

Vermilion Flycatcher

21 Nov 1954

Carter L., Pottawattamie Co., IA

R. G. Cortelyou

IBL 65:83

Record Number: 94-AG

Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Rapp, W. F. Jr. 1955. The Vermilion Flycatcher in Nebraska. Nebraska Bird Review 23:28-29.

Records Committee: IBL 65:83

VOTE: 7 NA

NA, Not in Iowa.

NA, Although an easy bird to identify, this report offers no description, not to mention the fact that the State in which it was found is not clear.

NA, Not in Iowa.

NA, Odds are good that this bird was in Iowa, but lack of information makes it hard for either state to claim it.

NA, No description. Not stated as to whether in Iowa or Nebraska.

NA, Cannot tell if this record was in Iowa from what is given, could have been on Nebraska side of Carter Lake.

NA, Bird was in NE. I spoke with Rusty Cortelyou 11/11/94: the bird was at the northwest corner of the lake, near the buildings at that location. This is clearly in NE. Note: virtually all of the lake is in Iowa.

not confined to evening flights to the roost, nor was it concerned with anything peculiar to a city.

In response to a preliminary report concerning the behaviorism (Bliese and Hendrickson, 1952), Doctors Frank and Mary Roberts (1953) commented having seen similar behavior among Gulls at Spirit Lake, Iowa. They suggested that dipping might be performed "to take advantage of the shifting air currents . . ." or that it might be "an old pattern, developed to avoid raptorial birds which may be waiting in the neighborhood of roosts".

Because the dipping behavior became more prominent with the season, as the flocks increased in size, the writer has been inclined to believe that it was probably related to the organization of the flocks. Shifting air currents did not seem adequate to explain the waves of dipping seen at Ames, nor the extreme localness of the behavior such as observed when only two or three birds out of a huge flock performed. Neither did they explain the manner of flight when it occurred on a calm or nearly calm day. On the basis of shifty air currents the performances should have been more frequent on gusty or windy days, but such was not noted.

When the commonness of this behaviorism at Ames is considered, clear mention of it is conspicuously absent in the literature, as far as the writer was able to determine. It seems that dipping has either been overlooked or that it has been taken for granted.

Does dipping occur in Nebraska or is it confined to points farther east? The writer is planning to observe closely the flights of birds to the Kearney "blackbird" roost this coming year, and would be interested in hearing from observers in other parts of the state.

#### Literature Cited

- Bliese, John C. W. and Hendrickson, George O.  
1952 The "dipping" of Bronzed Grackles. *Iowa Bird Life*, 22 (2): 22-23.
- Roberts, Frank and Mary  
1953 Notes on the flight habits of birds. *Iowa Bird Life*, 23 (2): 36.  
Nebraska State Teachers College, Kearney, Nebraska.

## The Vermilion Flycatcher in Nebraska

by William F. Rapp, Jr.

On November 15, 1954 Doris B. Gates and Mrs. Glen Viehmeyer identified at the University of Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station, south of North Platte, what they felt was an immature Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus* spp.). The bird continued to stay in the shrubs around the building at the Experiment Station and was seen on several occasions. On December 11, 1954 Doris B. Gates collected the specimen which proved to be an immature male Vermilion Flycatcher. The bird was mounted and is now in the collection of the Hastings Museum.

On November 21, 1954 Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Cortelyou, who were birding at Carter Lake, Omaha, also identified a Vermilion Flycatcher. They were able to watch the bird at close range for a long time before it flew away.

According to Bent (1942:308) the limits for the species are as follows: "north to southern California; southern Nevada; southern Utah; New

Mexico; and southern Texas."

Dr. Harrison B. Tordoff has told me that there are several reliable sight records for the bird in Kansas.

The collecting of a Vermilion Flycatcher in Nebraska poses an interesting ornithological problem. In 1934 the late A. J. van Rossem divided the Vermilion Flycatchers into two subspecies—an eastern and western race. The western form he called *P. r. flammeus* and the eastern form is called *mexicanus*. The range (Auk 61:452) of the Western Vermilion Flycatcher is: "Southeastern California, southeastern Utah and southwestern New Mexico to Nayarit." The range of the Eastern Vermilion Flycatcher is now limited to southern Texas and northern Mexico. Many ornithologists feel that the eastern race is nonmigratory, whereas the western race is migratory. Grinnell and Miller (1944:264) writing about the Western Vermilion Flycatcher in California state: "partially emigrant, reaching in winter and spring territory outside of breeding range." This last statement may partially explain the occurrence of at least two individuals in Nebraska. However, until some student of Flycatchers examines the North Platte specimen, we will have to be content to call our bird simply Vermilion Flycatcher.

#### Literature Cited

- Bent, Arthur Cleveland. 1942. Life Histories of North American Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows and their Allies. *United States National Museum Bulletin* 179.
- Grinnell, Joseph and Alden H. Miller. 1944. The Distribution of the Birds of California. *Pacific Coast Avifauna*, Number 27.
- Wetmore, Alexander. 1944. Nineteenth Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds. *The Auk* 61:441-464.  
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## Some Birds of The Quicourt Valley

by Wm. Youngworth

Before Lewis and Clark made their historic exploration of the Missouri River Valley, the French voyageurs had named a clear, rushing river in what is now northern Nebraska the Quicourt or Rapid River. Others who followed Lewis and Clark, such as the Astoria party in 1811, mentioned camping on the beautiful banks of the Quicourt. Here, too, the well known English naturalist, John Bradbury, sent out by the Linnaean Society of Liverpool to collect plants, would have lost his life to savage Indians had his comrades not rounded a bend in the Missouri River at the opportune time. Thomas Nuttall, the botanist, was a member of the boat's party.

Audubon and other naturalists tell of the beautiful Quicourt River pouring into the muddy waters of the Missouri. Most of these explorers did not penetrate beyond the mouth of the Quicourt, which, unfortunately, has been renamed the Niobrara. French trappers did, however, make their way up the brawling stream. The late Frederick M. Dille and the writer were shown cabin sites of these hardy rovers along the south bank of the

(Town)  
Carter Lake is in Iowa  
half of lake is in Iowa

94-A-G