

*ludovicianus*). So often has this bird hung Lined Snakes from the sharply pointed leaves of two yucca plants in a neighbor's yard that I have made a point of visiting the plants repeatedly, partly to ascertain what else the shrikes might be capturing. In the second week of February 1975 I found five Lined Snakes impaled on the leaves of one yucca plant. I had no way of knowing how many shrikes had caught the snakes, nor could I be sure how many had been caught in any one day. It is perhaps significant that I found no other prey impaled on the leaves. During the past three years I have found Lined Snakes hanging from the yucca tines as early as 10 February and as late as the middle of November. In the most severe part of winter the snakes probably become inactive.

The American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) feeds regularly on the Lined Snake. During the winter of 1974-75 I often saw a male kestrel perched on a telephone wire or fencepost on my way to work. The bird seemed to have a definite territory, for I saw it repeatedly in about the same area. On 13 February I watched it eating a Lined Snake. It was perching on a fence wire at the time.

On 14 February I watched a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) carrying a living Lined Snake in its bill. The jay killed the snake by slamming it against a branch.

In early February 1975 (exact date not recorded) I was surprised to see a meadowlark (*Sturnella* sp.) on the ground with a Lined Snake seven or eight inches long hanging from its bill. When the snake writhed, thus seeming to become shorter, the meadowlark shook it vigorously. This treatment continued until the snake grew limp. I did not see the meadowlark swallow the snake. As an impatient motorist drove past, honking his horn, the meadowlark took alarm and flew off with the snake dangling from its bill.

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15 JUNE 1975.

## ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER NEST IN COMANCHE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

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On the morning of 2 June 1975, while making a routine survey by truck of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Comanche County, southwestern Oklahoma, I happened to see a flycatcher of the genus *Myiarchus* flying past with an insect in its bill. Suspecting that it might have a nest nearby, I decided to investigate. The open northwestern part of the refuge where I was at the time, an area known locally as Fullingim Flat, is near-climax mixed-grass prairie throughout which such native grasses as little bluestem (*Andropogon scoparius*), Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), hairy grama (*Bouteloua hirsuta*), and buffalograss (*Buchlœe dactyloides*) flourish. A

few mature, long-dead mesquite trees (*Prosopis juliflora*) are scattered along its western edge. It is one of the few parts of the refuge in which the mesquite-grassland association occurs.

When I first observed the flycatcher, it was headed for a dead mesquite about 70 feet away. On reaching the tree it disappeared; but with my binocular I could see an old woodpecker hole about 10 feet up in a large limb, and I correctly assumed that the bird had gone into this hole. A few minutes later it reappeared, this time with a white something, perhaps a dropping, in its bill. Carrying this, it flew off. When about 100 feet northwest of the nest-tree it dropped what it was carrying, continued its flight northwestward across the refuge boundary fence, and passed out of sight. It was now on the Fullingim Ranch, privately owned, heavily grazed pastureland on which there was a dense stand of dead mesquite trees, most of them smaller than those inside the refuge fence.

Twice, at intervals of four or five minutes, the flycatcher returned with an insect that looked like a small grasshopper in its bill, entered the nest cavity, came out with empty bill, and flew off northwestward. Once it alighted on a treetop facing me, giving me a good look at its light gray throat and pale yellow belly. It was indeed an Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*), a species I had often seen in other parts of the western United States. I had no way of knowing whether I had been seeing one and the same bird all this time.

Hoping to learn what was in the nest, I drove to the dead tree, stood in the bed of the truck under the nest-hole, and listened. I could not hear young birds. When I felt of the limb at the nest-hole, my hand was covered almost immediately with tiny mites. I was obliged to leave without ascertaining what the nest contained.

