

no record to show that *Leucosticte australis* has ever been taken in New Mexico, Summit Peak, southern Colorado being at present its southern recorded limit. — H. W. HENSHAW, *Washington, D. C.*

Notes from Northern New Mexico. — The present status of *Lagopus l. altipetens* in the southern Rocky Mountains has been one of the interesting questions of our Biological Survey bird work in New Mexico. In the summer of 1903 we obtained old records of a few Ptarmigan seen in Mora Pass and on the peaks above the Upper Pecos, and in the winter of 1904 a specimen was collected in the Taos Mountains above Twining, about thirty miles south of the Colorado line, this being the first skin to substantiate the New Mexico records.¹ On July 19, 1904, we entered the mountains at Twining and proceeded to work the highest parts of the range between Taos and the Colorado line. The crest of the range between Taos and Twining runs far above timberline, by our aneroid readings averaging about 13,000 feet, with Taos as a base station at 7,000 feet. The highest point, known locally as Wheeler Peak, averaged with five readings 13,700 feet, which would make it the highest peak in New Mexico. In this group of mountains, although most of the snow melts in summer, Ptarmigan evidently were common before the advent of miners and sheep men. Our Indian camp man told us that twenty years before he had seen 'whole-lot-ta,' and now the birds are still common enough to be familiarly known by the Indians who see a few every year. At the time of our visit, however, large bands of sheep were running over the crest of the range, and although our party made six different trips to the peaks, only four Ptarmigan were seen. Two of these were secured by Sun-Elk, our Indian, who found them among the peaks above 13,000 feet, where he had seen them in previous years. Three primaries that he discovered on the trail followed by the sheep men suggested the probability that the sheep scared up the birds and the herders killed them with stones. Large bands of sheep were running over the crest of Costilla Peak just south of the Colorado line when we reached there on August 20. On the peak at 13,200 and 13,300 feet by the barometer, Mr. Bailey found evidence of Ptarmigan in piles of winter sign, considerable accumulations being found in some places. Two Mexicans he met on the mountain reported killing four of the birds that day, and a hunter from the neighborhood spoke of them familiarly. He generally found them in small flocks, he said, but sometimes saw as many as fifty together. He called them snowbirds, saying that they were usually found sitting around on the little benches near a large snowbank on the northeast side of the peak at about 13,200 feet. He added that the birds were very tame and that the males called in the mornings like a hawk. While only three

¹ Additional Notes on the Birds of the Upper Pecos. *The Auk*, 1904, pp. 351, 352.

specimens of *altipetens* have actually been collected from the New Mexico Rockies, such evidence gathered from hunters, Indians, and cattle men, shows conclusively not only that the birds were once common in the northern mountains of the territory, but that, although their numbers have been greatly depleted, Ptarmigan are still to be found by careful search on the highest peaks of New Mexico.

Ptarmigan and *Leucosticte australis* were the two birds we were most anxious to find in the high Rockies, and on July 20, the first day that we climbed Wheeler Peak we were following up the crest of the ridge at about 13,500 feet by the barometer, when a bird flew overhead whose call, undulating flight, and emarginate tail proclaimed it a *Leucosticte*, but hunt as we would we could get no other sight of it or its companions. A week later, however, on July 28, while Mr. Bailey was crossing an adjoining peak, he again heard the chirping of *Leucosticte*, this time in a cloud below him. When he answered the call a flock of about half a dozen came flying out of the cloud and lit on the stones four or five rods from him. An adult male that lit in sight was secured but the rest scattered among the stones and at the shot disappeared again in the clouds. Two days later Sun-Elk got another adult male near the same place, possibly from the same flock. These birds were both in full adult plumage with the characteristic black bills of the breeding season. The question that arose was, were they birds that had bred on these mountains, or were they from a band that had wandered down from Colorado after the breeding season? The mountains were about thirty miles from the Colorado line and judging from Mr. Cooke's accounts of the habits of the birds they do not wander much from their breeding grounds. He states, moreover, that the height of the breeding season is the latter part of July, and our first bird was seen July 20, the flocks being seen on July 28 and July 30. In August, as Mr. Cooke says, "Young and old swarm over the summits of the peaks, picking insects off the snow. By the last of October or early in November they descend to timberline and remain there through the winter except as they are driven a little lower by the severest storms. At the same time a few come into the lower valleys almost to the base of the foothills."¹ Nothing seems to be known of any southward wanderings. It would seem probable, therefore, that the Wheeler Peak birds furnish a breeding record for New Mexico. But however that may be, the only other records of *Leucosticte australis* from New Mexico are those of two birds taken by Mr. C. E. H. Aiken, reported in the Wheeler Survey, and, as Mr. Henshaw explains above (see p. 315), it now proves that these birds came, not from New Mexico, but from Colorado. The Wheeler Peak specimens therefore afford the first authentic record for New Mexico.

