

We at first presumed that a porcupine had wandered into the nest, which was accessible from the top of the cliff, until we returned the young birds to their nest and found the remains of a porcupine in it. This poses a few interesting but unanswered, questions; did the adults actually kill the porcupine in search of food? had the porcupine been attacked and killed in defence of the nest? or had

the adults found a dead porcupine and simply carried parts of it away to feed the young? In any case, one can only speculate as to what the condition of the adults is, or was. Other than the swellings where the quills had been pulled from, the young seemed in good shape, and the adults also showed no sign of handicap as they protested our presence at the eyrie.

NEW SIGHTING OF BAND-TAILED PIGEON IN ALBERTA

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On August 16, 1968, at 4:30 p.m., my mother, Mrs. C. Eric Wilson, and I were walking along Ribbon Creek road in the front range country west of Calgary. We were about a half-mile west of the point where this road meets the Coleman-Kananaskis highway, 16 miles south of the latter's northern terminus on Highway 1 from Calgary to Banff. At this point, I spotted an unidentified pigeon, perched 30 feet up in a dead birch or poplar tree, some 60 yards away from us. Together we observed it for a short time with seven-power binoculars. After about three minutes, I attempted to make my way closer to the bird through an intervening deadfall, but the bird immediately flew away.

The observed characteristics of this bird were as follows:

1. Size comparable with that of the domestic Rock Dove: approximately 15 inches.
2. Overall coloration dominated by greys.
3. Tail broad and rounded, not pointed.
4. Tail marked with darker grey or black, but details uncertain due to shadow effects of a branch near the tail.
5. A distinct white collar or nape, well displayed because upper part of body was bathed in sunlight with no shadows.
6. Habitat: a forested intermontane valley.

7. Behaviour: perching in a tree, more wary than Rock Dove.

All of these characteristics agree well with descriptions of the Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*). The coloration, especially dark bands on the tail and the white nape, are pointed out by Peterson (1961, p. 149) as diagnostic of the species. Furthermore, Peterson states that the bird "might be mistaken for Rock Dove except for its woodland or mountain habitat and greater tendency to alight in trees."

This is the second record of the Band-tailed Pigeon from Alberta, and the first one from the mountains of the province. A specimen was secured on July 27, 1967, at Leduc, Alberta, by Mr. Harvey Burns (Halladay, 1968). The status of this species in Alberta is as yet undetermined.

The Band-tailed Pigeon is locally common in southwestern British Columbia, and is confined to that area west of the Cascade Mountains (Brooks and Swarth, 1925; p. 53). It is possible that prevailing westerly winds could facilitate the passage of some birds of this population over the mountains into Alberta.

LITERATURE CITED

- Brooks, Allan, and H. S. Swarth. 1925. A distributional list of the birds of British Columbia. Cooper Ornithological Club. Pacific Coast Avifauna, Number 17.
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- Peterson, Roger Tory. 1961. A field guide to western birds. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.