

Notes on Some of the Birds of
Fort Klamath, Oregon, collected by Lieu-
tenant Willis Wittich, 21st. Infantry, U. S. A.,
With Annotations and Additions by
The Collector

This article is compiled from notes and collections forwarded to me, at different times, by Lieut. Wittich, during his residence of nearly four years at Fort Klamath.

The Fort is situated near the head of Upper Klamath Lake, one of a number of large lakes composing the Klamath basin, of Southern Oregon¹. Its altitude is 4400 feet above the sea level — above the limit of oak-trees. The country is well forested, in most places. The trees are of large size, and mainly evergreens — pine, fir, spruce and juniper, with a mingling of aspens. Mount Shasta, in California, appears in view in the South, and Mount Pitt at the North.

The Klamath basin occupies a chain of large lakes, ^{bordered by} ~~and~~ marshes of "tule" etc.², which abound in shoal water and low islands. These wide surfaces, ^{***} densely covered with rushes, afford most convenient retreats for a large number of swimming and wading birds, which nest and pass the summer there.*

Ducks, geese, herons, plovers, and sandpiper ^{are} exceedingly abundant. Dr. J. S. Newberry, quoted above, thus describes the arrival of the water

¹ Please give the exact situation, with latitude, longitude, mean temperature, and average rain-fall.

² Please give full details.

Dr. J. S. Newberry,
* Pacific Railroad
Report, Vol. II, p.
99, 1857.

fowl in autumn: "With the first October rain, vegetation begins to spring over all these prairies, and the geese and ducks now come in. Flock after flock in increasing numbers they come, until their flights rival those of the Passenger Pigeon, and the heavens are always marked by their characteristic triangles, and the air filled with their cries.

The ducks descend to the bays, streams, and lakes, and almost cover the smaller bodies of water, while the geese settle on the prairie and feed upon the fallen grain of the oat, or the first tender sprigs of springing grass, which now begins to tinge the landscape with green.

Below is given a list of specimens; with biographical notes, and notes of other species that occur, by Lieut. (and Mrs.?) Wittich;

3. To be filled in etc.

* This measurement is always taken from bases of rectrices, inside of skin.

A few stay all winter -

Mostly summer migrants.

They breed about 46699

in - woods build on bushes on ground (or in timber low down)

1. Turdus migratorius, Linné. Robin. No. 1, ad., 1875.

Wing, 5.05; tail, 4.25; bill from nostril, .55; gape, 1.09; tarsus, 1.32.

This specimen is probably a female. It is not distinctly referable to Ridgway's variety propinquus, though the white on the tail is confined to a rather broad terminal edging to the inner webs of the outer rectrices; the back has a faint brownish wash.

2. Turdus naevius, Gmelin. Varied Thrush.

No. 2, ad., 1875. Wing, 4.88; tail 3.81; bill from nostril, .56; gape, 1.09; tarsus, 1.25.

"C"

3. Sialia mexicana, Swainson. Western Bluebird.
No. 3, ♂ ad., May, 1875. Wing, 4.24; tail, 3; bill from
nostril, .38; gape, .79; tarsus, .76.

Sialia arctica, Swainson. Arctic Bluebird.
Found at Fort Klamath (?).

4. Parus montanus, Gambel. Mountain Chickadee.
No. 4, ad., May, 1875. Wing, 2.66; tail, 2.50; bill
from nostril, .33; tarsus, .65.

5. Sitta pygmaea, Vigors. Pigmy Nuthatch.
No. 5, ad., 1875. Wing, 2.50; tail, 1.63; bill from
nostril, .44; gape, .68; tarsus, .52.

6. Anthus ludovicianus, (Chimlin) Leitch. Fittler.
No. 6, ad., 1875. Wing, 3.25; tail, 2.73; bill from
nostril, .37; gape, .58; tarsus, .80. An exact
duplicate of typical Eastern specimen.

7. Dendroeca aestiva (Chimlin) Baird. Summer
Warbler, No. 7, ♂ ad., ~~May~~, 1875. Wing, 2.36;
tail, 1.88; bill from nostril, .30; tarsus, .70.

8. Dendroeca audubonii (Townsend) Baird.
Audubon's Warbler. No. 8, ♂ ad., May, 1875.
Wing, 3.11; tail, 2.60; bill from nostril, .30; tarsus, .68.
No. 9, ♂ ad., May, 1875. Wing, 3.07; tail, 2.63; bill
from nostril, .30; tarsus, .67.

