

FIRST RECORD OF WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER FROM LOUISIANA

J. V. Remsen, Jr., Museum of Natural Science,
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803

On 14 November 1982, I glimpsed a male Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) in brushy deciduous woods at Garner Ridge, 3 miles west of Johnsons Bayou School, Cameron Parish, Louisiana, 1.5 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico coastline. The bird immediately flew out of sight but then returned to the same trees about 45 minutes later, where relocated by Steven W. Cardiff; it was also seen by Melissa Allen, Tristan J. Davis, and Thomas S. Schulenberg. It was subsequently collected by the author. The specimen (Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology #107748; prepared by Cardiff) was a juvenal male with skull 0% ossified and testes 1.5 X 1 mm; it weighed 48.1 g, had little subcutaneous fat, and was not molting; its stomach contained a few small ants and three purplish fruits with pale seeds 4 X 4 X 2 mm. Bill measurements (length of exposed culmen 24.1 mm, depth at base 6.5 mm) indicate that the specimen can be referred to the Rocky Mountain-Great Basin subspecies *S. t. nataliae* (Swarth 1917; measurements in Ridgway (1914) and Oberholser and Kincaid (1974)). The A.O.U. Check-list (1983) erred in stating that this species winters

throughout its breeding range; northern populations of both subspecies are completely migratory, with virtually no winter records from Oregon, Utah, and Colorado north (Gabrielson and Jewett 1940, Bailey and Niedrach 1965, Godfrey 1966, Burleigh 1972, Behle and Perry 1975, Hayward *et al.* 1976).

This specimen represents the first record for Louisiana (Schulenberg 1984) and one of the very few from the United States east of 96° W. Longitude. Although this species is recorded regularly outside the breeding season in the lowlands of the western United States away from its coniferous forest breeding habitat (AOU 1983), records from the United States east of the Rocky Mountains are few; for example: (1) a sight record of a male from Minnesota on 25 May 1981 (Fitch and Fitch 1981), and a weakly documented sight record of a female from Minnesota on 22 April 1972 (Hatelid 1972); (2) a sight record from Chicago, Illinois, 17 April 1985 (Peterjohn 1985); (3) a bird photographed in South Dakota on 23-24 April 1975 (Whitney *et al.* 1978); (4) an unspecified number of records from the plains of eastern Colorado, where Bailey and Niedrach (1965) considered it to be "rare on plains"; (5) a sight record from

Kansas on 4 April 1935 (Johnson 1965) (6) a specimen from western Oklahoma on 11 November 1967 (Wood and Schnell 1984); (7) an unspecified number of records in the lowlands of eastern New Mexico (Hubbard 1970); and (8) numerous records from western and central Texas, where Oberholser and Kincaid (1974) considered this species to be a "scarce to rare and irregular visitor" to the Trans-Pecos area and northern Panhandle of Texas, with an additional sight record from Austin on 5 Oct. 1963; three Texas specimens were referred to the subspecies *nataliae*. More recent records from central and eastern Texas include: a sight record of a male at Austin on 9-22 Feb. 1977 (Webster 1977); a sight record of an "imm." male at Austin on 28 Nov. 1977 (Webster 1978); a male photographed at Austin 11 Nov. 1983 to Feb. 1984 (Lasley 1984, Lasley and Sexton 1984); a sight record on the 1982 Freeport Christmas Count (Arnold 1983); a sight record on the College Station Christmas Count on 18 Dec. 1976; and a sight record from High Island, Galveston Co., 18 Oct. 1975 (Webster 1976). Thus, most records east of the Rocky Mountains are from the western Great Plains, and the Louisiana record represents the easternmost record other than the subsequent record from Illinois. Vagrant individuals far east of the Rockies have been found mainly from mid-October through mid-December and in April.

I thank Steven W. Cardiff, Greg W. Lasley, and Keith A. Arnold for

comments on the manuscript.

Literature Cited

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION. 1983. Check-list of North American Birds, 6th Edition. AOU. Lawrence, Kansas.

ARNOLD, K. A. 1983. The eighty-third Audubon Christmas Count. Texas. Amer. Birds, 37:400-401.

BAILEY, A. M., & R. J. NIEDRACH. 1965. Birds of Colorado. Vol. II. Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver.

BEHLE, W. H. & M. L. PERRY. 1975. Utah Birds. Utah Mus. Natural Hist., Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake.

BURLEIGH, T. D. 1972. Birds of Idaho. Caxton, Caldwell, Idaho.

FITCH, P. & O. FITCH. 1981. Minnesota's second Williamson's Sapsucker. Loon 53:232-234.

GODFREY, W. E. 1966. The birds of Canada. National Museums Canada Bull. No. 203.

HATELID, H. 1972. The possible sighting of a Williamson's Sapsucker in Worthington, Minnesota. Loon 44:52-53.

HAYWARD, C. L., C. COTTAM, A.

- M. WOODBURY, & H. H. FROST. 1976. Birds of Utah. Great Basin Natur. Memoirs No. 1.
- HUBBARD, J. P. 1970. Check-list of the birds of New Mexico. New Mexico Ornithol. Soc. Publ. No. 3.
- JOHNSTON, R. F. 1965. A directory to the birds of Kansas. Museum of Natural History, Univ. Kansas., Lawrence.
- LASLEY, G. W. 1984. The autumn migration. South Texas Region. Amer. Birds 38:221-223.
- _____ & C. SEXTON. 1984. The winter season. South Texas Region. Amer. Birds 38:334-336.
- OBERHOLSER, H. C., & E. B. KINCAID. 1974. The bird life of Texas. Univ. of Texas Press, Austin.
- PETERJOHN, B. G. 1985. The spring season. Middlewestern Prairie Region. Amer. Birds 39: 305-310.
- RIDGWAY, R. 1914. The Birds of North and Middle America, Part VI, Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus., No. 50.
- SCHULENBERG, T. S. 1984. Third annual report of the Louisiana Ornithological Society Bird Records Committee. LOS News 107: 1-5.
- SWARTH, H. S. 1917. Geographical variation in *Sphyrapicus thyroideus*. Condor 19:62-65.
- WEBSTER, F. S. 1976. The fall migration. South Texas Region. Amer. Birds 31:349-351.
- _____ 1977. The winter season. South Texas Region. Amer. Birds 31: 349-351.
- _____ 1978. The autumn migration. South Texas Region. Amer. Birds 32:227-230.
- WHITNEY, N. R., B. E. HARRELL, B. K. HARRIS, N. HOLDEN, J. W. JOHNSON, B. J. ROSE, & P. F. SPRINGER. 1978. The birds of South Dakota. South Dakota Ornithologists' Union, Vermillion, South Dakota.
- WOOD, D. S., & G. D. SCHNELL. 1984. Distributions of Oklahoma birds. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman.