

ON THE SUMMER BIRDS OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY,  
MASSACHUSETTS.

BY WALTER FAXON.

[Concluded from Vol. VI, p. 46.]

LIST OF BIRDS OBSERVED ON AND NEAR GRAYLOCK MOUNTAIN, JUNE  
28—JULY 16, 1888.

1. *Actitis macularia*. SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—Several seen on Hopper Brook and Green River, Williamstown.
2. *Bonasa umbellus*. RUFFED GROUSE.—Common in woods nearly to the summit of Graylock.\*
3. *Buteo borealis*. RED-TAILED HAWK.—Rather common.
4. *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*. BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO.—A few seen in the Notch and one on the Graylock carriage road, 2100 feet above the sea-level.
5. *Dryobates villosus*. HAIRY WOODPECKER.—Rather common on the Saddle-Back range, from an altitude of about 2500 feet to the summit of Graylock, 3505 feet.
6. *Dryobates pubescens*. DOWNY WOODPECKER.—Rare. Only one or two were seen. These were at the head of the Hopper, about 2000 feet above the sea-level.
7. *Sphyrapicus varius*. YELLOW-BELLIED WOODPECKER. — Several specimens seen at different times on the Graylock carriage road, between two and three miles from the summit. Approximate altitude, 2800 feet.†
8. *Colaptes auratus*. GOLDEN-WINGED WOODPECKER. — Common about the base of the mountains and in the Notch. Also found on Graylock at an elevation of about 2800 feet, but at this altitude *Dryobates villosus* is the commonest Woodpecker.
9. *Antrostomus vociferus*. WHIP-POOR-WILL.—A few were heard in the Notch, altitude 1200 feet.
10. *Chordeiles virginianus*. NIGHTHAWK.—A few were seen in the Notch.
11. *Chætura pelagica*. CHIMNEY SWIFT. — Common. Frequently seen flying about the summit of Graylock.
12. *Trochilus colubris*. RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD.—Observed several times in the Notch.

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\* *Colinus virginianus* undoubtedly occurs at the base of the Saddle-Back range. I heard from trustworthy sources that a Quail's nest was found in the Notch, North Adams, during the season of 1888.

† Although *Ceophlæus pileatus* was not seen by me, the peculiar mortise-like holes which Mr. Brewster assures me are solely the work of this bird, were often noted. Mr. Brewster met with the birds themselves in the Hopper in 1883.

13. *Tyrannus tyrannus*. KINGBIRD.—Common in the open, cultivated country.
14. *Myiarchus crinitus*. CRESTED FLYCATCHER.—Rare. A pair were repeatedly seen near the Graylock carriage road, 2100 feet above sea-level, and a few at lower levels.
15. *Sayornis phœbe*. PEWEE.—Rather common in the cultivated lands.
16. *Contopus borealis*. OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER.—Not rare on the mountain sides. Most often found where the timber has been partly cut off.
17. *Contopus virens*. WOOD PEWEE.—Common. A few were found on Graylock at an altitude of 2800 feet.
18. *Empidonax pusillus traillii*. TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER.—Several observed in the willows along the shores of the Hoosac River in North Adams. Shot a male, evidently nesting in the neighborhood, in a thicket of willows on Notch Brook, July 12; altitude about 1200 feet.
19. *Empidonax minimus*. LEAST FLYCATCHER.—Not very common. Found chiefly in the farming lands.
20. *Cyanocitta cristata*. BLUE JAY.—Common up to summit of Graylock, where they often came to feed on the refuse thrown from the door of the mountain house.
21. *Corvus americanus*. AMERICAN CROW.—Very common.\*
22. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. BOBOLINK.—Common. Breeds in the Notch as high as 1400 feet above the sea-level.
23. *Molothrus ater*. COWBIRD.—A few were seen near the village of North Adams.
24. *Icterus galbula*. BALTIMORE ORIOLE.—Not rare in the settled portions of the country.
25. *Carpodacus purpureus*. PURPLE FINCH.—Common. Found on the Saddle-Back Mountains from the base to the summit of Graylock Peak.
26. *Loxia curvirostra minor*. AMERICAN RED CROSSBILL.—On the 14th of July, in the 'saddle' or depression between Graylock and Bald Mt., a small flock of Red Crossbills flew by but a short distance above my head. I saw them again near the same spot on the following day. Approximate altitude, 3000 feet.
27. *Spinus tristis*. AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.—Common where the land has been cleared of the forest.
28. *Spinus pinus*. PINE SISKIN.—On the morning of July 16 a few Siskins were seen near the old Adams path on Graylock, about 3000 feet above the sea.
29. *Poocætes gramineus*. BAY-WINGED SPARROW.—Common in the cultivated land in the valleys.

