

(personal communication) netted only one Blackpoll (an immature bird, 27 September) in 31 days of netting during the fall of 1969 near the Arkansas River 4.5 miles west of Udall, in Sumner County. During this period he netted 829 other warblers of 15 species. These September dates are of interest in view of the fact that Johnston (*op. cit.*) reported fall movement southward "in late October."

The three Hays specimens are apparently the only fall specimens of *D. striata* for Kansas, as there are none in the University of Kansas Museum of Natural History collections (Robert M. Mengel, personal communication). The three specimens were taken singly on 15, 16, and 22 September 1969. All were immature (one male, two females) with moderate to heavy fat deposits and very small gonads. They were netted in young box elders and tall annual weeds (sunflower and giant ragweed) along Big Creek near the Fort Hays Kansas State College campus.

Although the Blackpoll Warbler appears to be very rare and irregular in fall throughout the Southern Great Plains, more intensive field work may reveal that there is a regular spillover of birds from the northern migration route. Such a spillover has been documented since 1961 for California by DeBenedictis (1968, *Audubon Field Notes*, 22: 8). Specimens, recognizable photographs, and in-hand identifications by observers experienced with fall warblers are urgently needed to clarify further the status of the Blackpoll in the Southern Great Plains. Casual identification of fall-plumaged warblers is often erroneous; as pointed out by Burleigh (*op. cit.*) and Mengel (1965, *Birds of Kentucky*, p. 415) this misidentification badly confuses the distributional problems bird students are trying to solve.

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GENERAL NOTES

Banded five-year-old Ruby-throated Hummingbird recaptured in Oklahoma.— On 14 August 1969 at my banding station at Silver Lake, along the west edge of Oklahoma City, in Oklahoma County, central Oklahoma, I captured with a feeder-snare an adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) with fully red throat-patch. This same bird I had caught and banded on 23 August 1964. On that date its throat was white, marked with rows of dusky spots and with one tiny iridescent red dot where, presumably, an "immature" feather had been replaced by an "adult" feather. On the date of the bird's recapture it was at least five years and nine days old. The etched numerals on the band (X-7278) were still sharply defined. The band showed very little wear.

Since 1962 I have had a total of 16 Ruby-throated Hummingbird "returns." Six "returns" in the summer of 1964 gave me my greatest total for

any one season. Each of two individuals I retook two years after banding. With the exception of the above-reported five-year "return," each of the rest (13 birds) was taken one year after banding. Never have I retaken a banded bird on two occasions.

I have banded also three male Black-chinned Hummingbirds (*A. alexandri*), but I have never had a "return" of that species. Female Ruby-throated and Black-chinned hummingbirds resemble each other so closely that I despair of distinguishing them with certainty even when I have them in my hand. To the best of my knowledge every female hummingbird that I have banded has been a Ruby-throated Hummingbird.—V. J. Vacin, *Route 2, Box 123, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73114, 19 December 1969.*

