

BIRDS OBSERVED NEAR MINCO, CENTRAL OKLAHOMA.

BY ALEXANDER WETMORE.

(Continued from March, 1918, Wilson Bulletin.)

40. *Coturniculus savannarum bimaculatus* (Swainson).—Western Grasshopper Sparrow.

Common; breeding. Western Grasshopper Sparrows were characteristic birds of the high, rolling prairie where it was not under cultivation. On May 25 the condition of the sexual organs in birds collected indicated that the breeding season had just begun. Males sang from the weed-stems, the tops of the buffalo pea, or fence posts. The usual song may be represented by the syllables *Ka-tsick Ka-tsee-e-e-e*. Another song was a succession of squeaky notes given rapidly. Female birds were little in evidence and were flushed with difficulty from their shelters in the grass.

Three females collected average smaller than the measurements given for this form by Mr. Ridgway.¹ The males have shorter tails than is usual. In coloration the birds collected are typical *C. s. bimaculatus*. Compared with a series of *C. s. australis* they have less black and more rusty brown in the upper parts. The bill also is more slender than in eastern Grasshopper Sparrows taken in Virginia. Measurements in millimeters of the specimens collected are as follows:

	wing	tail
No. 1140 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 25, 1905, ♀ ad...	61.0	42.9
No. 1142 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 25, 1905, ♀ ad...	60.0	44.0
No. 1198 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 31, 1905, ♀ ad...	61.7	42.0
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Average of three adult females.....	60.9	42.9
No. 1143 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 25, 1905, ♂ ad...	63.0	44.6
No. 1152 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 26, 1905, ♂ ad...	63.5	45.0
No. 1196 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 31, 1905, ♂ ad...	65.0	44.5
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Average of three adult males.....	63.8	44.7

41. *Chondestes grammacus strigatus* Swainson.—Western Lark Sparrow.

Common; breeding. These birds were scattered over the rolling prairie country and seemed at this time all to be nesting. An adult male, collected May 23, has the plumage of the upper parts somewhat worn. It differs from *C. g. grammacus* in all of the char-

¹ Birds of North and Middle America, I, 1901, p. 210.

acters separating *C. g. strigatus* from that form. Length of wing 87 mm., tail 67 mm.

42. *Cardinalis cardinalis* (Linnaeus).—Cardinal.

Common in thickets and small growths of timber along streams and in hollows on the prairie. A nest containing five fresh eggs was found along Boggy Creek on May 23. This nest was placed in a small elm sapling. It was made of leaves and grass and was lined with rootlets. No specimens of the cardinal found near Minco were collected so that the race to which these birds belong is in doubt. It seems probable that they will prove to be *Cardinalis c. cardinalis*.

43. *Guiraca caerulea lazula* (Lesson).—Western Blue Grosbeak.

Common. Though Blue Grosbeaks were found nearly always in pairs they did not seem to be nesting yet. The birds frequented heavy weed growths, and many were seen along the railroad track where telegraph wires offered convenient perches. The males were in full song. These grosbeaks were rather wild and were suspicious of any approach so that I had trouble in securing those desired as specimens. A male taken near Minco on May 26 is in full plumage. Another secured near Leal May 31 has the head and neck all around blue while elsewhere the body plumage is brown. Indistinct spots and marking of bluish are evident on the ventral surface and on the hind neck is an irregular patch of brownish. Measurements of these specimens follow:

	wing	tail
No. 1157 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 26, 1905, ♂ ad.	90.0	67.5
No. 1193 (Coll. A. W.) Leal, Okla., May 31, 1905, ♂ ad.	90.0	67.0

Average of two adult males.....	90.0	67.3
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	wing	tail
No. 1124 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 23, 1905, ♀ ad.	81.5	62.0
No. 1134 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 24, 1905, ♀ ad.	84.5	68.0
No. 1158 (Coll. A. W.) Minco, Okla., May 26, 1905, ♀ ad.	83.0	62.0
No. 1194 (Coll. A. W.) Leal, Okla., May 31, 1905, ♀ ad.	86.5	67.5

Average of four adult females.....	83.9	64.9
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Both male and female are decidedly paler than the corresponding sex in *G. c. caerulea*.

44. *Passerina cyanea* (Linnaeus).—Indigo Bunting.

A common breeding bird. An adult female in rather worn plumage was taken near Minco on May 23.

45. *Passerina ciris pallidior* Mearns.—Pale Painted Bunting.