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\* *Corvus corax* was recorded from Williamstown in 1877 by Professor Sanborn Tenney (Amer. Nat., XI, 243, 1877; cf. Brewster, Auk, I, 10, foot-note, 1884). Tradition points to a cliff on the eastern side of Ragged Mountain in Adams as an old breeding place of the Raven. This cliff is still known in the neighborhood as the 'Raven Rocks.'

30. *Ammodramus sandwichensis savanna*. SAVANNA SPARROW. — Common at lower levels at the base of the Saddle-Back range of mountains, and observed in the Notch as high as the Graylock toll-gate, 1560 feet.

31. *Zonotrichia albicollis*. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.—In ascending Graylock by the turnpike, this bird was not met with until within two miles of the summit (altitude about 2800 feet). From this point to the summit it is common. Its notes are preëminent in the bird music of the top of Graylock, where it is known and cherished by the keepers of the summit-house as the 'Mountain Lark.' On the eastern slope of Graylock, in the Notch, especially in the cleared land on the south of the 'Bellows-Pipe' or height-of-land, the Whitethroat descends to a much lower level than on the western side of the range.

32. *Spizella socialis*. CHIPPING SPARROW.—Common wherever the land is tilled.

33. *Spizella pusilla*. FIELD SPARROW.—Common in the pastures of the valleys and mountain sides.

34. *Junco hyemalis*. SNOWBIRD.—Common up to summit of Graylock. Observed, June 28, on the 'Winter Road' from North Adams to the Notch, only 370 feet above the village of North Adams. Here the birds were apparently on their breeding-ground. They are more abundant, however, at higher levels. They are called 'Snowbirds' here, as in eastern Massachusetts.

35. *Melospiza fasciata*. SONG SPARROW. — Common wherever the land has been cleared. I found it in Wilbur's Clearing, or the 'Mountain Pasture,' on the carriage road to Graylock (2200 feet), and on the southern side of Graylock, where the forest has been felled, at a considerably greater altitude. Not found on the summit.

36. *Passer domesticus*. HOUSE SPARROW.—Only found in populous villages like North Adams and Williamstown.

37. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*. TOWHEE.—Not uncommon in favorable places, *e. g.*, the shrubby pastures on the 'Winter Road' in the neighborhood of the North Adams Reservoir and the cleared 'sprout-land' on the southeastern side of Graylock. Here it is found in the favorite haunts of the Mourning Warbler, and extends up to a high level, in fact as far as the forest has been cut off. Mr. Brewster found but one pair of Towhees during his visit to this region in 1883.\* It is probable that they are increasing with the disappearance of the forest.

38. *Habia ludoviciana*. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK. — Rather common. Noted on the mountains as high as 2500 feet.

39. *Passerina cyanea*. INDIGOBIRD.—Common in the more open country. Seen in the clearing on the summit of Graylock.

40. *Piranga erythromelas*. SCARLET TANAGER. — Rather common. Seen on Graylock at an altitude of over 3000 feet.

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\* Auk, I, 13, 1884.

41. *Petrochelidon lunifrons*. EAVE SWALLOW.—Common. According to Dr. Emmons, this bird first appeared in Williamstown in 1825.\*

42. *Chelidon erythrogaster*. BARN SWALLOW.—Common. Often seen flying about the summit of Graylock.

