

reached the nandina bush and climbed upward until they were two or three feet above the ground. The fourth chick did not appear until mid-day. It emerged as if shoved out, fell like a rock from the entrance, and was followed immediately by the fifth (and last) chick, which fluttered down. I did not try to help the fourth chick in any way. I did not see it climb into the nandina bush.

On the day of the "fledging" (hardly the right word, for not one of the chicks could fly well), I noticed that the two parent birds roundly scolded a Carolina Wren that happened by, but that they paid no attention to a Bewick's Wren that continued to sing not far away.

To my surprise I continued to see the young House Wrens for several days. I rarely saw the whole brood at one time, but on the morning of 1 July I watched the entire family for some time—all seven birds—on the back porch, some of them investigating potted plants, others hopping about the furniture or teetering on the edge of the rain-gutter near the roof.

Certain points should be made in conclusion: 1. When I opened the nestbox on 28 June I found no unhatched eggs or dead young. 2. I am not sure how many male House Wrens I saw or heard. I never saw or heard more than one bird singing at a time, and I believe there was only one male in our yard most of the time. 3. I feel sure that the larger of the bullsnakes did not capture the male wren, for there was no lump in the snake's body. 4. The fact that the birdbox used by the wrens was in a more or less shady place may have contributed to reproductive success. 5. Almost certainly the nesting would not have been successful had I not removed the bullsnakes.

1201 WALNUT ROAD, NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069, 6 DECEMBER 1969.

THE BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER IN THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES

BY GEORGE MIKSCH SUTTON

THE BLACK-THROATED Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*) is so un-
common in Oklahoma today that bird students of the state cannot help wondering whether S. W. Woodhouse, writing well over a century ago, might have erred badly in calling "*Sylvicola canadensis*" (the scientific name in use for the "Black-throated Blue Wood Warbler" at that time) "abundant in Texas and the Indian Territory" (Woodhouse, in Sitgreaves, 1853, Report of an expedition down the Zuni and Colorado rivers, p. 71). Might Woodhouse have misidentified the bird? Probably not. Might his records have been mixed? Possibly.

John S. Tomer, who has been making a careful study of Woodhouse's itinerary and work in Indian Territory, informs me (letter of 13 December 1970) that Woodhouse listed "*Sylvicola canadensis*" among the birds observed by his party in 1849 (see Sitgreaves and Woodruff, 1858, Reports of Captains Sitgreaves and Woodruff of the survey of the Creek Indian boundary line, Exec. Documents

House of Representatives, 35th Congress, 1857-58, 12: 9); that Woodhouse did not list "*Sylvicola canadensis*" among the twenty-eight bird species collected by his party in 1849 (*op. cit.*, p. 13); that Woodhouse did not mention the "Black-throated Blue Wood Warbler" in the report of his activities in 1850 (*op. cit.*, pp. 25-27); and that no specimen of Black-throated Blue Warbler is listed in the U. S. National Museum catalogue along with other Woodhouse specimens that were deposited there in 1859. In other words, there is very little evidence from specimens preserved or from what Woodhouse himself reported, that he had seen much of the Black-throated Blue Warbler in Indian Territory, this despite his rather sweeping statement. Margaret M. Nice, accepting the words of Woodhouse at face value, stated that "only one observer"—T. R. Beard, who saw the bird in Creek County—had noted *Dendroica caerulescens* in Oklahoma since Woodhouse's day (Nice, 1931, Birds of Oklahoma, p. 158).

In Kansas the Black-throated Blue Warbler is a "rare transient, in woodland. Present (chiefly west) in May, September, October" (Johnston, 1965, A directory to the birds of Kansas, p. 47). Four Kansas specimens (one from Lane County, western Kansas, a male, 16 October; three from Shawnee County, eastern Kansas, two males on 7 October, female on 23 October) are in the collection of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas (card of 18 December 1970 from R. F. Johnston). Charles A. Ely informs me (letters of 13 November 1969 and of 19 November 1970) of two males mist-netted by him on 8 October 1966 and on 8 November 1970 among small box elders along Big Creek near the Fort Hays Kansas State College campus at Hays, Ellis County, central Kansas; he tells me also (letter of 16 November 1969) of two sightings for September, two for October, one for April, and one for May (all for eastern Kansas) reported in 1964, 1965, 1966, and 1970 issues of the Kansas Ornithological Society's "Newsletter."