Common; breeding. Nonpareils were fairly common in brushy

areas, and while not wild, kept well concealed when followed. Males sang their pleasing songs constantly. The only specimen secured was an adult female in peculiar plumage shot May 25. This, at first glance, might pass for an immature male. It has a reddish wash over the under surface (varying from flesh color to salmon color) with a very faint rosy wash on the back and rump that renders comparison with other specimens somewhat difficult. This bird measures as follows (in millimeters): wing 68.0, tail 53.0.

Four females of *P. c. ciris* from South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana give the following measurements: wing 64-66 mm. (average 65.1 mm.), tail 50-54 mm. (average 52.0 mm.). Four females of *P. c. pallidior* from southern Texas have a wing measurement of 66-68 mm. (average 67.2 mm.), and a tail measurement varying from 51 to 54 mm. (average 52.2 mm.). The bird from Minco equals *C. p. pallidior* in measurements, and in addition agrees with birds from Fort Clark, Texas (the type locality of *pallidior*) in having the green of the crown grayer than in true *ciris*. This gray tone is less evident on the back because of the reddish wash present in this specimen.

46. *Spiza americana* (Gmelin).—Dickcissel.

Dickcissels, known locally as "field canaries" or "wheat birds," bred abundantly around Minco. Brush or weed grown tracts were favorite haunts, but the birds spread in great numbers everywhere through cultivated fields and along fences. The males sang their odd, emphatic songs all day long perched on a weed, post or some other point of vantage. Occasionally a bird sang while on the wing. A nest was found in a clump of buck brush near the South Canadian River, built in a fork one and one-half feet from the ground. The nest was made of grass and weed-stems and lined with fine grasses. It was thick walled, bulky and strongly built. One egg had been deposited.

A male Dicksissel, collected May 24, is in full plumage with a black shield on the throat, and a small black spot in the center of the breast below. Another, collected on May 23, was shot for a female, but on dissection proved to be a breeding male. In color and marking it is very similar to females. The throat patch is even more restricted than in many females, and the feathers of the pileum are heavily streaked. On the underparts the yellow is of greater extent, and the black submalar streak found in females is barely indicated. A breeding female was collected on May 25.

47. *Piranga rubra rubra* (Linnaeus).—Summer Tanager.

The Summer Tanager was fairly common and was apparently

on its breeding grounds. Two were seen near Minco May 26 and an adult male was taken near Leal on May 31. This bird is in full plumage save for a crescent of carrot red on the upper breast. The wing of this specimen (No. 1182, Coll. A. W.) measures 93.0 mm., the tail 72.0 mm.

48. *Progne subis subis* (Linnaeus).—Purple Martin.

Two or three pairs of Purple Martins were nesting in bird houses in Minco. They were seen May 23 and daily thereafter.

49. *Hirundo erythrogastra* (Boddaert).—Barn Swallow.

One individual was seen near Minco May 29.

50. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* (Audubon).—Rough-winged Swallow.

Two were seen at a nesting hole in a railroad cut near Minco on May 28. Others were observed near Leal on May 31.

51. *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides* Swainson.—White-rumped Shrike.

White-rumped Shrikes were rare in this region at this time. One was seen on May 24, another on May 26, and single birds were observed later. As no specimens were secured these birds are referred arbitrarily to *L. l. excubitorides*.

52. *Vireosylva gilva gilva* (Vieillot).—Warbling Vireo.

Warbling Vireos were seen on May 26 and May 29. None were taken. I thought that they were breeding.

53. *Vireo belli belli* Audubon.—Bell's Vireo.

Common; breeding. Bell's Vireos were found everywhere in thickets and many came into the yards of Minco. Plum thickets on the upland prairies furnished dense cover for them, and in these places it was almost impossible to get sight of the birds. In town I heard their harsh emphatic songs constantly during the many hours passed in preparing specimens. All attempts at transcribing the song on paper were failures and it is necessary to hear the notes at first hand in order to appreciate them. Though harsh the song was not unpleasing and its oddity in inflection and phrase did not become monotonous, though repetition was incessant. One nest found was swung from a crotch in an apple tree four feet from the ground. It was made of shavings from weathered weeds, bits of paper and cotton and was lined with fine grass and horsehair. It was small in diameter and rather deep. On May 31 this nest contained three eggs of the Vireo and one of a Cowbird, all fresh. On May 26 another nest made of fine grass and weeds and lined with fine grass was found in a plum thicket near the South Canadian River. This nest hung from a crotch one and one-half feet from the ground. Externally it was covered with cobwebs. It contained three Vireo's eggs and one of a Cowbird. All were fresh.

Another nest found the same day in a similar situation was not yet completed.