43. *Tachycineta bicolor*. WHITE-BELLIED SWALLOW.—A few were seen in the village of North Adams, the only ones observed by me in Berkshire County.

44. *Ampelis cedrorum*. CEDARBIRD.—Common in the cultivated lands.

45. *Vireo olivaceus*. RED-EYED VIREO.—Abundant wherever there are deciduous woods.

46. *Vireo gilvus*. WARBLING VIREO.—Not uncommon in the villages, as in Williamstown and North Adams. Seldom seen elsewhere, and never except near dwellings.

47. *Vireo solitarius*. BLUE-HEADED VIREO.—Not uncommon in heavy woods on the sides of the mountains.

48. *Mniotilta varia*. BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER.—Not uncommon at lower levels. Not noted above about 2000 feet.

49. *Helminthophila ruficapilla*. NASHVILLE WARBLER.—Not rare. A good many were found in the pastures in the Notch and in the 'Mountain Pasture' (2200 feet). A few were seen along the Graylock turnpike up to within about a mile of the summit.

50. *Helminthophila peregrina*. TENNESSEE WARBLER.—On the morning of the 15th of July, near the point of divergence of the Williamstown and Adams paths on the southwestern side of Graylock Peak (altitude, about 3000 feet) I was surprised to hear the characteristic song of the Tennessee Warbler. I soon found the bird in a thick growth of black spruce, balsam fir, and mountain ash. Impeded by the dense undergrowth of hobble-bushes and by fallen logs, and losing the clew of song (for the bird became silent soon after discovery), I was unable to follow the bird and secure it. The next morning I again discovered it on the same path, half way between the former place and the summit of the mountain, but failed in my attempt to shoot it. My identification of the bird in both instances was absolutely certain. The only record of this bird's summering in Massachusetts that I can find is that of a bird, nest, and eggs, said to have been secured near Springfield by Professor Horsford.† This record seems to have been generally discredited. It is not included by Mr. Bicknell in his list of the summer birds of the Catskills. Tennessee Warblers seem to show much diversity in their choice of a summer haunt. In 1887 Mr. Bradford Torrey and myself found two males in full song through the breeding season in some pasture land largely grown up to black spruce in Franconia, New Hampshire, at a high level (some distance above the Profile House Farm). In the latter part of May, 1888, my brother discovered it near the same place and also in an extensive larch swamp in the lower part of the same town, where Mr. Torrey

\* Amer. Jour. Sci. and Arts, XXVI, 208, 1834.

† Baird, Brewer and Ridgway, Hist. N. A. Birds. Land Birds, I, 207, 1874.

found it again in the latter part of the following month. Mr. William Brewster\* detected it in a white spruce and larch swamp in Anticosti, July 11, 1881, and he informs me that at Lake Umbagog he has generally observed it during the breeding season in larch swamps, but sometimes on mountain sides—always among coniferous trees. Dr. C. H. Merriam† states that in the Adirondack region, where it breeds, it generally prefers hard-wood areas, and Mr. J. A. Allen‡ reports it as not uncommon toward the middle of July, near Denison, Iowa, “in low groves of bur- and other oaks.”

51. *Compsothlypis americana*. BLUE YELLOW-BACKED WARBLER.—Very rare. I identified only one specimen, high up on the wall of the Hopper, about 2000 feet above the sea-level.

52. *Dendroica æstiva*. YELLOW WARBLER. Seen only near the village of North Adams. But it must be borne in mind that I spent very little time in the lower country of Northern Berkshire.

53. *Dendroica cærulescens*. BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER.—Quite common on the mountains up to at least 3000 feet. Prefers woods with a good share of deciduous trees, maple, birch, beech, oak, etc. Among the innumerable specimens seen, but two were females.

