

THE BEWICK'S WREN IN NEW YORK STATE

PETER PAUL KELLOGG

In mid-January 1954 Mrs. Davis Daboll of West Lake Road, Auburn, New York, called Dr. Sarah F. Hoyt at Cornell to report that she and her neighbor, Mrs. Earl Coalson, had just decided that the bird at their feeding station, thought to be a Carolina Wren, was apparently a Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewicki*). The bird appeared to be very tame about the feeding station and several times it had been caught in a trap by accident so that observers had a good opportunity to see it at close range.

Both Mrs. Hoyt and the writer made trips to Auburn in an effort to see the bird but it never came to the feeding station while either of us was there.

In late January Mr. Daboll photographed the bird on the feeding station with color film. These films were brought to Cornell on 6 February, and we were convinced that this Auburn bird was a Bewick's Wren, as the films show the diagnostic whitish tipping and barring to the outer tail feathers.

Correspondence by Mrs. Hoyt with Dr. Kenneth Parkes of the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, who is perhaps the most recent worker on the birds of New York State, brought the report from Parkes that he believes there is no specimen of a Bewick's Wren from New York State although there are two sight records for New York City. (*Audubon Field Notes*, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 236.)

After I had told about the Bewick's Wren over Station WHCU and the Rural Radio Network on 6 February I received the following letter from Mrs. Arthur W. Cowell of 144 Ridge Avenue, State College, Pennsylvania.

February 11, 1954

"We spend the summer on East side of Keuka Lake. Last summer I drove into the yard of Mrs. Florence Taylor who has an Antique Shop about a mile south of Penn Yan on east side of lake. The house faces the lake with a yard at the back. There are trees, etc. On either side of the yard, separated by the width of the lot, perhaps 100 feet, are poles bearing wren houses.

"As we drove in I noticed both houses were occupied but by different species of wrens. One was a Bewick. I said to Mrs. Taylor, 'You have a rare wren here.' And she replied: 'I thought one of them acted funny.'

"Had I known that the bird had never been seen in the district I would have asked someone to look into it with me. I am familiar with the bird. They are not common here but are usually seen and have nested several times. I have read that the house wren and Bewick are not compatible but Dr. Clyde Todd, author of 'Birds of Western Pennsylvania,' doubts this. My find, for which I should have no particular credit because the two birds were plain as day, would substantiate this.

"Your broadcast of last week made me recall this happening."

On 16 February 1954 I received the following post card communication from Mrs. C. Castle Cunnings of 189 Wall Street, Corning, New York.

"One day in the last week of November, a friend who lives two blocks away called to ask about a strange bird under the damp shrubs in her yard. From her description, I suggested the Carolina

Wren which we have found in two places on Keuka Lake. On Dec. 4th I was amazed to see *two Bewick* wrens in my own yard. I was away a few days and did not see them again, probably one was the bird she saw."

That we have had so few records of this Wren in the past, and these three reports within a year suggests that the Bewick's Wren may be extending its range and perhaps should be placed high on the list of birds to watch for during the coming season.

It is possible that this report will bring out hitherto unknown records for the State either in the form of skins or as sight records.

Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell, Univ.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Cormorant Bill

The Cormorant Bill passed the New York State Senate and Assembly, and has been signed by the Governor. Thus, the Double-crested Cormorant and the Common or European Cormorant are protected birds under Section 203 of the New York State Conservation Law. We again wish to thank Hi Clements for laying the groundwork, President Harold Mitchell for his support, Messrs. Alvin G. Whitney and Samuel Adams for appearing before committees in Albany, and all the members of the Federation, who responded in behalf of the Cormorant.

More Dam Business

During the very last hours of the New York State Legislature, a bill was passed authorizing the construction of Panther Mountain Dam. This was done without warning, and our real fight will be next year, when the bill must be passed again.

Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument has received the approval of President Eisenhower and it is now up to Congress to act. If we wish to prevent a dangerous precedent of having our National Parks and Monuments violated by special interest groups, we must write our U. S. Senators and Representatives in strong protest. Echo Park Dam will be only one of a series of dams, which are being planned for this scenic area.

Stanley Oliver Grierson, Conservation Chairman.

FEDERATION NEWS

Our next annual meeting will be held Aug. 28-29 at Ithaca, New York. Hosts will be the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University, The Cayuga Bird Club and the Cornell Field Ornithology Club. The Chairman of the Program Committee for this meeting is Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg.

The Cornell University Press, 124 Roberts Place, Ithaca, released on March 15 a record called, *The Mockingbird Sings*. One individual Mockingbird imitates, with near perfection, the songs of more than thirty species. Price \$2.50.

Hi Clements has just received word from Mrs. Joseph F. Weiler, treasurer of the Baldwin Bird Club, that the Veterans Bird Club of the Northport Veterans Hospital is no longer in existence.