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# THE OÖLOGIST

FOR THE STUDENT OF

BIRDS, THEIR NESTS AND EGGS

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VOLUME XXII

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*ALBION, N. Y*

*FRANK H. LATTIN, M. D., PUBLISHER*

*ERNEST H. SHORT, EDITOR AND MANAGER*

1905

1892

of 2892 *1892*



# INDEX.

Abnormal Crow's Beak.....	106	Eggs of Knot, Discovery of.....	37
Adventures of a Grosbeak Family.	24	Evolution of Species.....	181
A Day in the Field with Walter E. Bryant .....	135	Feeding Habit of Humming-birds.	140
After Western Red-tails.....	53	Fraud, Egg .....	28, 59, 92, 156
American Ornithologist's Union, Twenty-third Annual Congress of.	181	Gannets.....	121
Australian Birds .....	119	Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray.....	117, 131, 155
Battle With the Broad-wings, A..	89	Grosbeak, Rose-breasted.....	24, 39, 41
Bird Flight, Wing Movements in..	182	Grouse, Ru ed.. ..	170
"Bird Guide".....	173	Gull, Herring .....	108
Bird Migration, On.....	149	Hawk, Am. Sparrow.....	60, 105
Bird Protection.....	186-187	Hawk, Broad-winged....	89, 156
Birds of Monongalia Co., W. Va., Some Notes on.....	60	Hawk, Cooper's.....	91, 105, 138
Birds Removing Eggs from Nests.	25	Hawk, Desert Sparrow.....	165
Birds, Status of.....	183	Hawk, Ferruginous Rough-leg....	106
Bittern, Least.....	90	Hawk, Marsh .....	105
Blackbird, Red-winged....	44	Hawk, Red-bellied .....	43
Bobolink .....	75	Hawk, Red-shouldered....	43-124
Bob-white .....	170	Hawk, Sharp-shinned.....	105
Bower-bird.....	120	Hawk, Swainson's.....	43, 88
Brownell, C. L.....	28	Hawk, Sets of Five Eggs of Red- tailed .....	140, 168
Bryant, W. E.....	91	Hawk, White-tailed .....	140
Bush-tit, Calif.....	136	Hawk, West. Red-tail....	43, 53, 168
California Nesting of the Dotted Canyon Wren in.....	122	Heron, A Chapter from the Life History of the Green.....	21
Catalogue, Taylor's Standard Egg .....	10, 27	Heron, Gt. Blue.....	85, 90, 101
Chat with a Naturalist.....	119	Hoatzin .....	186
Chickadee, Black-capped..	92	Honey-eater .....	121
Collection of J. W. Jacobs.....	8	Hornbill .....	75
Coloration, Protective....	185	Hummingbird, Anna's....	136
Crane, Whooping and Sandhill..	85	Hummingbirds .....	140
Crow, Am.....	87, 106	Indiana, Nesting of the Whip-poor- will in Franklin Co.....	8
Cuckoo .....	9	In North Carolina and Virginia..	74, 117, 137
Cuckoo, Calif .....	169	Jaegar, Pomarine .....	9
Cuckoo, English .....	185	Jay, Calif.....	136
Cuckoos .....	173	Kite, Everglade.....	27
Dipper, Am.....	156	Kite, Spotted Egg of Miss.....	188
Dove Chronicle, A Mourning.....	72	Kite, Swallow-tailed.....	27
Eagle Experiences in Fla., Bald..	5	Knot, Discovery of the Eggs of..	37
Egg Catalogue .....	10, 27, 60, 91	Longspur, Lapland .....	186
Eggs, Freak Hen's.....	72		
Eggs of Bank Swallow, Spotted..	166		
Eggs of the Broad-winged Hawk.	156		
Eggs of Carolina Paroquet.....	173		

