

darker, each with a dark band across its chest. He collected the lighter-colored bird, the one he had photographed. The specimen proved to be a male in complete juvenal feather (UOMZ 7309, weight 253.2 grams, wingspread 39¼ in.). In identifying it as *L. atricilla*, George M. Sutton compared it directly with two juvenal Franklin's Gulls (*L. pipixcan*) collected in North Dakota on 23 August 1972 by Robert W. Stewart and forwarded through the courtesy of Lewis W. Oring, and with a not-quite-fledged Laughing Gull collected on 29 June 1973 along the Texas coast by David Blankinship and Brent Giezentanner. Identification was confirmed at the American Museum of Natural History in New York by John Farrand. The brownish-gray of the chest apparently is diagnostic, the juvenal Franklin's Gull being white-chested. When, after completion of the post-juvenal molt, the young Laughing Gull becomes white-chested, it may, indeed, be "not separable" from the immature Franklin's Gull (Robbins, Bruun, and Zim, 1966, Guide to field identification birds of North America, p. 138). The photograph does not show the dark chest band at all clearly, but it does show the large bill.

5816 N.W. 53RD ST., OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73122; 4129 N. EVEREST, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73111, 7 JULY 1973.

A CANYON WREN NEST IN CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

BY DOROTHY B. NEWELL

The Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*) is resident in the Black Mesa country of far western Oklahoma and in rocky formations in southwestern Oklahoma; it has been found nesting in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Comanche County, but there is no record of its nesting anywhere in Oklahoma east of these mountains (Sutton, 1967, Oklahoma birds, p. 415).

In late afternoon on 28 May 1973 I discovered a Canyon Wren nest with young at the Methodist Canyon Camp in Caddo County, central Oklahoma, a few hundred feet west of the Canadian County line. My husband John and I were on a field trip with Wesley Isaacs, Charles Frichot, his wife Berniece, and Al Reed. Suddenly we were startled by the scolding notes of a wren that was darting about behind rocks and on ledges on the canyon wall right beside us. We noted the white throat and realized that this was a Canyon Wren, not a Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*). Wanting to get a better look at the bird, the rest of the group followed it along the wall while I remained at the spot where we had first seen it. Within a short time the group was out of sight, but the bird had doubled back and was now not far from me, moving in and out among the loose rocks that had fallen to the bottom of the canyon. This time I followed the wren closely, looking behind and under the rocks and in crevices, hoping that it might have a nest hidden there. The wren soon disappeared, but I continued to look for the nest. I noticed a row of small eroded holes in the red sandstone wall about 4 feet above the ground. Looking into a hole that had some debris

around its opening, I saw the yellow-outlined mouths of baby birds in a nest about 6 inches back from the entrance.

I decided to sit on a stump not far away in hopes of seeing a parent bird return to feed the young. An Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) that happened to be perching on a low limb nearby made me wonder whether the nest I had found was a phoebe's, but the nest in the hole was not at all like any phoebe nest I had ever seen. Within about ten minutes a Canyon Wren with food in its mouth returned to the opening, entered, reappeared promptly, and left. I heard no sound from the young as they were being fed.

About this time the rest of the group returned, plainly disappointed since they had not been able to find the wren. We all sat down opposite the nest site and waited for an adult bird to come with food. When one did appear, Wesley Isaacs tried to get a picture of it, but it moved so constantly that photography was impossible. After it left, my husband looked closely at the nest, noting that there were at least three young and that they were well feathered and much like their parents in color. Hoping to get one of them, so that we could have a look at it, he put his hand inside the hole, but the brood scrambled farther back in the crevice where they were out of reach. We concluded from this behavior that they were about ready to leave the nest.

Discovery of this nest confirmed our suspicion that Canyon Wrens were nesting in this particular canyon, for we had seen the species there on several occasions. On 20 June 1971, Henry Walter and John Newell had seen two of the wrens in the canyon. On 15 August 1971, Al Reed, his wife Ora, and John Newell had seen a singing male there. On 3 June 1972, John Newell had observed a close-knit family group of five working together along the canyon wall not far from the spot at which I found the nest.

4129 N. EVEREST, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73111, 22 FEBRUARY 1975.

GENERAL NOTES

Migratory bird records from fall mist-netting in central Oklahoma. — During the fall migration period, considerable numbers of songbirds representing a large number of species move through central Oklahoma. These birds usually remain in an area less than a week at a time and most are rather drab; i.e., immatures are in first winter feather and adults in dull fall plumage. In addition, they are usually silent, making them difficult to detect and identify. Birds can be identified with much greater certainty in hand than in the field, therefore mist-netting can be a substantial aid in ascertaining species composition during migration. By fall, ground vegetation in ungrazed areas has become dense with low, fruit-bearing plants. Many of the larger woody plants drop their fruits about the time they begin shedding leaves. Thus, cover and food sources for many migratory birds come to be concentrated close to the ground. It is under these conditions that mist nets are most effective.

To ascertain the species composition of fall migrants, I chose an area suitable for mist-netting and one where birds would likely become concentrated as they migrated through. During September of 1974 I set up a banding operation in the vicinity of the University of Oklahoma Fisheries Research Station at Noble in Cleveland County. The