54. *Dendroica coronata*. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER.—Not rare in the black spruces on Graylock from about 2800 feet to summit. One with a quick ear for the song might count on finding three or four specimens during a day spent on the mountain. I believe the only other record of this bird in Massachusetts during the breeding period is Winchendon, Worcester County (Brewster, *Auk*, V, 391, Oct., 1888).

55. *Dendroica maculosa*. BLACK-AND-YELLOW WARBLER.—Common. Noted from about 1000 to 2200 feet. Prefers somewhat open country with a second growth of spruce. Hence, although belonging to the Canadian fauna more strictly than the Canadian Warbler, it is not so common at high levels as the latter.

56. *Dendroica pensylvanica*. CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER.—Common in the mountain valleys, and extending well up on the sides of the mountains.

57. *Dendroica blackburniæ*. BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER.—Common on the Saddle-Back range from the Notch nearly to the summit of Graylock. On the Graylock carriage road *D. blackburniæ* and *D. virens* are the commonest of the Warblers.

58. *Dendroica virens*. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER.—Common. Distribution similar to that of *D. blackburniæ*.

59. *Seiurus aurocapillus*. GOLDEN-CROWNED THRUSH.—Common. Found nearly to the summit of Graylock.

60. *Geothlypis philadelphia*. MOURNING WARBLER.—Common. Noted at altitudes from 1000 to 3500 feet, one pair at least being established

\* Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., XX, 370.

† Bull. Nuttall Orn. Club, VI, 227.

‡ Mem. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., I, 494.

in the edge of the clearing on the summit of Graylock. Especially abundant where the forest has been cut on the south side of the 'Bellows-Pipe' in Adams. Wherever the land has been recently cleared, but not appropriated for pasturage or tillage, the Mourning Warbler is found, the most characteristic tenant of the dense 'sprout growth' that forms the vanguard of the succeeding forest. By widening the domain of this lovely bird the wood-cutter atones, in a measure, for the destruction he causes. The voice of the Mourning Warbler is full. The song that I most often heard resembles the syllables *thúr-ree, thúr-ree, thúr-ree* (sometimes the repetition was four times instead of three). A refrain consisting of three notes, with the accent upon the last, or of two notes with a strong accent on the first, the voice falling on the second, was sometimes appended. At other times the form of the song was quite different, consisting of but five notes, the penultimate note strongly accented, the last pitched on a lower key. The last two notes together are equal in time to one of the first three. Something in the mode of delivery of the latter song suggests the song of the Water-Thrush, as Mr. Maynard\* has observed. As far as I could determine, the same bird always followed one score. The Mourning Warbler, like the Golden-crowned Thrush, or its nearer relative, the Maryland Yellow-throat, is much given to an ecstatic aerial song that defies description. On the first of July I discovered a nest of this bird. It contained four young birds. On the seventh the young had flown and the nest was secured. It was placed about ten inches from the ground in a clump of young beech saplings. The body of the nest is composed of strips of bark and dry leaves, with a lining of fine black roots and horse hair. Many dead leaves are fastened to the outside. But slightly attached to the saplings the nest rests upon a loose platform of dry spruce twigs. The inside diameter is about two inches. Of large size and slovenly construction the nest is not a very creditable specimen of Mnioiltine architecture.

61. *Geothlypis trichas*. MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT.—Not rare, but not so abundant as *G. philadelphia*. Found to some extent in the same localities with the latter, but oftener at a lower level and in more cultivated country.

62. *Icteria virens*. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT.—I was somewhat surprised to find a pair of Chats near the North Adams Reservoir (altitude, about 1080 feet), within half a mile of Hermit Thrushes, Black-and-yellow, Black-throated Blue, and Canadian Warblers, and Snowbirds, at the same elevation.

63. *Sylvania canadensis*. CANADIAN WARBLER.—Rather common on the Saddle-Back Mountains, breeding as high as the summit of Graylock. The lowest level at which it was observed was about 1000 feet above sea-level, near the cascade on Notch Brook, North Adams.

