



**Winter Range of the Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*) in Florida**

According to the *A.O.U. Checklist* (1957:535-6) the winter range of the Rusty Blackbird extends to northern Florida as far south as New Smyrna Beach and Cedar Keys. This limit has been cited by later authors (e.g. Bent, *U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 211, 1958:296; McCaskie, *Calif. Birds*, 2, 1971:55) Recent Florida records sug-

Table 1. Sight Records of *Euphagus carolinus* in southern Florida

Date	Location	Reference
Dec. 1916	Princeton (Dade Co.)	Florida Bird Life p. 432, 1932
Oct. 1917	Royal Palm Park (Dade Co.)	Florida Bird Life p. 432, 1932
Feb. 1924	Sanibel	Florida Bird Life p. 432, 1932
Mar. 1932	U.S. 41 & S.R. 94	L.A. Stimson, pers. comm.
Feb. 1933	Florida City	L.A. Stimson, pers. comm.
Dec. 1938	Immokalee	Florida Naturalist 12:96, 1939
Jan. 1946	Fakahatchee Swamp	Florida Naturalist 20:52, 1947
Dec. 1956	Hallandale	Aud. Field Notes 11:133, 1957
Dec. 1958	Fort Myers	Aud. Field Notes 13:152, 1959
Dec. 1960	Fort Myers	Aud. Field Notes 15:173, 1961
Dec. 1962	Coot Bay	Aud. Field Notes 17:158, 1963
Dec. 1963	Coot Bay; Fort Myers; Naples, W. Palm Beach	Aud. Field Notes 18:173, 350, 174, 180, 186, 1964
Feb. 1964	Coot Bay	W.B. Robertson, pers. comm.
Dec. 1964	Naples; W. Palm Beach	Aud. Field Notes 19:189, 196, 1965
Jan. 1965	Fort Lauderdale	Aud. Field Notes 19:183, 1965
Oct. 1966	Fort Myers	Aud. Field Notes 21:25, 1967
Dec. 1966	West Palm Beach	Aud. Field Notes 21:412, 1967
Mar. 1967	Sanibel	Aud. Field Notes 21:412, 1967
Dec. 1968	Fort Myers; Naples	Aud. Field Notes 23:240, 246, 1969
Dec. 1969	Fort Lauderdale; Naples; W. Palm Beach	Aud. Field Notes 24:241, 250, 258, 1970
Dec. 1970	West Palm Beach	Am. Birds 25:300, 1971

gust that a review of the southeastern extent of the wintering range of this species is in order. Numerous sight records indicate that the Rusty Blackbird is a regular winter resident in the swamp woodlands of Florida as far south as Sarasota County and Lake Okeechobee (see e.g. *Audubon Field Notes*, 21:202, 1967). In southern Florida (that area south of Lake Okeechobee) the species is definitely of more irregular occurrence. Sight records in this area are summarized in Table 1. Three of these records are from Coot Bay in Everglades National Park at the southern tip of the Florida peninsula. The number of sightings in recent years is notable.

Verification of the occurrence of the Rusty Blackbird in southern Florida has heretofore rested upon the somewhat tenuous record from Cape Florida, 31 March 1858, reported by Howell (*Florida Bird Life*, 1932: 431) but omitted from the *A.O.U. Checklist*. It presumably was collected by Gustavus Wurdemann who was active in southern Florida at that time. Although other specimens collected by him at Cape Florida on that date have been located in the U.S. National Museum, no Rusty Blackbird specimen could be found (R.C. Banks, pers. comm. to O.T. Owre). It is to be noted that this marsh bird would not be expected to occur in a beach habitat such as that of Cape Florida.

On 8 February 1970, an additional specimen was collected in the Big Cypress Swamp of Monroe County, Florida (Sec. 20, T 54 S, R 34 E) The specimen (an adult female; follicles minute; weight 54.5 gm) is deposited as a study skin in the reference collection of the University of Miami (UMRC 5993). It was collected from a mixed flock of blackbirds foraging in a scrub cypress swamp. The location of this specimen is 225 miles south of the limit indicated by the *Check-list*.

The Rusty Blackbird may therefore be considered a regular winter resident in swamp woodlands of Florida as far south as Lake Okeechobee and of irregular

occurrence south of the Lake ranging in small numbers in some years to the tip of the peninsula.

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