

- Dendroica tigrina* (Gmel.). — Seven specimens.
Dendroica petechia gundlachi Baird. — Common, breeds.
Dendroica maculosa (Gmel.). — Six specimens, Oct. 6-21.
Dendroica striata (Forst.). — Thirty-six specimens.
Dendroica blackburniæ (Gmel.). — Two specimens, Oct. 12.
Dendroica dominica (Linn.). — Six specimens.
Dendroica virens (Gmel.). — Oct. 12, male.
Dendroica palmarum (Gmel.). — Oct. 20, female.
Dendroica discolor (Vieill.). — Twenty-five specimens.
Seiurus aurocapillus (Linn.). — Thirteen specimens.
Mimus gundlachi Caban.
Margarops fuscatus (Vieill.).

INAGUA.

- Gallinula galeata* (Licht.). — July 17.
Tringa minutilla Vieill. — July 28.
Totanus flavipes (Gmel.). — July 28.
Myiarchus sagræ Gundl.
Loxigilla violacea (Linn.).
Vireo olivaceus (Linn.). — Sept. 17, female.
Vireo crassirostris (Bryant).
Cœreba bahamensis (Reich.).
Helmitherus vermivorus (Gmel.). — Sept. 22, female.
Dendroica petechia gundlachi Baird.
Mimus gundlachi Caban.

 NOTES ON THE RANGE AND HABITS OF THE
 CAROLINA PARRAKEET.

BY AMOS W. BUTLER.

THE CAROLINA PARRAKEET (*Conurus carolinensis*), whose range is now confined to quite restricted areas in some of our southern States, was formerly known as a characteristic bird of Indiana. At the time of its greatest range in that State, within historic times, it was known from New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to Kansas, Nebraska, and possibly Colorado. It is my desire to present some evidence tending to show its distribution in Indiana and neighboring States together with some notes upon its habits.

In 1831 Audubon notes them from the vicinity of Cincinnati, and states: "Our Parakeets are very rapidly diminishing in number, and in some districts, where twenty-five years ago they were plentiful, scarcely any are now to be seen. At that period [1806] they could be procured as far up the tributary waters of the Ohio as the Great Kanawha, the Scioto, the heads of the Miami, the mouth of the Manimée (Maumee) at its junction with Lake Erie, on the Illinois River and sometimes as far northeast as Lake Ontario. At the present day very few are to be found higher than Cincinnati, and it is not until you reach the mouth of the Ohio that Parakeets are met with in considerable numbers." Wilson after mentioning their occurrence near Lake Michigan, in latitude 42°, and also twenty-five miles northwest of Albany, N. Y., speaking of his trip down the Ohio, says of this bird: "In descending the Ohio, by myself, in the month of February, I met with the first flock of Parroquets at the mouth of the Little Scioto. I had been informed by an old and respectable inhabitant of Marietta, that they were sometimes, though rarely, seen there. I observed flocks of them afterwards at the mouth of the Great and Little Miami [the former near Lawrenceburg, Ind.], and in the neighborhood of the numerous creeks that discharge themselves into the Ohio." He also reported them in great numbers at Big Bone Lick in Kentucky.

Dr. Kirtland in 1838 says: "The Parakeets do not usually extend their visits north of the Scioto, though I am informed, perhaps on doubtful authority, that thirty years since [1808] flocks of them were seen on the Ohio at the mouth of Big Beaver, thirty miles below Pittsburg." Atwater notes them as far north as Columbus, Ohio, and Mr. M. C. Read at Talmadge, Summit Co., Ohio. Dr. F. W. Langdon reports them from Madisonville, near Cincinnati, during the summers of 1837, 1838, and 1839. Few were seen in 1840, and none after that year. Nelson in his 'Birds of Northeastern Illinois' says: "Formerly occurred. Specimens were taken in this vicinity by R. Kennicott many years ago, and Dr. H. M. Bannister informs me he has seen it in this vicinity." Mr. Robert Ridgway in his 'Ornithology of Illinois', 1889, says: "Fifty years ago [1839] it was more or less common throughout the State. The National Museum possesses a fine adult example from Illinois, . . . another from Michigan."