64. *Setophaga ruticilla*. AMERICAN REDSTART. — Not very common, and not found far up on the mountains. Much less abundant than in Eastern Massachusetts.

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\* Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., XIV, 362.

65. *Galeoscoptes carolinensis*. CATBIRD. — Common in the lower and more open country.

66. *Harporhynchus rufus*. BROWN THRASHER. — Not common. Not seen above an altitude of 1050 feet (North Adams).

67. *Troglodytes aëdon*. HOUSE WREN. — This bird was observed in its half-domesticated state near farmhouses in Williamstown, and a few were found remote from human habitations on the mountain sides where the forest had been cut off and where the dead stubs seemed to afford them a congenial home. In such places the Olive-sided Flycatcher also is pretty sure to be found. The Wrens are quite shy in such localities, seeming to retain the primitive habits of their race.

68. *Troglodytes hiemalis*. WINTER WREN. — Common in suitable localities on the Saddle-Back Mountains above 2000 feet. At this season they were very confiding, and seemed to take great pride in introducing me to their large and noisy families.

69. *Certhia familiaris americana*. AMERICAN BROWN CREEPER. — Common in the coniferous forest of the Saddle-Back Mountains.

70. *Sitta carolinensis*. WHITE-BELLIED NUTHATCH. — Not common. Killed one near the carriage road not far from the summit of Graylock, July 10, and saw a pair with young in the Hopper, July 9.

71. *Sitta canadensis*. RED-BELLIED NUTHATCH. — Common on the mountains. Observed from about 2100 feet to the summit of Graylock, in fact wherever there were old black spruces. Like its White-bellied cousin this bird at times repeats its nasal *hank* for a protracted period and with rapidity, suggesting to my ears the call of a pygmy Flicker. This seems to be its song proper.

72. *Parus atricapillus*. CHICKADEE. — Rather common.

73. *Regulus satrapa*. GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET. — During my first ascent of Graylock on June 28, I discovered the Golden-crowned Kinglet in full summer song in the thick second growth of black spruce through which the carriage road passes before emerging into the 'Mountain Pasture.' Approximate altitude, 2200 feet. I afterward found the Kinglet to be a not uncommon bird at this place and higher up on the mountain in the primitive spruces. It has been recorded from the summits of the Catskills by Mr. T. M. Trippe\* although Mr. Bicknell† failed to identify it in the same region at a later date.‡

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\* Amer. Nat., VI, 47, 1872.

† Trans. Linn. Soc. N. Y., I, 144, 1882.

‡ Since this was written Mr. William Brewster has published an account of the breeding of the Golden-crowned Kinglet in Winchendon, Worcester Co., Mass. (Auk, V, 337, Oct., 1888). In Dr. Emmons's catalogue of Massachusetts birds (Hitchcock's 'Report on the Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, and Zoölogy of Massachusetts', 1833) this bird is marked as breeding in the State. As professor in Williams College, almost within the shadow of Graylock, Dr. Emmons had ample opportunity to know of the bird's presence on the mountain in the breeding season, although his authority in this case seems to have been universally discredited. In the second edition

74. *Turdus mustelinus*. WOOD THRUSH.—Common at lower levels and extending high up in the beech forest at the head of the Hopper. Also found sparingly at other points on the mountains. Noted on the Graylock carriage road near the three-mile board, altitude, 2400 feet (?).

75. *Turdus fuscescens*. WILSON'S THRUSH.—Common in the lower, cleared portions of the country, and observed at least as high as 2000 feet from the sea-level on the cleared portions of the mountain sides.

76. *Turdus aliciae bicknelli*. BICKNELL'S GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH.—On the third of July I visited the summit of Graylock, for the first time under favorable conditions of weather. I had barely reached the top when the chant of Bicknell's Thrush was heard issuing from the thick growth of spruces, firs, and mountain ashes that skirt the clearing. The singer was perched upon one of the larger spruces, perhaps twenty feet from the ground. As I approached nearer he darted into the dense undergrowth of hobble-bushes and mountain maples. He proved to be so shy that it was not until my second subsequent visit to the mountain top (July 6) that I succeeded in shooting him. I therefore had ample opportunity to hear the song at short distance, for the bird was not chary of song when well concealed by intervening tree-trunks and foliage. The song is very much like that of Wilson's Thrush in quality of tone, but quite different in form. In neither regard does it bear any close resemblance to the song of Swainson's Thrush. It is introduced by two or three low clucks only to be heard at a short distance, which seem to the listener to be involuntary, mechanical sounds, like those that precede the song of the Whip-poor-will. The bird was shot while singing. The alarm or call-note of this species resembles the Veery's, although distinguishable. It is entirely different from the abrupt whistle of the Olive-back. All of the *Hylocichlæ* are as readily distinguished by their call-notes as by their proper songs. What I take to be the equivalent note of the Hermit Thrush is not the low *chuck* commonly heard while the bird is on its migration, but a peculiar sound which always suggests to me a Finch rather than a Thrush. The Bicknell's Thrush on Graylock remained in the same place to my knowledge for four days in early July, in constant song. I do not doubt, therefore, that its nest was near by. The condition of its testes, moreover, denoted a breeding bird. I failed to find a nest, however, nor did I see or hear another specimen although I visited the summit of Graylock on five subsequent days and carefully explored the other high points of the range.

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of this catalogue, 1835, *Dendroica maculosa* and *Sitta canadensis*, both common in the Graylock region in summer, are also marked as breeding in Massachusetts, although not admitted in this *role* to recent lists until Mr. Allen's revised catalogue of 1886, on Mr. Brewster's authority. In the light of the recent testimony to the accuracy of Emmons's catalogue it is worthy of note that *Dendroica castanea* is also marked by him as "breeding, rare." Is it not possible that in Dr. Emmons's day, before the destruction of the great coniferous forest of Graylock had gone very far, this bird found a congenial breeding ground there, as it still does in the White Mountains of New Hampshire?

77. *Turdus ustulatus swainsonii*. SWAINSON'S THRUSH.—Not uncommon on the Saddle-Back range from about 2800 feet up to the summit of Graylock, 3505 feet. Met with sparingly as low as 2000 feet.

78. *Turdus aonalaschkæ pallasii*. EASTERN HERMIT THRUSH.—Common at elevations from 1000 or 1200 feet to 2900 feet.

79. *Merula migratoria*. AMERICAN ROBIN.—Common. Frequently seen on the mountains even to the summit of Graylock.

80. *Sialia sialis*. BLUEBIRD.—Rather common in the settled parts of the country.

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ERRATA.

In the first part of this paper, Vol. VI, Jan. 1889, p. 42, line 14, for "oppositeness" read "appositeness"; line 30, omit "Yellow Warbler."

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## NOTES ON THE GENERAL HABITS, NESTS AND EGGS OF THE GENUS *PASSERELLA*.

BY CAPT. CHARLES E. BENDIRE.

THE GENUS *Passerella* was established by Swainson in 1837, and an excellent synopsis of it may be found in Mr. H. W. Henshaw's able article in the "Bulletin" of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, Vol. III, Jan., 1878, pages 3 to 7 inclusive.

According to the latest classification, that of the A. O. U. Code and Check-List, this genus is divided into four forms, one species proper and three races, as follows:

I. *Passerella iliaca* (Merr.), FOX SPARROW.

II. *Passerella iliaca unalaschcensis* (Gmel.), TOWNSEND'S SPARROW.

III. *Passerella iliaca megarhyncha* (Baird), THICK-BILLED SPARROW.

IV. *Passerella iliaca schistacea* (Baird), SLATE-COLORED SPARROW.

Regarding the breeding habits of *Passerella iliaca*, the handsome and well-known Fox Sparrow, familiar to all eastern ornithologists during its migrations, I am unfortunately unable to add anything that is new, from personal observations, and I cannot find any positive records in the bird literature accessible to



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