Very abundant during the migrations, fluttering
about the junipers, upon whose berries they feed.

Small bird
lighter than
about 8 ft from
ground

Not on list at
Hospital.

Numerous
winter residents
Not known to breed
here on timber from
breeding. Same
as Magpie.

April 14. 75

June 15 75

May 5. 75

Not on list
at hospital

9. Geothlypis philadelphia (var. macgillivrayi Baird?) Macgillivray's Ground Warbler.
No. 10, ♀ ad., Spring of 1875. Wing, 2.16; tail, 2.26;
bill from nostril, .28; gape, .51; tarsus, .76.

Permanent
resident

April 25"

x 10. Myiodioctes pusillus, var. puleolatus, Ridgway.
Western Green Black-capped Flycatching Warbler.
No. 11, ♂ ad., April, 1875. Wing, 2.24; tail, 2.25; bill
from nostril, .24; tarsus, .72. This specimen is
distinctly variety puleolatus. It differs from
Eastern specimens in being much brighter
yellow beneath, scarcely tinged with olive on
sides; frontal band and throat, with a
suffusion of orange; pileum with brighter
steel-blue metallic gloss.

Not seen in winter
seen in
summer
June 15"

x 11. Pyrranga ludoviciana, (Wilson) Bonaparte.
Louisiana Tanager. No. 12, ad., June, 1875.
Wing, 3.75; tail, 3.10; bill from nostril .43; tar-
sus, .75. No. 13, ♂ ad., Spring of 1875. Wing, 3.75;
tail, 3.13; bill from nostril, .44; tarsus, .75.

April 28
abundant

H. horreorum
also found.
Recorded at
hospital June 15
1875
Rum Swallow

x 12. Tachycineta bicolor, (Vieillot) Coues. White-
bellied Swallow. No. 14, ♂ ad., April, 1875.
Wing, 4.62; tail, 2.40; bill from nostril, .20;
gape, .51; tarsus, .39.

Plumbeous Vireo.
Recorded at hosp. No date
June 4 1875

x 13. Carpodacus purpureus, var. californicus, Baird.
Californian Purple Finch. No. 15, ♂ ad., ^{May} ~~May~~
(Crumm); 50.
1875. Spring, 3.75; tail, 2.78; bill from nostril, .39;
tarsus, .69.

Pine Linnet
Ch. Piquet
May, 1875

14. Passerculus savanna, var. sandwichensis, Baird.

Northwestern Sparrow. No. 16 (probably young in autumn). Wing, 2.82; tail, 2.37; bill from nostril, .30 (from base of culmen, .45); tarsus, .78.

American Goldfinch
Yellowbird - Thutler
Ch. Frites - June 1875

15 - not on list.

Melospiza Baird
Swamp Sparrow - M. Palustris
April 26, 1875

15. Melospiza melodia, var. _____ (?)

Long Sparrow. No. 17, May, 1875.

* This is the measurement of bill always given, which not otherwise stated.

Wing, 2.64; tail, 2.75; bill (from base of culmen), .49; tarsus, .86. Recorded by McEldery April 26th, 1875.

Junco - wagleri
Snowbird.
J. hyemalis, Oct. 29, 1875

16. Junco oregonus, Townsend Slater, Oregon Snowbird. No. 18, ♂ ad., February, 1875. Wing, 3; tail, 2.82; bill, .42; tarsus, .76. No. 19. Wing, 2.92; tail 2.77; bill, .38; tarsus, .78.

Abundant at Klamath in winter etc.

Spizella Bonaparte
Chipping Sparrow
chip bird - chippy. X
June 9 - 1875
Zonotrichia -

17. Zonotrichia leucophrys, (Foster) Swainson. White-crowned Sparrow. No. 20, ^{ady} May, 1875. Wing, 3.12; tail, 3.25; bill, .46; tarsus, .93. This specimen is typical leucophrys. (April 26" 1875)

(Oct. 29" 1875)

18. Zonotrichia coronata, (Pallas) Baird. Golden-crowned Sparrow. No. 21, 1875. Wing, 2.96; tail, 3.07; bill, .46; tarsus, .89.

19. Passerella iliaca, var. townsendii, (Audubon) Nuttall. Townsend's Fox Sparrow. No. 22, 1875, is typical townsendii. Wing, 3.28; tail, 3.50; bill, .48; tarsus, .93.

20. Cyanospiza amoena (Say) Baird. Lazuli Finch. No. 23, ♂ ad., June 15, 1875. Wing, 2.78; tail, 2.45; bill, .42; tarsus, .62.