The earliest published notice I find of its occurrence in Indiana is in Dr. Haymond's account of the 'Birds of Southeastern Indiana' in 1856 in the Proceedings of the Philadelphia Academy. He says: "This bird was formerly very numerous along the White Water River. Several years have elapsed since any of them have been seen." The same author in his report on the Birds of Franklin County, Indiana, 1869, also alludes to their former abundance.

Some little investigation has brought to my attention a number of interesting facts. Dr. George Berry of Brookville informs me they were last seen by him in that vicinity in 1835. Mr. Peter Pelsor of Metamora formerly lived at North's Landing, Switzerland County, where in the winter of 1838-39, Parakeets were common. Prof. John Collett has informed me of its occurrence along the Wabash River as far up as Fort Wayne. He further notes that as a boy, from 1834 to 1844, he was accustomed to seeing flocks of from thirty to fifty on his father's farm in Vermilion County. Judge A. L. Roache, of Indianapolis, informs me that his father's family moved to Monroe County in 1828 when Parrakeets were common there. The family came from western Tennessee where the bird was well known and abundant. He says they were to be found in Monroe County also in 1836, and the same year, and perhaps the year after, he noted them near Rockville, Parke County. Prof. B. W. Evermann has also learned from the late Louis Bollman of the occurrence of the species in Monroe County in 1831. My father informs me that the last Parrakeets he saw in Indiana were at Merom, on the Wabash River in 1834. At that time he saw a small flock of about a dozen. He also told me of seeing a small number—perhaps six individuals—along Pogue's Run near Indianapolis. He thinks the last-mentioned observation was made in 1832. When he was a boy (1806-8) they were common about Brookville, but at that time they were noticeably less in numbers than a few years before. Prof. E. T. Cox informs me they were as numerous as Blackbirds (*Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*) when he went to New Harmony in 1826.

Mr. Fielding Beeler of Indianapolis says he was born in 1823 and grew to manhood within seven miles of the city in which he now lives, and has a very distinct recollection of the Parrakeets. They were rather rare, and he thinks they disappeared from that

vicinity about 1835. Near the site of the present village of Centerton, Morgan County, Mr. Beeler says they were more numerous. There they frequented the bottoms of White River. They were last seen in that vicinity about 1838-40.

Professor John Collett thinks the Parakeet left Indiana in 1844. This is evidently not the case. Hon. John W. Ray informs me they were observed by him in Clark County up to about 1844, and in Greene County in 1849. Mr. W. B. Seward of Bloomington informs me that these birds were well known to him from 1840 to 1850, and in many places were plentiful. The late Dr. Richard Owen a short time before his death very kindly furnished me with quite a number of valuable notes on the occurrence of this species near New Harmony, based upon observations of his own, of Mr. Sampson, and of several of the older residents of that place. Mr. Sampson remembers them as common when he went there in 1827. Further evidence is presented of their known occurrence in that vicinity in 1840, 1842, 1850, 1857, and last in 1858.

From the evidence here presented it seems that they had disappeared almost wholly from Ohio and from Indiana, save the southwestern portion, by some time between 1835 and 1840, and that they left Indiana about 1858. So far as I know, there is but one record of the recurrence of the species in the region thus vacated. The late Dr. J. M. Wheaton gives, upon what he considers good authority, an account of a flock of twenty-five or thirty individuals at Columbus, Ohio, in July, 1862. Within about thirty years from the time first referred to by Audubon the species had entirely disappeared from the territory south of a line drawn, from Chicago, Ill., to Albany, N. Y., to, approximately, a line drawn from some point in Virginia, or perhaps North Carolina, to the lower Wabash Valley. In the next forty-five years they disappeared from southwestern Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Kentucky, most of Missouri, and from the immediate vicinity of the Mississippi River, also from the States of the Atlantic coast as far south as Florida. The steady contraction of occupied area still continues. They are now perhaps found in but a few restricted localities. In the southern part of Florida they are still to be found in some numbers. Perhaps a small area in the interior of some of the Gulf States may still be occupied by them. Besides there is an area,

whose limits are undefined, in Indian Territory, extending probably into Texas and possibly into Arkansas and Missouri, where Parakeets are said to be found still. It is but natural to think that the extinction of these birds is but a question of a few years.