Colorado records listed by Bailey and Niedrach (1965, Birds of Colorado, 2: 683) are chiefly for the eastern, non-mountainous part of the state; they indicate occurrence from 2 September to 27 November (five records for September, five for October, three for November) and from 9 to 27 May (exceptionally on 13 and 14 June). Two records not mentioned by Bailey and Niedrach are these: 17 October 1953, one seen at Loveland (1954, Audubon Field Notes, 8: 28); 30 September 1963, female seen at Golden (1964, Audubon Field Notes, 18: 51).

For Arkansas there are—according to Douglas A. James (letter of 1 November 1969)—seven valid records, one for September, one for October, one for April, and four for May. All of these excepting that for April (1904) are based on sightings since 1953. The Black-throated Blue Warbler has never been collected in Arkansas.

In Texas the species is a "rare migrant" (Wolfe, 1956, Check-list of the

birds of Texas, p. 65). Most records (including several published recently in Audubon Field Notes) indicate occurrence from 2 September to 26 October and from 2 March to 20 May "in about the eastern half" of the state—i.e., westward to Tarrant, McLennan, Kerr, and Bexar counties (quoted phrase from E. B. Kincaid Jr. communication of 26 February 1970). The only record that I know of for the vast area west of the just-named counties is this: 3 to 9 November 1959, one seen repeatedly and photographed (motion pictures) at El Paso, El Paso County (1960, Audubon Field Notes, 14: 63).

In New Mexico *Dendroica caerulescens* is a "very local and irregular autumn migrant, recorded almost statewide" (Hubbard, 1970, Check-list of the birds of New Mexico, p. 75). Of the several records mentioned by Ligon (1961, New Mexico birds and where to find them, p. 249), only one is for spring (7 May), the rest being for fall and winter (20 September to 21 February). A male bird was banded at Los Alamos on 21 September 1959 (1960, Audubon Field Notes, 14: 63). Dale A. Zimmerman informs me (letter of 5 December 1969) of three recent records—one based on a specimen, one on a color photograph, and one on a sighting—all for October.

For Arizona four records are listed by Monson and Phillips (1964, A check-list of the birds of Arizona, p. 55): 30 April 1955, male found dead in Ajo Mountains; 5 May 1955, one photographed (color) in Chiricahua Mountains; 17 October 1956, one taken (others "believed seen") in same mountains; 31 October 1959, one seen "east of Tucson."

Recent volumes of Audubon Field Notes mention 15 records for Texas (see above), nine for California, five for Colorado (see above), five for New Mexico (see above), at least two for South Dakota, and one each for Saskatchewan, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oregon, and Nevada.

There are very few records for Mexico. Miller, Friedmann, Griscom, and Moore (1957, Distributional check-list of the birds of Mexico, Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 33, p. 248) state that the species winters "casually" on the Yucatan Peninsula (Cozumel Island and Quintana Roo) and in Guatemala and Colombia.

Until very recently, the only specimen of Black-throated Blue Warbler from Oklahoma was a female (mummy, old UOMZ No. 17704) that I collected along the Cimarron River near Kenton, Cimarron County, on 1 October 1932 (Sutton, 1934, Notes on the birds of the western panhandle of Oklahoma, Ann. Carnegie Mus., 24: 40; 1967, Oklahoma birds, p. 501). Since 1932, *D. caerulescens* has been recorded in Oklahoma on 16 occasions. On 25 May 1947, O. W. Letson saw one in Mayes County 5 miles south of Locust Grove. In early May 1949, J. G. Newell saw one in Woodward Park, Tulsa. On 20 October 1953 the late A. Felkel saw one in Texas County in or near Guymon (1954, Audubon Field Notes, 8: 28). About 15 September 1954, Ivy Hilty also saw one in or near Guymon (1955, Audubon

Field Notes, 9: 38). On 3 May 1955, S. D. Schemnitz saw a male near Boise City, Cimarron County (1955, Audubon Field Notes, 9: 341). On 14 April 1956, the late Henrietta Pitchford saw a male in or near Okmulgee, Okmulgee County. On 5 October 1956, Arthur F. Halloran and his wife, Audrey, saw a male near the headquarters buildings of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Comanche County. On 17 April 1962, Marcia Boose and Katherine Miller saw a male in Osage County at a Girl Scout camp 12 miles southwest of Bartlesville (1962, Audubon Field Notes, 16: 427). On 2 December 1962, Ruth Barlow and Nelle South observed a male and a female for some time in Washington County, in the suburbs of Bartlesville. On 22 April 1963, L. L. Byfield and his wife, Ann, observed a male for several hours in Wakita, Grant County. On 4 November 1964, Ruby Cranor observed a female in a tangle near a farm pond 6 miles south of Bartlesville. On 16 October 1969, Emma Messerly observed a female in shrubbery in her back yard along the edge of Bartlesville; on the following day she and Sophia C. Mery saw a female in the Turkey Creek bottomlands nearby. On 21 October 1969 V. J. Vacin found a male specimen dead under a window of his residence at Silver Lake, in the western part of Oklahoma City. On 29 April 1970, and again on 2 May 1970, H. S. Cooksey and his wife, Hazel, saw a male bird in their yard in Norman, Cleveland County (1970, Audubon Field Notes, 24:621).