Two weeks later (18 June 1975), Jack D. Tyler, Ralph D. Kirkpatrick, and I returned to the nest-tree, finding no flycatcher either young or old anywhere in the vicinity. We removed the nest-limb and split it open. The nest, which was about 8 inches down from the entrance hole, was composed of coarse grass and dry bovine manure with lining of cattle hair. Noteworthy was the absence of castoff snakeskin, material so often used by the Great Crested Flycatcher (*M. crinitus*) in its nest (Bent, 1942, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 179: 110, 111; Bailey and Niedrach, 1965, Birds of Colorado, Denver Mus. Nat. Hist., 2: 515; Sutton, 1967, Oklahoma birds, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, p. 326). The nest was empty but still heavily infested with mites. We had no way of knowing whether the brood had fledged, or, for that matter, whether it had ever held eggs or young. The bird that I had watched on 2 June could have been carrying food to its mate.

According to the summary of data filed at the University of Oklahoma Bird Range, the only previous record for the Ash-throated Flycatcher in Com-

anche County is of three birds seen by A. F. Halloran and G. M. Sutton in the same general area on 24 June 1960. One of these, a male with much enlarged testes (UOMZ 3938), was collected that day (Davis and Halloran, 1962, South-west. Nat., 7: 264).

WICHITA MOUNTAINS WILDLIFE REFUGE, CACHE, OKLAHOMA 73527, 9 FEBRUARY 1976

## GENERAL NOTES

**Birds killed at a TV tower near Coweta, Oklahoma.**—In October 1974 many birds were found dead under a TV tower 2 miles north of Coweta, Wagoner County, northeastern Oklahoma (see Norman, 1975, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc., 8: 25-27). In mid-September 1975 I picked up many more birds under the same tower. A listing of these is in order despite the fact that I found nothing very surprising.

On the morning of 12 September I found the following, none of which appeared to have been dead more than a day or so: 1 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), 1 Common Snipe (*Capella gallinago*), 1 Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*: wing only), 1 Black-billed Cuckoo (*C. erythrophthalmus*), 3 Gray Catbirds (*Dumetella carolinensis*), 2 Swainson's Thrushes (*Catharus ustulatus*), 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), 3 Red-eyed Vireos (*Vireo olivaceus*), 2 Warbling Vireos (*V. gilvus*), 4 Black-and-white Warblers (*Mniotilta varia*), 10 Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*), 1 Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), 2 Northern Waterthrushes (*S. noveboracensis*), 9 Mourning Warblers (*Oporornis philadelphia*), 2 Wilson's Warblers (*Wilsonia pusilla*), 3 Canada Warblers (*W. canadensis*), 3 Bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), 3 Northern Orioles (*Icterus galbula*), and 5 Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*).

On the morning of 13 September I picked up the following, all of which presumably had struck the tower the preceding night: 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 1 Eastern Wood Pewee (*Contopus virens*), 1 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), 3 Gray Catbirds, 3 Red-eyed Vireos, 1 Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*), 1 Black-and-white Warbler, 1 Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*), 1 Yellow Warbler, 1 Northern Waterthrush, 1 Wilson's Warbler, and 1 Northern Oriole.

On the morning of 15 September I picked up the following: 1 Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), 1 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*), 1 House Wren, 1 Gray Catbird, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 3 Red-eyed Vireos, 1 Philadelphia Vireo, 8 Black-and-white Warblers, 1 Yellow Warbler, 1 Mourning Warbler, 1 American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), 2 Northern Orioles, 2 Dickcissels, and 1 Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus sавannarum*).

The most notable of the above-listed specimens, most of which are being preserved as skeletons, are probably the two Philadelphia Vireos, a species long thought to migrate through Oklahoma only in spring (Sutton, 1967, Oklahoma birds, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, p. 482); the Black-billed Cuckoo, which has not heretofore been reported from Wagoner County; and three of the Northern Orioles, all of which were of the black-headed "Baltimore" type picked up on 12 September. Interesting also is the fact that the important genus *Dendroica* is represented by only one species, the Yellow Warbler, this despite the fact that several species of the genus either breed in or move through eastern Oklahoma more or less regularly. Perhaps the most striking fact of all is that I found only one Nashville Warbler: on 9 October 1974 I picked up 64 specimens of this species (Norman, *op. cit.*, p. 26), one that observers will surely agree is among the commonest transient birds of Oklahoma in both spring and fall.

The weather from 12 to 15 September was in no way exceptional in northeastern Oklahoma.—James L. Norman, 502 N. 14th St., Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401, 10 March 1976.