

THE BIRDS OF THE ISTHIMUS OF PANAMA

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The long, narrow Panamanian Isthmus is definitely tropical in the variety of its birds, with 865 species recorded within the limits of its 29,306 square miles, and the seas adjacent. The number may not seem impressive until it is recalled that in the vast region of North America north of México only 800 living kinds are known. The overall relationship of the resident Panamanian avifauna is to southern Central America and northern South America, in particular to Costa Rica on the west and Colombia to the south. In the latter, with sixteen times the land area and far greater expanse in the higher elevations, 1,592 species of birds, or less than twice the number in Panamá, are recorded.

In the Panamanian list 145 kinds are migrant visitors that come annually in their escape from northern winter. Part of these are birds of passage through Panamá, to and from wintering grounds in South America, but many remain to add their number for a period of months to the population of the resident avifauna. In addition to those from the north, there are at least six kinds that arrive annually in June or July as migrants from southern South America in escape from the southern winter season. Two of these are species of swallows that may appear in considerable number.

Other than the migrants and a few casual visitors, there are 670 species of birds that are definitely resident on the Isthmus. Aside from aquatic species and others of wide distribution, few of these appear northern in origin. The exceptions include the meadowlark, pipit, and grasshopper sparrow of the savannas; the junco on the Chiriquí volcano; the hairy woodpecker

