

## FURTHER NOTES ON INDIANA BIRDS.

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For a knowledge of the animal life of the region within the present limits of Indiana, in the early days of our history, we are indebted to the early travelers like Col. Geo. Croghan (1765), to the pioneers who made records and to the early naturalists including Alexander Wilson (1808); John J. Audubon (1827-1840).

It was not until Dr. Rufus Haymond published his first contribution in 1856 that any one attempted a list of the birds of the state. (Birds of S. E. Ind. Proc. Phila. Acad. Nat. Sci. 1868, pp. 286-298). That was succeeded by his later paper in the report of the Geological Survey of Indiana in 1869 (pp. 209-335).

Other authors to whom we are indebted for important contributions in the next few years were Robert Ridgway, whose parents lived for a time near Wheatland, Knox County. Dr. David Starr Jordan, whose manual of vertebrates in 1876, afforded the student of back boned animals in this region a most helpful aid. E. W. Nelson, Dr. Frank W. Langdon, William Brewster, Dr. J. A. Allen and Dr. Barton W. Evermann. That brings us down to 1879. In that year appeared the first attempt to catalogue the birds of Indiana by Dr. Alenbert W. Brayton. (A catalogue of the Birds of Indiana, Trans. Ind. Hort. Soc. 1879, pp. 87-165.) It was a timely work and a valuable contribution.

Following this came a notable increase in the number of publications each year on Indiana birds. These are given in the bibliography in the Report of the State Geologist for 1897, page 532. My own first catalogue of the birds of Indiana appeared in 1890 in the transactions of the same society that published Brayton's list eleven years before. (Trans. Ind. Hort. Soc. 1890. Appendix C. pp. 1-135.) This was followed in 1897 by "The Birds of Indiana" published in the report of the State Geologist for that year, pp. 515-1187.

Since that time the writer has endeavored to present to this Academy reports of additional species occurring in the state, together with notes of special interest which he thought worthy to be called to your attention. In accordance with that purpose the following eight papers have been presented and printed in the Academy's proceedings.

Notes on Indiana Birds, A. W. Butler, 1899, p. 149-151.

Some rare Indiana Birds, A. W. Butler, 1902, p. 95-99.

Conditions Effecting the Distribution of Birds in Indiana, A. W. Butler, 1903, p. 180-189.

Some Notes on Indiana Birds, A. W. Butler, 1906, p. 145-150.

An Addition to the Birds of Indiana, A. W. Butler, 1908, p. 49.

A Heronry near Indianapolis, A. W. Butler, 1912, p. 57-58.

Birds that Destroy Grapes, A. W. Butler, 1912, p. 53-55.

Further Notes on Indiana Birds, A. W. Butler, 1912, p. 59-65.

Following my practice I give herewith a few notes that should be available to students.

For several years Brother Alphonsus has published in the American Midland Naturalist, valuable records of observations made by him in the vicinity of Notre Dame, St. Joseph County. Some of these follow:

Pine Grosbeak—*Pinicola enucleator* (Linn.).

In a letter Brother Alphonsus says:—The Pine Grosbeak was found on December 4, 1914, in a mulberry tree at Notre Dame. A number of English Sparrows were curiously watching the bird. Other records of the species were made on October 22 and November 6, 1914, also April 18, 1914. On the October date a pair of these Grosbeaks was seen. The male was reddish on the head and back; the female mottled with brownish and lighter. The call note is distinctive.

A flock of Evening Grosbeaks, ten in number, appeared at Notre Dame on November 30, 1910 and remained three days. This is the first record of the species in this locality known to me. They came each day in the early part of the afternoon to a certain box-elder to feed on the seeds. On January 19, 1911, six more of the species were feeding in the same kind of tree and uttering a low note. (See also Am. Mid. Nat. Sept. 1916, p. 492, 495 and 499.)

Brown Creeper.—*Certhia familiaris americana* (Bonap.).

His observations indicate that it is much more common in winter to the northern boundary of the state than it had been supposed to be. In the winter of 1914-15 it "appeared on 10 days in December; on 18 in January; and on 12 in February, making a total of 40 records which greatly exceeded the two previous winters, 1913-14, having had 13 records, and 1912-13, only 3 records." (Amer. Mid. Nat. Sept. 1916, p. 498.)

Roscate Tern.—*Sterna dougalli* Montag.

A specimen was taken by Mr. H. L. Stoddard, of the Field Museum, Chicago, near Millers, Lake County, Indiana, August 14, 1916. He says, "The bird was alone on the beach (Lake Michigan) and attracted my attention from this action as I never remembered having seen either of our species of white terns on the sand. They almost invariably use the fisherman's net stakes out in the lake. On studying the bird through binoculars I thought I noticed a difference so the specimen was collected. No other was seen, though Forster's and Common Terns as well as the Black Terns

were there by the hundred. The specimen is in perfect breeding plumage, the breast being quite rosy in color."