Another addition to the New Mexico list, presumably also a breeding record, is that of *Hylocichla f. salicicola*, for we heard one of these

¹The Birds of Colorado, State Agr. Coll. Bull. No. 37, p. 98.

thrushes singing on July 17, 1904, in the willows bordering Pueblo Creek, just beyond the Pueblo of Taos. As the birds are 'not uncommon' in Colorado, it would not be strange to find them in suitable localities thirty miles south of the borderline.

Skins of male and female *Galeoscoptes carolinensis* had previously been sent in from Rinconada under date of June 4, 1904, and we found Catbirds fairly common in the thickets bordering Pueblo Creek the second week in July. One was seen carrying food on July 15. On July 14, as we drove along the road our attention was attracted by the cries of a pair of Catbirds in the adjoining thicket, and when Mr. Bailey forced his way through the tangle he found the nest empty except for one headless nestling whose murder the old birds were bewailing.

Dendroica caerulescens, while migrating only 'casually to the east base of the Rocky Mountains,' had previously been recorded from the Rio Mimbres and Rio Grande in New Mexico, and on October 8, 1904, Mr. Bailey took one in the Gallinas Mountains, near the middle of Rio Arriba County. The bird, which was shot from a high conifer in a gulch, proved to be a male in first fall plumage.—FLORENCE MERRIAM BAILEY, *Washington, D. C.*

The former Status of the Flamingo and the Fish Hawk in the Lesser Antilles.—In the writings of Dutertre (*Histoire générale des Isles des Christophie, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique, et autres dans l'Amérique*, 1654, p. 300; *Hist. gén. des Antilles habitées par les François*, II, 1667, p. 268) we find the Flamingo (flambant; flaman; flamand) mentioned as occurring at that time in Guadeloupe. He says, regarding this bird: "Rare, and only seen in the 'salines' farthest away from habitations. The young are more white than the adults, but become redder with age." Although no definite locality is given, Guadeloupe is probably meant (the other islands considered being St. Kitts, Dominica, Martinique, and Grenada), as the author resided there, and in all cases where an animal or bird described does not occur on that island (as for instance the armadillo, 1667, p. 298, of Grenada) he gives its habitat. Moreover, the zoölogical notes are largely confined to the fauna of Guadeloupe. This is also, I believe, the first mention of the lighter (less red) plumage of the young bird.

Mr. Francis Coull (at present residing at Grenada) tells me that formerly Flamingos were of casual occurrence at Antigua, and he once saw several in the Five Island swamps, about forty years ago. He has not heard of them on the island since that time, although they were then well known to many of the natives under the name "Flamingo." There is no mistaking Mr. Coull's identification, and the locality is very favorable for the birds.

At Anegada, the most northerly of the Virgin Islands, where the conditions are much like those in the Bahamas, I am informed by a resident that they are still of casual occurrence. Dr. Christian Branch of St.



Bailey, Florence Merriam. 1905. "Notes from Northern New Mexico." *The Auk* 22, 316–318. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4070174>.

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