

L. Irby Davis (*A Field Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Central America*, 1972, p. 129), who refers to the species as the "Swallow-tailed Flycatcher," gives the normal range as Mexico to Argentina. It is possible that tropical storm Gilda, which moved up the East Coast several weeks prior to the date of our observation, carried the flycatcher to this area. Several people attempted to relocate the bird the weekend of 3 November 1973, but without success.

[For those unfamiliar with the Fork-tailed, it is a large, kingbird-sized flycatcher with pure white underparts, a gray back, black crown, and a long black scissor-like tail. Both sexes have a concealed yellow crown patch, smaller in the female. The species is figured on plate 28 of L. Irby Davis' book and plate 29 of Peterson's new *Field Guide to the Birds of Mexico*.—JRH]

Nesting Ravens on Pilot Mountain

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On 22 March 1974 a team comprised of Fran Baldwin, Ruth Hill, Jerry Shiffert, Ramona Snavely, Paul Spain, and Park Ranger Jonathan Wild confirmed the nesting of Common Ravens (*Corvus corax*) on the pinnacle of Pilot Mountain (elevation, 2,440 feet) in Surry County, N.C. The nest was located on the east side of the pinnacle on a rock ledge with a larger rock ledge diagonally overhanging the nest on the left side. It is quite inaccessible and very difficult to reach.

The nest was a large bulky structure about 16 to 20 inches outside diameter and about 10 to 12 inches inside diameter consisting of large twigs $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. The young could not be seen in the nest because observation had to be made from below rather than above. Two and possibly three young were heard calling each time the adults approached the nest. The adults were seen carrying food but fed the young only once while we were present. Numerous photographs were taken of the nest, the surrounding habitat, and the adult birds.

A second visit was made on 7 April 1974 by Wayne Irvin and Jonathan Wild. On this occasion two young and possibly a third one were seen peering above the nest. The adults fed the young, and photographs were taken.

Sprague's Pipit in Northern South Carolina

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About 15:00 on 25 January 1973, we visited Creech's Pond in northeastern York County, S.C., approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the North Carolina state line. The area consists of large pastures with grazing cattle and two ponds, one about 4 acres in size, the other 1 acre. The smaller pond has a marshy area, and both have mud flats which attract migratory shore birds. Overwintering ducks and geese are usually present, but on this date only a Pied-billed Grebe, female Bufflehead, and Ruddy Duck were on the larger pond.

While scouring the fields for Horned Larks, William Cobey noticed what appeared to be a small dark sparrow about 50 feet away. It walked without tail-wagging, and we observed the white outer tail feathers and thin bill of a pipit. With our 30X Balscope Sr. the striped back and yellowish legs of Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) could easily be seen. A second bird soon appeared from behind a grass clump, then a third popped up even closer. We watched them through the scope for 15 minutes before they flew away without

calling. In spite of the overcast day, even the whitish breasts with faint streaking were visible.

The similarity between Creech's Pond and the habitat in North Carolina reported by Silcock (*Chat*, 37:25) is striking. At Creech's Pond the pipits were seen near the dam in a dry area regularly frequented by Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*). Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) usually are seen nearby.

Sprague's Pipit was added to the South Carolina State List by A.T. Wayne, who collected a specimen near Mt. Pleasant in Charleston County, 24 November 1893 (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 421). Another was taken in the same area 17 November 1900, and a third was seen 1 November 1904. It was not until 46 years later in 1950 that the species was again seen in South Carolina in the Columbia area (*ibid*, p. 620). During the winters of 1956 and 1957, R.A. Norris collected one specimen and observed several others in the AEC Savannah River Plant area near Aiken. The species is reported by Shuler (*South Carolina Birds of the Foothills*, 1966, p. 50) as rare in the piedmont. There are but two published records for North Carolina (*Chat*, 23:89; 37:25). The record reported here and those of recent years may indicate that Sprague's Pipit is not as rare in the Carolinas as formerly supposed.

Sharp-tailed Sparrows in Northwestern South Carolina

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On 19 May 1974 I observed two Sharp-tailed Sparrows (*Ammodramus caudacuta nelsoni*) in Anderson County in northwestern South Carolina. The birds were of the Nelson's race, which nests from northwestern Minnesota to southern Northwest Territories and winters along the coast from South Carolina to Texas (Bent, *Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows, and Allies*, 1968, p. 819).

I was walking along the damp edge of a marsh about 2 miles S of Townville when a sparrow flushed from foot-high grass in front of me. I identified the bird as a Sharp-tailed Sparrow the second time it flushed from the grass, but not until it was flushed for the fourth time did it alight in a small bush. I approached the bird to within 18 feet and studied it in excellent light for 2 minutes. The bright ochre-orange color of the breast and face was easily noticed, as were the white stripes on the back, the solid dark crown, and the almost total lack of streaking on the breast and sides. A minute later and 50 yards from the first bird, I flushed a second bird from short grass along the marsh edge and into a small bush. This individual was even brighter-colored on the breast, face, and back than the first bird. Unlike the dark ear patches characteristic of the Eastern race (*A. c. caudacuta*), these birds had pale brown auriculars.

South Carolina Bird Life (Sprunt and Chamberlain, 1970) contains no inland records for the Sharp-tailed Sparrow, and a search through issues of the *Chat* and *American Birds* for the past several years failed to reveal any inland records; thus, this is apparently the first record for inland South Carolina. Sidney A. Gauthreaux and I reviewed regional bird books and *American Birds* to determine the spring status of this species in the southeastern United States, concentrating especially on inland records. The species appears to be a very rare, though a perhaps regular, migrant in the inland portions of the Southeast. It has a remarkably late migration period for a sparrow, as nearly all of the inland records fall between 15 and 25 May. Since the species regularly remains on its wintering grounds along the Gulf and southern Atlantic coasts until about 10 May, according to regional bird books, its occurrence in the inland portions of the Southeast during the latter half of May is not unexpected. Presumably the birds I saw had wintered on the southern Atlantic coast and were migrating to the northwest when they were discovered in Anderson County.