dales where I lived, and I had more recently seen it in the eastern Arctic. July 25 is rather too early for migrants, and there would of course be little likelihood at any time of migrants in this locality.

This extends the known range considerably to the southeast. Previous records known from northwest Canada, all in the Yukon Territory, appear to be as follows:

- Aug. 18, 1901, Fortymile (J. Grinnell 1909, *Condor*, 11: 207).
- Aug. 1, 1904, High ridge above Coal Creek, near Fortymile (W. H. Osgood 1909, *N. Amer. Fauna* No. 30, U.S. Dept. Agric., Wash.: 65).
- June 24, 1906, King Point, Mackenzie Bay (H. T. L. Schaanning 1933, *Medd. Zool. Mus., Oslo*, No. 33: 144).
- July 31, 1908, Herschel Island (R. M. Anderson 1913, in Stefansson's "My life with the Eskimo": 456-494).

July 15, 1943, Teepee Lake, south of Alaska highway near International Boundary (C. H. D. Clarke, unpublished, "Biological Reconnaissance of the Alaska Military Highway", etc., Ottawa: 15).

I am very grateful to Mr. W. Earl Godfrey for bringing these to my attention. The position of the present observation is 350 miles or more east or southeast of any of the places listed above. It may be noted with interest that the gap between western and eastern records of wheatears is not much more than 1000 miles (cf. J. C. Ross's record made on May 2-3, 1830, at Boothia Felix, in *App. to Ross's 2nd Voyage*, p. xxvi, Lond. 1835).

Two Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) and a Grey-crowned Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte t. tephrocotis*) were seen slightly higher on the main ridge. Though these are not unexpected, they are perhaps worth recording from a region about which so little is known. The Rosy Finch is reported to extend as far east as the Franklin mountains, east of the Mackenzie (M. Y. Williams, *Can. Fld.-Nat.*, 1933, p. 30).—V. C. WYNNE-EDWARDS, Aberdeen, Scotland.

New Sight Records of Three Species at Pimisi Bay, Ontario.—On May 25, 1950, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, *Coccyzus a. americanus* (Linnaeus), was seen perched in the top of a large-toothed aspen that was not yet in full leaf. I first noticed the bird because of its peculiar song, "tock-tock-tock", given at even intervals, unlike that of the Black-billed Cuckoo, *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (Wilson), which is fairly common in the district. As the bird turned about on its lofty perch in the bright sunlight, all its distinctive field-marks came into plain view. The bird remained in the vicinity until June 10, during which time it was seen twice again under excellent conditions.

On September 13, 1951, a Virginia Rail, *Rallus l. limicola* Vieillot, emerged from the reeds at Pimisi Bay onto a flat rock, not more than 8 or 10 feet from where I stood. Identification was based mainly on my experience of having seen the species in the field on two previous occasions at Buffalo and Toronto Islands, and I later re-checked it with skins at the Redpath Museum, Montreal.



Wynne-Edwards, V.C. 1952. "Wheatears in the Mackenzie Mountains, District of Mackenzie, N.W.T." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 66(2), 67–67.

<https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341391>.

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