

Photographic Record of a Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) from Drew County, Arkansas

J.L. Hunt^{1*} and C.G. Sims¹

¹University of Arkansas at Monticello, School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences,
397 University Drive, Monticello, Arkansas 71656.

*Correspondence: huntj@uamont.edu

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The geographic range of the greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) extends from central Mexico to north-central California in the west and to western and central Arkansas in the east (Hughes 2011). This range has been expanding to the north and east during historical times, including in Arkansas (Hughes 2011). Greater roadrunners were first recorded in southwestern Arkansas in 1936 (Baerg 1950). By 1950, they were recorded in Crawford County and Pulaski County (James 1960), and by the mid-1950s, greater roadrunners occurred in Washington and Benton counties, where they were considered to be numerous (Brown 1963). The published range of the greater roadrunner in Arkansas currently extends across the state, except in a north-south band adjacent to the

Mississippi River (James and Neal 1986; Hughes 2011). Herein we provide the first published record and photograph (Fig. 1) of a greater roadrunner from Drew County.

In June 2018, the authors began hearing rumors of a greater roadrunner being sighted within the city limits of Monticello. Several residents claimed to have seen the bird hanging around the edges of the local golf course. On July 10, the owner of a home just to the northeast of the golf course alerted us to the presence of the bird on his property, and allowed us access to investigate. Although we were unable to find the greater roadrunner on that day, we returned on July 11 and were able to observe and photograph the bird (Fig 1). The greater roadrunner, which appeared to be an adult, was



Fig 1. Greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) photographed on 11 July 2018 at Monticello, Drew County, Arkansas.

visible for nearly an hour, during which it wandered along the edge of a wooded area, hunted for food, and took a dust bath. We continued to hear reports of the bird throughout the summer. One observer claimed to have seen two greater roadrunners at one time, but we were unable to confirm more than one individual. In June and July 2019, a greater roadrunner, presumably the same individual, was seen and photographed on the same property where we photographed the bird in 2018.

Greater roadrunners have previously been reported from near Crossett in Ashley County in 1978 (James and Neal 1986), and from the western part of the state of Mississippi in 1982 (Maxon 2005). Although the geographic range is expanding, possibly in part due to changes in habitat and warming climate, it is unclear whether the individual observed in Drew County is part of a trend or merely another extra-limital record. We intend to monitor the area for additional observations.

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