

are males. This is true of all the subspecies, except that in the West Indian forms these white tips are much less distinct, sometimes nearly obsolete" (p. 707, footnote b).

In a series of Black Swifts collected by myself in southeastern Alaska in June and July, 1909 (see Swarth, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 5, 1911, 71) there is one female (no. 9363 Univ. Calif. Mus. Vert. Zool.) that in color and markings is absolutely indistinguishable from the males. The underparts are uniformly dark (except for one pure white feather on the throat), of exactly the same sooty hue as the males, and with not the slightest trace of the scale-like white markings on the abdomen, which Mr. Ridgway believes to be invariably present in the female. Like the others, however, it differs from the males in having a square, rather than a forked tail. The birds collected by me were all carefully dissected to ascertain the sex, and the possibility of there having been a mistake made in this specimen, is precluded by the fact that this particular female contained within it an egg that would have been laid, probably within twenty-four hours. There is no doubt, therefore, that in this case we have a female indistinguishable in coloration from the male, so that sometimes, at least, the sexes *are* alike in coloration, as Mr. Drew affirmed.

It is with some reluctance that the above statements are offered. The writer is unwilling to appear to be hypercritical of a work so comprehensive, and so admirably carried out, that it should be spared carping comment on immaterial points, and these remarks should not be taken in that sense. They are merely the contribution of an additional fact that may modify previous conceptions of this particular species.—H. S. SWARTH, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoölogy, University of California, Berkeley, California.*

A Crested Flycatcher in December at Cambridge, Mass.—On December 20, 1911, in the Fresh Pond Reservation, Cambridge, I saw a Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*). It was at midday in the warm sunshine. The bird was among shrub growth planted on a bank of some extent on the northwestern border of the reservation. As I followed along at the foot of the ridge, my attention was quickened by hearing call-notes which could not be ascribed to any bird that might be expected to be heard at this season. When shortly my glasses covered it, it was immediately recognized to be a Crested Flycatcher. The pale reddish wing and sulphur-yellow side were plainly presented to view, also the pale margining of the wing-coverts. Later the pearl-gray breast was seen and the sulphur-yellow of the entire under parts. The bird took short flights from one shrub to another and frequently dropped to the ground for an instant, at once returning to a near perch. Apparently it was procuring its food from the ground, perhaps discerning and obtaining the bodies of dead insects. The ground was bare and had been so up to this time. No perch taken was more than two or three feet high, and usually they were only a few inches above the ground. I followed the flycatcher along the shrubbery for five hundred feet or more, while it was thus engaged and remained with it for

half an hour, often viewing it at a distance of not more than fifty feet. The temperature of the early morning had been 22°. The noon day temperature in the shade was officially given as 39°. The air at the time, however, was soft and warm and calm. Of course there was no insect life in the air, and the bird plainly was not looking for it there. In the afternoon of the following day an hour was spent searching for the bird, but I could not find it.

The Crested Flycatcher is a rare summer resident of Eastern Massachusetts, being so characterized by Mr. William Brewster in his "Birds of the Cambridge Region" and by Dr. C. W. Townsend in his "Birds of Essex County." The latest record for a bird of the species is given by Mr. Brewster as September 26, in 1897, when one was seen in Arlington by Dr. Walter Faxon. Messrs. Howe and Allen in their "Birds of Massachusetts" give the limit of the season as September 12 and a record without specific data of October 15. Mr. Richard M. Marble has a record of one seen by him on October 2, 1910, in the Allendale woods, West Roxbury.

This Cambridge bird, therefore, so far as I am able to determine from records at hand, furnishes the only occurrence of the species later than October 15 and was present sixty-six days after that date. The same means which had afforded it subsistence in October and November were doubtless present in December up to the day it was observed. No snow had as yet fallen to cover the ground. The mean temperature of December was officially given as 6° above the normal and the highest for twenty years. The temperature rose above freezing on all except four days. Thus this flycatcher had had unusually mild weather conditions under which to extend its remarkable stay.

Messrs. Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway in their "History of North American Land Birds, vol. 2, p. 336, state, "During the early summer this species [Great Crested Flycatcher] feeds chiefly upon insects of various kinds; . . . afterwards, as if from choice, it chiefly eats ripe berries of various kinds of shrubs and plants, among which those of the poke-weed and the huckleberry are most noticeable." Many of the shrubs among which the bird moved on the day it was observed were berry-laden.—HORACE W. WRIGHT, *Boston, Mass.*

The Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) at Springfield, Mass.—In the spring of 1908 the presence of a single Starling was first noticed in this vicinity. Since that time the number observed in this part of the Connecticut valley has rapidly increased until this winter flocks containing upwards of one hundred individuals have been often seen. They now occasionally come into the very center of the city, frequenting the spires and cupolas of the churches and public buildings.—ROBERT O. MORRIS, *Springfield, Mass.*

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in Chester Co., Pa.—While the Starling has long been a common resident in the vicinity of New York and adjacent



Wright, Horace Winslow. 1912. "A Crested Flycatcher in December at Cambridge, Mass." *The Auk* 29, 242–243. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4071380>.

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