This is the second record reported for the state and the only one verified by a specimen.

Long-tailed Jaeger.—*Stercorarius longicaudus* Vieill.

A specimen was taken by Mr. H. L. Stoddard at Dune Park, Indiana a few miles east of Miller's Sept. 21, 1915. (The Auk. Jan. 1916 p. 75.)

This is the first Indiana record for this northern bird.

Prairie Warbler.—*Dendroica discolor* (Vieill).

Mr. Philip Baker found this warbler nesting near Helmsburg, Brown County, Indiana, in May 1916. The following account he has kindly prepared for me.

On May 8th I found a nest of the Prairie Warbler, half completed. The nest was placed in a small apple tree on the border of a sassafras thicket. It was completed May 14th. May 21st I found 4 eggs in the nest but upon visiting it a few days later, the eggs were gone and the birds had left.

On May 21st I found another nest about a quarter of a mile from the first. This was built in a tangle of wild blackberries, close to the ground. It also contained 4 eggs. May 27th the eggs had hatched.

I tried to obtain a picture of this nest with the young birds, but my efforts were unsuccessful.

Within 2 miles of these nests, I heard at least 4 Prairie Warblers singing during May, June and July. Each bird confined its movements to a comparatively small area of densely covered "undergrowth" principally sassafras. From the fact of a continuous period of song and a closely limited feeding ground, I believe these birds were mated and their nests were close by. I am mailing both nests to you.

Bartramian Sandpiper.—*Bartramia longicauda* (Bechst.).

Mr. E. B. Williamson of Bluffton, Indiana, has the egg shells found June 16, 1916, in a nest of this bird in a meadow on the S. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 26, Twp. 25 N. Range 12 E. about  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles south of that town and  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles east. The nest was discovered by Nathan Truax, about May 29, 1916, but the eggs were not hatched June 9, 1916. Birds of this species had not been seen in that vicinity before by the residents. Mr. Williamson says the day he visited the site and obtained the egg shells he saw five or six of these birds. This is the first breeding record for that part of the state.

Great Blue Heron.—*Ardea herodias* Linn.

The past spring Mr. E. B. Williamson, Bluffton, Indiana, called my attention to a heronry of this species in Huntington County, about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Bluffton and a half mile west of the Wells-Huntington County,

line. On July 18, 1916, he very kindly took C. C. Deam and me to the site. It is a low woods with many large cottonwoods and swamp white oaks on the land of Lewis C. Mills. Mr. Williamson said last year he counted forty-five or forty-six nests, but was unable to tell how many of these were occupied. On the day of our visit we saw few birds, but found the heronry had been "shot up." Many dead birds, young and adults, were found on the ground beneath the trees bearing the nests. Under one tree we counted fifteen carcasses. Under another an empty cartridge box doubtless indicated the means of the awful slaughter. Such an atrocious act is an outrage that ought not to go unpunished.

Mr Mills says the herons began occupying this woods for nesting purposes about thirty years ago.

The herony used by these birds for many years in the Schildemeyer woods near Julietta, Marion County, was again occupied the past season as it has been for many years and I am indebted to Mr. Hohenberger for some excellent photographs of some of the nests.

Mr. James L. Mitchell of Indianapolis, informed me recently that in 1912 or 1913 he found a herony of this species on the Kankakee river. He counted twelve nests but there may have been more. It was approximately within three fourths of a mile of an island where George W. Miles, the Fish and Game Commissioner, had his camp not far from Hebron.

Paul Weatherwax of Indiana University called my attention to a herony of Great Blue Herons in Carroll County heretofore not reported. He has kindly supplied me with the following information from Ted Stanton who lives near its site.

These nests are about six miles southeast of Delphi and four miles northwest of Flora; on the John O. Cartwright farm. They are in an 80 acre wooded tract in almost its original condition, only the dead timber having been removed. The herony is not near any stream of considerable size.

The nests are in all kinds of trees, some tall and some smaller. Nests of sticks; no lining and are about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter and loosely put together.

The birds have been known to nest there for the last eight years, and have probably been there much longer. There were about 20 nests in 1916, and the same number in 1915.

Being of no economic importance, few of the birds are killed by people. Some of the young fall from the nest and are killed by the fall.

The eggs are greenish blue; about as large as a duck egg; four or five at a sitting, but only one sitting a year.

The young are fed on fish caught by the old ones in Wild Cat Creek, six miles away. Old birds may be seen flying to the creek to fish early in the morning. The hawks get a few of the young.