Not a great deal is known of the habits of these birds throughout their earlier range, but some characteristic facts are remembered, and for such as I have I am indebted to the gentlemen whose names I have mentioned. The species seems to have been present throughout the year over most, if not all, of its range, and consequently must have bred. They were currently reported to hibernate, but sometimes appear to have been active during winter. Concerning the habit of hibernation I am furnished the following note by Prof. Collett: "In 1842 Return Richmond of Lodi, Indiana, cut down, in the cold weather of winter, a sycamore tree some four feet in diameter. In its hollow trunk he found hundreds of Parakeets in a quiescent or semi-torpid condition. The weather was too cold for the birds to fly or even to make any exertion to escape. Mr. Richmond cut off with his saw a section of the hollow trunk some five feet long, cut out a doorway one foot by two in size, nailed over it a wire screen of his fanning mill, rolled this cumbersome cage into the house, and placed in it a dozen of the birds. They soon began to enjoy the feed of fruit, huckleberries and nuts he gave them, and he had the pleasure of settling absolutely the disputed question as to how they slept. At night they never rested on a perch, but suspended themselves by their beaks and with their feet on the side of the cage. This was repeated night after night during their captivity."

To Mr. W. B. Seward I am indebted for the following notes: "My first intimate acquaintance with the Parakeet was about the year 1845 when I secured a nest of young ones on the border of White River, in Owen County. The nest was in a decayed tree that had been blown down by the wind. The young birds had been secured by a farmer boy of whom I bought them soon after they had been captured. I think there were five of them. My impression now is that the nest was inside of the tree, but of this I am not now positive owing to the lapse of time and the fact that I was more interested in the pets I had secured than in the exact situation of the nest where they were hatched. But I remember that it was a much decayed tree with but few limbs, so it was hardly possible that there was a place on the outside of the tree

where a nest could have been secured. I think it may be set down as a fact that Parakeets make their nests inside of hollow trees, always selecting a tree with a side opening into the hollow near the top. I had often, before and since I secured these birds, passed through the region where they were captured, and seldom if ever passed without seeing Parakeets. It was near White River, where the road was for many miles almost always in sight of the river, with cornfields on the bottom lands and here and there a dead tree in the fields and on the river bank. Parakeets, more or less in numbers (never in flocks), could be seen flying from tree to tree. My admiration for these beautiful birds was unbounded, and I often wished I could capture one, but they were so wild that I had no hope of ever accomplishing it. The young birds I secured all lived to maturity and were kept by me for several years in a large cage made for the purpose. The special food of the Parakeet was the 'cuckle burr.' It was my custom to gather large quantities of these burrs in the fall to last until they ripened again. In eating, the bird picked up a burr with its beak, this was then delivered to one foot raised to receive it. Then one end of the burr was cut off with the sharp-ended under beak, the burr being held with the foot and the under side of the upper beak while two small kernels were extracted with the assistance of the tongue and the husk was thrown away. Parakeets will leave any other kind of food for cuckle-burrs, but will eat all kinds of nuts, if broken, and various kinds of seeds. I never knew them to eat meat of any kind. They invariably roost on the side of the cage with their beak hooked over one of the wires. It has been claimed that they roost hanging by their beak but this is a mistake. I did everything I could to induce them to breed, by providing them with nests, materials for shells, etc., but without success. I do not think they will breed in confinement. Most of the time I kept their wings cropped so that they could not fly, and allowed them much freedom in this way. They would climb into trees in the yard, but return to the cage to feed and to roost. They knew me and were pleased to have me visit them and allow them to climb on me, but would bite me the same as any one else if I put my hands on them. They were extremely fond of one another and exhibited great distress if one was absent for any length of time. I often took one or two of them away on my shoulder and was absent an hour or two, and

at such times a noisy racket was kept up till my return." Another authority speaking of these same birds says: "If at any time an accident happened to one of them, or one escaped from confinement, the household, and neighborhood as well, was aroused by their outcries. They would not be satisfied until the escaped bird was found and returned, when quiet was restored."

