

Mr. Nuttall acutely observes in this relation: 1st, that the congregating propensity of this bird has "no relation with the usual motives to migration among other birds"; 2nd, "Nearly the whole species which at any one time inhabit the continent are found together in the same place"; and 3rd, "They do not fly from climate, as they are capable of enduring its severity and extremes." These characteristics, being rendered the more wonderful and effective by surpassing power of flight, enable the Wild Pigeon to defy the petty limitations which environ and restrict other migratory birds and even to set at nought the one law of nature which beyond any other has proved itself most absolute, tyrannical and mysterious,—the law of geographical distribution of species.

Viewed from this standpoint we may regard the occurrence of *Ectopistes migratorius* on the Pacific Slope as a thing so natural that we wonder why it never happened before. Indeed there should now be many of us who doubt not that it has often happened, and who ask, on behalf of our feathered cosmopolite, an ampler breeding range than the books accord, making it from Ocean to Ocean, and from Mexico to Alaska. Despite our attempts to bridge these gaps in the life-history of North American birds, there yet exists in New World ornithology a *terra incognita* of no small proportions, a fact that should not discourage, but inspire us all to renewed endeavor.—SAMUEL N. RHOADS, *Haddonfield, N. J.*

The Breeding Range of the Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*) in Texas.—That this bird is credited with "breeding in suitable localities from Maine to California, and from the Fur Countries south into Mexico" by old and undoubted authorities in ornithology is readily admitted. That it is migratory in northeastern Texas, especially in Cooke County, is proven from my note book showing its departure in April and May and its return in July and August, for a number of consecutive years.

The question then to be considered is, what constitutes a *suitable* nesting locality? I readily admit that I don't know. If a belt of timber (post oak, black oak, elm, black walnut, black hickory, etc.) fifteen miles wide and one hundred miles long is not suitable for the nesting of this bird, then I need not expect its young to be raised in Cooke County.

But Mr. Lloyd records its nesting in Tom Green County, Texas, where the timber is more scrubby than in Cooke County. How is the bird's behavior in this matter to be reconciled with its not breeding in Cooke County? I must again confess ignorance of the reason. The only place I have personal knowledge of the birds' breeding in the State is in Polk County, in the Pine Region of southeastern Texas. In April, 1889, I saw the birds paired and entering holes in the dead pines, in such manner that I felt convinced that they would remain during the season. Mr. J. A. Singley, in Lee County, some seventy-five miles west of Polk County, writes me, "I have never found the Sparrow Hawk breeding in Texas or Mexico." However, he has a report of its nesting in Lee County, in former years. A great many eastern 'species' of birds fail to penetrate the dry plateau region of Texas. Many varieties (subspecies) of eastern forms,

occur in this plateau region. Perhaps the Sparrow Hawk of the plateau region of Texas, in which Tom Green County is situated, will prove to be distinct from the eastern bird when more carefully studied.—G. H. RAGSDALE, *Gainsville, Texas*.

Great Gray Owl in Worcester County, Mass. — A Great Gray Owl (*Scotiaptex cinerea*) was killed in Princeton, Feb. 28, by E. T. Whitaker, a member of the Worcester Sportsmen's Club. The day was severely cold, the thermometer registering 4° below zero. This is the first record for this species in this County.—GEORGE B. CHURCHILL, *Worcester, Mass.*

Acadian Owl (*Nyctala acadica*) at Washington, D. C. — The Acadian Owl has always been considered of extremely rare occurrence at the Capital; in fact until the present winter but five specimens were known from this locality. The first of these was taken by Mr. Drexler some years ago, which was followed by an occasional capture from time to time. On December 12, 1890, an adult male was taken by Mr. Walter B. Barrows three miles east of the city at Brookland. This served as a stimulus for close search, and on January 4, 1891, reward came in the shape of three females taken by Mr. J. D. Figgins and myself. These were mostly in a dense thicket of pines, less than half an acre in extent, and the peculiarity especially noticeable was the fact that not a single male was to be found, although we searched the woods again and again, as well as neighboring patches of pine. On Feb. 4 or 5, 1891, one flew into the Smithsonian building where it was captured alive, and now serves as one of the attractions of the 'Zoo', making a total of five taken the past winter, or as many as all previous records taken together.

It would appear from this that the species is much more common than ordinarily supposed, but if such be the case it is strange that no more have been taken, as scarcely a week has passed that Mr. Figgins and myself have not spent at least one day in the woods, and always with an eye open for *Nyctala*, but since the record of January 4, not a feather has rewarded our efforts, and it must, I think, still be considered as one of the rarer birds of the district.—EDWIN M. HASBROUCK, *Washington, D. C.*

Occurrence of the Groove-billed Ani at Jupiter Inlet, Florida. — While at Palm Beach, Lake Worth, Fla., my friend, Mr. Franz Kinzel, a resident there, informed me that an example of *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Swains. had been shot during the first week in January last at Jupiter Inlet. Mr. Kinzel examined the bird, and identified it himself with the aid of Ridgway's 'Manual,' in which it is stated that this species has only occurred in the United States in the Valley of the lower Rio Grande in Texas, thence extending southwards to Peru.—A. S. PACKARD, *Brown University, Providence, R. I.*

Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) in Arizona. — A specimen of the Groove-billed Ani is now in my possession which was shot about



1891. "The Breeding Range of the Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*) in Texas." *The Auk* 8, 312–313. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067878>.

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