The male specimen above referred to (UOMZ 6601) I prepared myself. It was one of the fattest parulids I ever handled, proof that it was, indeed, "in readiness to migrate" (total weight 15.3 grams; weight of lump fat 5.4 grams). The skull was not completely ossified. The twelve rectrices were (are) more pointed than those of fully matured West Virginia and Michigan specimens in my personal collection.

Summarizing the above: the 17 acceptable Oklahoma records (two without definite date; Creek County "record" or "records" not included since we have no idea how many birds T. R. Beard saw, or when he saw them) indicate occurrence here from mid-September to 21 October (exceptionally to 4 November and 2 December) and from 14 April to 25 May. Six records are for October, three for April, four for May, and one each for September, November, and December. The 17 records are for the following counties: Mayes 1, Washington 4, Tulsa 1, Okmulgee 1, Osage 1, Oklahoma 1, Cleveland 2, Grant 1, Comanche 1, Texas 2, Cimarron 2.

According to the AOU Check-list of North American birds (1957, p. 491). *D. caerulescens* winters "mainly" in the West Indies. No mention is made in this compendious work of the several New Mexico records, many of which antedate 1957. The westernmost localities listed under "breeding range" are Saskatchewan (Emma Lake) and Manitoba (Indian Bay). The only western

"accidental occurrence" localities mentioned are Alberta (Tofield) and California (Farallon Islands, Santa Barbara).

Since 17 records indicate presence of the Black-throated Blue Warbler in Oklahoma; since there are many records also for Kansas, Colorado, Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona; and since some of the New Mexico records are winter records, is it not in order to suspect either that the species has had a continental winter range for some time or that it is now establishing one? Might Woodhouse, after all, have been justified in calling the Black-throated Blue Warbler "abundant in Texas and the Indian Territory" a century ago?

I wish to thank V. J. Vacin, J. S. Tomer, Sophia C. Mery, Emma Messerly, D. A. James, E. B. Kincaid Jr., C. A. Ely, R. F. Johnston, and D. A. Zimmerman for the help they gave me while I was preparing this manuscript.

STOVALL MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069, 24 DECEMBER 1970.

GENERAL NOTES

White Ibis in central Oklahoma.—On the afternoon of 2 May 1970 James M. Carrel and I were surprised to see a goose-sized, largely white bird flying swiftly up from one of many scattered small sloughs in recently flooded Bermuda-grass bottomland along the Canadian River on the W. R. Griffith ranch 4½ mi. northwest of Newcastle, McClain County, central Oklahoma. The bird flew in the manner of an accipitrine hawk, alternately flapping its wings and gliding. Occasionally it uttered a guttural, gooselike grunt. It circled close to us several times, giving us a good look at its bright red face and long, rather thick, decurved bill, confirming our belief that it was indeed a White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*). It was not fully adult. As it flew overhead we noted that all of its remiges (secondaries as well as primaries) were dark brown. In a fully adult White Ibis the wing is white except for the black tips of the four outermost primaries—a pattern that shows admirably in a photograph taken by Allan D. Cruickshank (see Lowery, 1955, Louisiana birds, p. 135).

The White Ibis has not heretofore been reported from central Oklahoma. Sutton (1967, Oklahoma birds, p. 45) cites records for Marshall, Johnston, and Choctaw counties in southern Oklahoma; for Tulsa County in eastern Oklahoma; and for Alfalfa County in north-central Oklahoma. The species evidently is to be looked for along large watercourses and near large impoundments throughout the main body of the state; its closest breeding grounds appear to be in "the southern half of Louisiana" where it occurs "in fresh-water swamps" (Lowery, *op. cit.*, p. 145), and along the coast of eastern Texas as far north as Chambers County (AOU Check-list, 1957, p. 55).—Larry P. Mays, *Department of Biology, East Central State College, Ada, Oklahoma 74820, 30 July 1970.*

Swallow-tailed Kite in central Oklahoma.—At about 09:30 on 6 September 1970, while Nelson Hall and I were studying birds along the southwest shore of Lake Hefner—a large impoundment in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County,