Oregon Towhee
P. ~~modulatus~~ - Var. by
Oct. 5. 1875

21. Pipilo chlorurus, Townsend Baird. Green-tailed Towhee; "Blandings' Finch". No. 24, ad, May, 1875. Wing, 3.06; tail, 3.65; bill, .52; tarsus, .95

Numerous in summer
Nest in tree
4 eggs

22. Agelaius phoeniceus, (Linn.) Vieillot. Red-winged Blackbird. No. 25, ♂ ad. Wing, 4.92; tail, 4.23; bill, .90; tarsus 1.11.

(Red-shouldered Blackbird)
Agelaius phoeniceus, var. gubernator, (Wagler) Coues
Agelaius phoeniceus, var. tricolor, (Nuttall) Coues.
Red-and-white Shouldered Blackbird. All of the above varieties are found together at Klamath (?) yes

June - 1875

23. Xanthocephalus icterocephalus, (Bonaparte) Coues. Yellow-headed Blackbird. ~~Extremely~~ abundant about the Klamath marshes (?)

Please give me a little biography - real sketch of the Meadow Lark.

23. Sturnella magna, var. neglecta, (Audubon) Allen. Western Fieldlark. No. 26, ♂ ad. Wing, 5.03; tail, 3.75; bill, 1.35; tarsus, 1.55.

Very numerous
Permanent resident
Corvus cryptoleucus
Rau - 1875

24. Scopelogadus cyanocephalus, (Wagler) Cabanis. Blue-headed Grackl; Brewer's Blackbird. No. 27, ♂ ad. Wing, 5.09; tail, 4.53; bill, .86; tarsus, 1.25. probably to 25 * 25 not on list at hospital

* Pacific Railroad Rep., Vol. II, p. 82-3, 1857
Very rare

25. Corvus americanus, var. caurinus, (Baird) Coues. Northwestern Fish Crow. No. 28, ad, 1875. Wing, 11.00; tail, 7; bill, 1.62; tarsus, 2.15. Appears to be uncommon at Klamath. Dr. Newberry remarks: "in the Klamath basin we did not see it, but it appeared again with

the oaks on the Des Chutes river etc."

X 26. Picicorvus columbianus, (Wilson) Bonaparte.
June '75 Clark's Crow. No. 29, ♀. Wing, 7.05; tail, 4.55;
bill, 1.34; tarsus, 1.33. No. 30, ♂ ad. Wing, 7.55;
tail, 4.87; bill, 1.60; tarsus, 1.35. The first spec-
-imen (No. 29, ♀) has a faint suffusion of
brownish laid over the ash of the dorsal
surface; and the bill is much shorter
and more convex.

July '75 X
Throughout summer.
Pica melanoleuca, var. tudsonica, (Sabine) Allen.
American Magpie. Found at Klamath (2)

No
Certainly seen or noticed
Pica melanoleuca, var. nuttalli, (Audubon) Coues.
Yellow-billed Magpie. Found at Klamath (2)

What other Jays do you have? June '75 X
Canada Jay
Feb. 26 1876
27. Tyrannus stellari, (Audubon) Swainson
Steller's Jay. Nos. 31, and 32, ad. ^{June, 1875} Wing, 5.70;
tail, 5.80; bill, 1.16; tarsus, 1.60.

X 28 Tyrannus verticalis, Say. Arkansas Flycatcher.
May 31 '1875 No. 33, ad., May, 1875. Wing, 4.78; tail, 3.85; bill
from nostril, .52; gape, .96; tarsus, .75.

X 29 Contopus borealis, (Quainson) Baird. Olive-sided
June 15 '1878 Flycatcher. No. 34, ad. Wing, 4.25; tail, 3.30; bill
from nostril, .52; gape, .95; tarsus, .66.

X 30. Contopus virens, var. richardsonii, (Quainson)
Coues. Western Wood Pewee. No. 35, ♀ ad., May, 1875.
Wing, 3.27; tail, 2.75; bill from nostril, .35; tarsus, .54.
No. 36, ♂ ad. Wing, 3.48; tail, 2.93; bill from nostril, .38;
tarsus, .56

Night Hawk
Bull Bat
C. virginianus
June 1875

You must shoot
some and put
them in alcohol
for a few days;
then send by
mail, and I will
skin them!

Nov. 1. 75

Trochilidae. - Hummingbirds. * Abundant at
Klamath. Species not determined.