The Parakeets are said by Prof. Collett to be very affectionate in their wild state. It is said that when one of a flock was wounded, the others gathered about, regardless of danger, and made every effort to render assistance to their unfortunate comrade. They were very easily tamed. A crippled bird seemed at once to be contented with the cabin to which it was taken, and in a day's time would clamber over the clothing of its captor and take food from his hand.

As has been mentioned, the principal food of the Parakeet was 'cuckle-burrs' or 'cockle-burrs' (*Xanthium canadense* Mill.) which grew abundantly on the river bottoms. So great was their fondness for these burrs that everyone noticed it, and for this destruction of weed seeds they were held in high regard by farmers. They also ate pecans, acorns, beechnuts, haws, berries of the black gum, persimmons, and hackberries. Next to cuckle-burrs they preferred the last-mentioned food. In spring they were very destructive in orchards, biting out the tender shoots and eating the blossoms and young fruit. In summer and autumn they lived largely on fruit and grain. Apples, grapes, and cherries are especially mentioned. They were gregarious, moving in flocks of from six to one hundred, and are said to have been as common, in some localities, as Blackbirds (Bronzed Grackles). They are said by one authority to have alighted on an apple tree in such numbers as almost to cover it over. When the fruit was ripe, sometimes the entire crop would be destroyed. Often they seemed to destroy in a spirit of mischief. They would tear off apples and other fruits, and after taking a bite throw them to the ground, and so continue. They tore off the heads from wheat stalks, and seemed to delight in throwing them away.

The favorite haunts of these birds were along water courses and about lakes and sloughs. Especially were they abundant in the extensive bottom lands along the rivers. There it was that cuckle-burrs grew most abundantly and there were always many hollow trees suitable for their habitations. Seldom were they found away from such surroundings.

They were quite expert acrobats, and became proficient in many ways. They seemed to delight in exhibiting their ability and practical jokes to an audience whether of birds or human beings. One thing in which they were said to have delighted, in captivity, was climbing a suspended string. They were very cleanly in their habits, and are said to have bathed regularly every day at a particular spot.

All facts concerning their former distribution and their habits as noted when they ranged north of the Ohio River, are very much desired.

NINTH CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION.

THE NINTH CONGRESS of the American Ornithologists' Union was held in the Library of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, Nov. 17-19, 1891, the President, Mr. D. G. Elliot, in the chair. In the absence of the Secretary, Mr. Sage, on account of illness, Mr. C. F. Batchelder was appointed Secretary *pro tem*. There were present during the session fourteen Active Members, and thirty-two Associate Members. The present membership of the Union, as given in the report of the Secretary, is as follows: Active Members, 47; Honorary Members, 22; Corresponding Members, 72; Associate Members, 352;— Total, 493, showing an increase of 28 for the year. During the year the Union has lost by death, one Honorary Member, Dr. August von Pelzeln of Vienna, Austria; one Active Member, Col. N. S. Goss, a member of the Council, of Topeka, Kansas; and one Associate Member, Dr. J. I. Northrop of New York City. The Treasurer's report exhibited the finances of the Union in good condition, there being no liabilities, and a balance in the Treasury.

Dr. Anton Reichenow, of Berlin, Germany, was elected an Honorary Member; Dr. Max Fürbringer of Amsterdam, Holland, Ernst Hartert of London, England, and Wm. V. Legge of Hobart Town, Tasmania, were elected Corresponding Members,