One specimen was collected, an adult male, taken May 26. This bird has the back very slightly grayer than in typical *V. b. belli* from eastern Kansas, the rump being decidedly brighter than the back. In this and in length of tail (which measures 46.5 mm.) this bird verges somewhat toward *V. b. medius* of southwestern Texas. In other respects it agrees with true *belli* and there is no hesitancy in allotting it to this form.

54. *Oporornis formosus* (Wilson).—Kentucky Warbler.

Kentucky Warblers were fairly common in dense thickets. Birds were seen on May 24 and 26. None were taken.

55. *Geothlypis trichas brachidactyla* (Swainson).—Northern Yellow-throat.

A tolerably common species. Individuals were seen on May 23 and 27 near Minco, and a breeding female was taken on Bacon's Ranch near Leal on May 31. This specimen (No. 1192, Coll. A. W.) measures as follows: Wing 54.0 mm., tail 45.0 mm., exposed culmen 10.1 mm., and tarsus 20.2 mm. The wing and tail measurements, though large, are within the maxima for this form. Compared with *G. t. occidentalis* this specimen is distinctly darker above.

56. *Icteria virens virens* (Linnaeus).—Yellow-breasted Chat.

Common; breeding. Chats frequented the thickets everywhere and from May 25 to 30 the males, under the excitement of the breeding period, were in sight more often than is usual. Twice birds were seen in open bushes singing loudly and posturing in an odd manner. They swung first to one side and then to the other, turning each time until the head and body hung down, a performance that could not fail to attract attention. Another flew up a few feet above a thicket and sang in the air, supporting himself with rapidly beating wings, while feet and tail hung loosely and the bird swung jerkily from side to side. Two males, collected on May 25, resemble typical *virens* in size and in the extent of the malar stripe, but are very slightly grayer above. These two measure as follows (in millimeters):

	Wing	Exposed	
		tail	culmen
No. 1144 (Coll. A. W.) ♂ ad., May 25, 1905.....	77.0	74.0	14.8
No. 1150 (Coll. A. W.) ♂ ad., May 25, 1905.....	78.0	77.0	14.0

57. *Mimus polyglottos leucopterus* (Vigors).—Western Mockingbird.

Common; breeding. Western Mockingbirds nested in the yards in Minco and were distributed in suitable localities through the

country. I found them quite common in the thickets near the South Canadian River. An adult male, taken May 26, is typical of *M. p. leucopterus* in size and color. It measures as follows (in millimeters):

	wing	tail	exposed culmen	tarsus
No. 1159 (Coll. A. W.) ♂ ad., May 26,				
1905	112.8	120.0	17.0	34.0

58. *Thryomanes bewicki cryptus* Oberholser.—Texas Wren.

An adult male, in breeding condition, was taken on Bacon's Ranch, near Leal, on May 31. Compared with *T. b. bewicki* this bird is much grayer above and whiter below, while the black bars in the under tail coverts are decidedly narrower. It agrees with a series of *T. b. cryptus* from Texas in color and in size save that the tail is shorter than the wing instead of equal to it or longer. The bird is in worn plumage. It measures as follows: Wing 58.4 mm., tail 56.5 mm.

MINUTES OF THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION.

The nineteenth annual meeting of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union was held at Omaha, Nebraska, Friday and Saturday, May 10 and 11, 1918. The sessions were held in the Assembly Room of the First Unitarian Church, at Turner Boulevard and Harney Street. The annual banquet, this year of the conservation type, took place in this room conjointly with the annual dinner of the Nebraska Audubon Society at 6:30 on the evening of May 10. Eighty-five members of the two societies of bird lovers were present.

Following the dinner at 7:45 p. m. the members of the N. O. U. retired to the Auditorium for a short business session, with President C. E. Mickel in the chair. The reports of the officers were received, and an Auditing Committee and a Nominating Committee were appointed, the former committee consisting of Mr. Wilson Tout and Misses McDonald and Pyrtle, and the latter committee consisting of Professor R. W. Dawson, Mrs. L. R. Button and Miss VanSant. While these committees were deliberating the society proceeded with the election of new members.

The names of eight persons were proposed for membership in the society and all were elected, as follows: Mr. Cyrus Black of Kearney, Mr. A. M. Brooking of Inland, Mrs. A. J. Cornish of Lincoln, Miss Blanche Garten of Lincoln, Mrs. H. Hapeman of Minden, Mr. Paul Hoagland of Omaha, Mr. W. G. Landers of Norfolk, and Mrs. Anna Witt of Scribner.



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