Colaptes, S. rufus

X 31. Ceryle alcyon (Linné) Boie. Belted Kingfisher.
No. 37, ♀ ad. Wing, 6.40; tail, 4.25; bill from
frontal feathers, 2; Abundant at Klamath ^{4/2} (?)

June 75

X 32. Picus villosus, var. harrisi (Audubon) Allen.
Harris' Woodpecker. No. 38, ♂ ad., June, 1875.
Wing, 5; tail, 3.55; bill, 1.40; tarsus, .81.
Numerous among the pines (?)

May. 75

X 33. Sphyrapicus varius, var. ruber, (Gmelin) Baird.
Red-breasted Woodpecker. No. 39, ♂ ad. Wing, 4.65;
tail, 3.40; bill, .96; tarsus, .77.

May 10/75

X 34. Melanerpes formicivorus, (Swainson) Bonaparte.
Lewis' Woodpecker. No. 40, ♂ ad., April, 1875.
Wing, 6.62; tail, 4.38; bill, 1.18; tarsus, .95; No.
41, ♀ ad., April, 1875. Wing, 6.50; tail, 3.82; bill,
1.23; tarsus, .92.

June 15/75

35. Colaptes mexicanus, Swainson. Red-
-shafted Flicker. No. 42, ♀ ad. Wing, 6.56; tail, 5.20;
bill, 1.53; gape, 1.72; tarsus, 1.10.

Cooper's Hawk
Chicken Hawk
Sept. 2 1875

Lamer Falcon
F. mexicanus

Rusty Capped Falcon
Sparrow Hawk
Aug. 1875

X 36. Circus cyaneus, var. hudsonius, Gmelin.
Marsh Hawk; Harrier. No. 43, ♂ ad. (bluish
plumage), June, 1875. Wing, 12.90; tail, 9;
bill from ~~base~~ of cere, .65; tarsus, 2.85. No. 44,
♂ juv., 1875. Wing, 12.95; tail, 9.75; bill from
cere, .63; tarsus, 2.90.

37. Nisus fuscus, (Gmelin) Bonaparte. Sharp-
-shinned Hawk. No. 45, ♀ ad., 1875. Wing, 7.98;
tail, 7.15; bill from cere, .48; tarsus, 2.10.

38. Buteo swainsoni, var. ————— (?)
Swainson's Buzzard. No. 46 ***

Bondion haliaetus (Linné) Savigny. Fish Hawk;
Osprey. Numerous on the rivers and about
the Klamath lakes (breeds?) ^{Summer} residents.

Haliaetus leucocephalus, (Linné) Savigny
White-headed Eagle. Common along the
rivers and especially so at the head of
~~upper~~ Klamath lake (?) (Breeds?)

39. Aegialitis vociferus, (Linné) Cassin. Killdeer
Plover. No. 47. Wing, 6.34; tail, 4.33; bill,
.75; tarsus, 1.40.

40. Himantopus nigricollis, Vieillot. Stilt.
No. 48, ad. Wing, 8.37; tail, 3.20; bill, 2.47;
tarsus, 3.93; middle toe (without claw), 1.36.

41. Steganopus wilsoni (^{Sabine} ~~Gemmick~~) ^{Gouss} Bonaparte.
Wilson's Phalarope. No. 49, ad., 1875. Wing, 4.65;
tail, 2.40; ~~bill~~ tarsus, 1.22.

42. Gallinago wilsoni (Gemmick) Bonaparte.
Wilson's Snipe. No. 50 ad. Wing, 5.10; tail, 2.92;
bill, 2.65; tarsus, 1.19.

Specimen
packed away.
A very interesting
bird; will send it
to Ridgway, at
Washington, for
his opinion etc.

43. Totanus melanoleucus, Gmelin. Greater
Sill-tail. No. 51, ad. Wing, 6.97; tail, 3.28;
bill, 2.01; tarsus, 2.25.

44. Totanus solitarius, Wilson. Solitary Tattler.
No. 52, ad. Wing, 5.18; tail, 2.66; bill, 1.20; tar-
sus, 1.23.

45. Grus americanus, (Linné) Ord. Whooping
Crane; White Crane. No. 53 ***.

x 46. Rallus virginianus, Linné. Virginia
Rail. No. 54, ad. Wing, 4; tail, 1.82; bill, 1.60;
gape, 1.62; tarsus, 1.38.

also
Common Rail
Carolina rail
June 17.75
Yellow rail

Anser ——— (?) Goose - sent to Dr.
Cous - what species (?)

packed away
at present.