Premature departure from nest of young Common Ravens.—The Common Raven (*Corvus corax*), a hardy species of remarkably widespread distribution, is known to nest very early in some parts of its range. In Maine, P. F. Ekstorm collected a set of five eggs on 28 March 1940; in Virginia, W. B. Tyrrell observed "just hatched" young on 26 March 1939; and in Pennsylvania, S. S. Dickey found nests "finished as early at 25 February" though most nests were not "ready for eggs" until March (Bent, 1946, *U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 191, pp. 186-88). On the Labrador coast, W. W. Perrett collected a set of six fresh eggs on 15 May 1900, an early date for that cold, foghug part of North America (see Austin, 1932, *Mem. Nuttall Orn. Club*, 7: 166). Authors seem to agree that the incubation period of *Corvus corax* is about three weeks and that fledging requires "5-6 weeks" more (see Witherby *et al.*, 1948, *Handb. British Birds*, 1: 9), but there is a surprising dearth of information concerning dates on which departure of young from the nest has actually been observed. This is largely, no doubt, because nests are hard to reach or see into. J. R. Forbes reported seeing "four young just out of a cliff nest at Port Manvers [Labrador] on July 14, 1937" (Todd, 1963, *Birds of the Labrador Peninsula*, p. 520), but it is impossible to know from such a statement how long the brood had actually been out of the nest or whether they could fly. There are few concise nesting data for either Colorado (see Bailey, A. M., and Niedrach, 1965, *Birds of Colorado*, 2: 564) or New Mexico (see Bailey, Florence M., 1928, *Birds of New Mexico*, pp. 487-88; and Ligon, 1961, *New Mexico birds and where to find them*, p. 202) despite the fact that *Corvus corax* breeds widely in montane parts of those states. A photograph in *Birds of Colorado* (*op. cit.*) showing a raven's nest and almost-fledged young was taken by A. M. Bailey on 29 May 1937 on Gunnison Island in Great Salt Lake, Utah. As regards Oklahoma, neither Nice (1931, *Birds of Oklahoma*, p. 127) nor Sutton (1967, *Oklahoma birds*, pp. 374-76), mentions a single date for eggs or young birds. A nest found by D. F. Parmelee *et al.* on 22 April 1967 at the east end of the Black Mesa near Kenton, Cimarron County, Oklahoma, held three apparently fresh eggs (almost certainly an incomplete clutch) on that date, and a clutch of five eggs containing "embryos about a week old" on 26 April 1968 (see Parmelee, 1968, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.*, 1: 22-23). Exactly a year later, on 26 April 1969, Dr. Parmelee found six eggs in the same nest, one of them pipped, the others at the point of hatching. This clutch was preserved for the University of Oklahoma collection.

On the afternoon of 8 June 1969 my friend Ronald Gibson and I drove

home to central Oklahoma from a weekend spent in looking for Prairie Falcons (*Falco mexicanus*) in the Black Mesa country. About 8 mi. east of Kenton we noticed well north of the highway a mesa at whose west end there was a cliff that looked promising. Hoping that a climb there might give us a look at a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) as well as a falcon, we decided to investigate.

Walking along the bottom of the cliff, we put to flight two Sparrow Hawks (*Falco sparverius*)—a pair that almost certainly had a nest in a hole in the rock, though we failed to find it. Ronald decided to climb the cliff, leaving me to watch from below. As my friend worked his way upward, feral pigeons (*Columba livia*) continued to fly noisily from holes and ledges above or to one side of him.

As I proceeded along the base of the cliff I spotted a large mass of sticks about 30 feet above me and ten feet down from the top. In doubt as to what species of bird had built the nest, I looked at it closely, seeing that it held well developed young ravens. I could not be sure, from where I was, how many young there were. I yelled to Ronald, telling him where the nest was. With great difficulty he climbed down to within a few feet; but he could not reach the nest itself. He told me that there were five young birds and that they were almost ready to fly. Even as he was talking, one of them jumped from the nest. Unable to keep its altitude, it glided to a rough landing well downslope. Ronald shouted that he wanted the bird. Then a second young raven jumped out, gliding off in another direction. I had taken no more than ten or twelve steps toward the first "fledgling," when a Prairie Falcon flew out from the rocks about 50 feet from the raven nest. When I saw the falcon I became so excited that I almost tumbled down the slope. The young raven I was after made no attempt to fly, but it hopped and flapped with surprising speed down the mesa side. When finally I caught it, the parent birds were croaking their disapproval loudly and circling very close overhead.

With the raven in my arms, I scanned the cliff, hoping to locate the falcon's eyrie. I located two more big stick nests, each of them empty. These may have been raven nests, though the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), a species that builds a large nest of sticks, frequently nests on cliffs in the Black Mesa country (see Sutton, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103).

Ronald and I found no evidence that Prairie Falcons were nesting on the cliff, but above the northernmost end of the mesa we saw two Golden Eagles circling on what was probably an updraft from the cliff.

June 8 cannot be considered a fledging date for *Corvus corax* since neither of the young ravens that left the nest on that date could fly.—John O. Langford, *Oklahoma Geological Survey, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73069, 15 December 1969.*

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