47 Crismatura rubida (Wilson) Bonaparte.
Ruddy Duck. No. 55, ♂, adult breeding
plumage ***

48 Hydrochelidon lariformis (Linné) Leves
Black Tern. No. 56, adult breeding
plumage. Wing, 7.67; tail, 3.55; bill, 1.07;
tarsus, 5.9.

48 species - 56 specimens. Besides Dr.
Cous Goose - we must find out about it

List of Birds whose occurrence at Klamath
is probable - to be looked for etc.

1. Turdus swainsoni, var. instutatus, Nutt. oreg.
Oregon Thrush.
2. Cinclus mexicanus, Sw. Water Owl; Depper.
Clear streams in the mountains - flies under
water - special desideratum.
4. Regulus satrapa & calendula - Golden, and Ruby
- crowned Kinglets - (Evergreens; very small.)
5. Parus rufescens, Townsend. Chestnut backed Chickadee.
6. Sitta carolinensis, variety aculeata - Slender billed (White
- bellied) Nutcracker - (Bluish bird; habits of a woodpecker)
7. Sitta canadensis - Red-bellied Nutcracker - (smaller
than above; red belly; habits same.)
8. Certhia familiaris - Brown Creeper. (Long, slender,
decurved bill; creeps on trunks of pines & cedars)
9. Troglodytes osoletus. Rock Wren. ("This Wren
was found inhabiting piles of ^{broken} trap rock on the shores
of Klamath lakes etc" (Merriam's Report))
10. Thryothorus spilurus. Western Wren (Fallen logs)
11. Telmatorhynchus palustris. Marsh Wren (Reedy
marshes) There are several other Wrens.
12. Alauda alpestris. Horned Lark; Skylark.
13. Helminthophaga ruficapilla. - Nashville Warbler.
(special desiderata; low bushes)
14. Helminthophaga celata - Orange-crowned Warbler.
15. Dendroica nigrescens, (Townsend) Baird. Black-
throated Gray Warbler - Good specimen a special
desideratum - for my cabinet.
16. Dendroica coronata - Yellow-rumped Warbler.
Special desideratum; like the two beautiful Audubon's Warblers
you sent me; but without yellow on throat etc; habits same
17. Lanius naevius; Water Wagtail; Water Thrush
(has the tilting motion of sandpiper; frequents brooks & ponds)
18. Geothlypis trichas; Maraland Yellowthroat (Sides
of head black; on the ground)
19. Icteria virens. Yellow-breasted Chat. (Makes
ridiculous noise; turns summersaults in the air etc.)
20. Lichyocineta thalassina; Violet Green Swallow
21. Petrochelidon lunifrons - Cliff Swallow - (special
desideratum; wings, head & tail will do.)
22. Icthyophaga similis - Rough-winged Swallow.
(Breeds in holes in banks &c.)

23. Progne subis. Purple Martin -
24. Ampelis cedrorum. Cedar Bird - (Gorge crest on head; eat berries of juniper (cedar).)
25. Myiadestes townsendii. Townsend's Flycatching Thrush. Good specimen very desirable - (Mountains; canyons; cedar trees on rocky places; sings deliciously)
26. Loxia americana. - Cross-bill Special desiderata - found in the ^{yellow} pines feeding on cones)
27. Chrysomitris - Goldfinches - (several species; flight undulatory; found where you find the Goshawk Finch)
28. Sparrows & Buntings - Lots of 'em.
29. Icterus bullockii; Bullock's Oriole? (don't know about finding it so high up)
30. Corvus corax, var. carnivorus. Raven. Special desiderata - good skin.
31. Gymnokitta cyanocephala, (Maxim!) Bonaparte Blue Crow; Cassin's Jay; Maximilian's Jay. Very specially a desideratum
32. Apelocoma floridana var. ~~floridana~~ californica California Jay. Special desiderata; probably not found at such an altitude.
33. Picisorex canadensis Canada Jay; Whiskey Jack very special desideratum
34. Flycatchers; several of 'em.
35. Antrostomus nuttalli. - Nuttall's Whippoorwill
36. Panyptila saxatilis, White-throated or Rock Swift Inhabit ledges of rock (near water?) fly very high. Very special desideratum
37. Chaetura vanxi Chimney Swift
38. Three species of Hummingbirds - all special desiderata.
39. Woodpeckers - Several species

Hawks, Owls, Vultures, Eagles, Pigeons, ducks, geese, gulls, terns, waders, divers etc etc.