## THE OOLOGIST.

<p>Magpie, Am ..... 69</p> <p>Martin, Purple.....74, 108</p> <p>Medal, Awarded a Gold..... 8</p> <p>Migration on Bird.....148, 183</p> <p>Mockingbird ..... 29</p> <p>Mourning Dove, Chronicle, A.... 72</p> <p>Mount Dry Skins, A Quick Way to. 76</p> <p>Nest Building, Co-operative.....168</p> <p>Nests, Last Year's Bird's.....138</p> <p>New Jersey, Breeding Warblers of..182</p> <p>New Jersey, Green Heron in..... 21</p> <p>New Jersey, Gt. Blue Heron Col- lecting in Salem Co.....101</p> <p>New York Am. Barn Owl in Or- leans Co.....106</p> <p>Nuthatch, Red-breasted .....123</p> <p>Nuthatch, Syrian ..... 75</p> <p>Oklahoma, White-tailed Hawk in.140</p> <p>On the Use in Surgery of the Ten- dons of the Ardeidae and Gru- idae ..... 85</p> <p>Oology of a Farm, The.....171</p> <p>Osprey, Am.....39, 90, 104</p> <p>Oven-bird .....189</p> <p>Owl, Barred ..... 40</p> <p>Owl, Saw-whet .....124</p> <p>Owl, Screech .....90, 124<sup>b</sup></p> <p>Paroquet, Carolina .....173</p> <p>Partridge, Calif.....135</p> <p>Phoebe, Black.. .....135</p> <p>Pigeon, Passenger .....44, 133, 149</p> <p>Pelican, Brown .....182</p> <p>Purple Martin .....74</p> <p>Rail, Sora ..... 76</p> <p>Raven ..... 40</p> <p>Rifle-bird .....121</p> <p>Robin, Am. ....41, 58, 108</p> <p>Robin, Pied .....120</p> <p>Robin, Rose-breasted .....121</p> <p>Robin's Nest ..... 9</p> <p>Rodwell, G. H., Death of ..... 27</p> <p>Sanderling ..... 38</p> <p>Sandpiper, Spotted ..... 44</p> <p>Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied ..... 87</p> <p>Shrike, White-rumped.....25</p> <p>Scrub-bird .....120</p> <p>Skins, A Quick Way to Mount Dry. 76</p> <p>Skunk .....133, 188</p> <p>Snipe, European ..... 38</p> <p>Some Hawking Trips..53, 88, 138, 165</p> <p>Songs,About Some..... 41</p> <p>Songs of Hermit and Wood Thrush.183</p> <p>Sparrow, English .....168, 173</p> <p>Sparrow, Field..... 92</p> <p>Sparrow, Song.....108</p> <p>Species and Sub-species of N. Am.</p>	<p>Spotted Bank Swallows Eggs...166</p> <p>Swallow, Bank .....166</p> <p>Tern, Noddy .....121</p> <p>Tern, Sooty .....121</p> <p>Texas, Pileated Woodpecker in.. 26</p> <p>Thrasher, Brown ..... 25</p> <p>Thrasher, Crissal ..... 76</p> <p>Thrush, Hermit .....183</p> <p>Thrush, Varied ..... 92</p> <p>Thrush, Wilson's ..... 90</p> <p>Thrush, Wood....58, 183</p> <p>The Other Side..... 40</p> <p>Towhee .....189</p> <p>Turkey ..... 40</p> <p>Verdin ..... 76</p> <p>Vulture, Turkey ..... 76</p> <p>Warbler, Bachman's .....103</p> <p>Warbler, Hooded .....137</p> <p>Warbler, Kirtland's .....27, 92</p> <p>Warbler, Mourning ..... 56</p> <p>Warbler, Tennessee..... 134</p> <p>Warbler, Parula ..... 39</p> <p>Warblers of Demarest, N. J....182</p> <p>Whip-poor-will in Franklin Co., Ind., Nesting of the..... 8</p> <p>Woodcock, Am. ....170</p> <p>Woodpecker, Downy ..... 27</p> <p>Woodpecker, Red-headed.... 60</p> <p>Woodpecker, Nest and Eggs of the Pileated ..... 26</p> <p>Wren, Cactus ..... 76</p> <p>Wren, House ..... 76</p> <p>Wren, Nesting of the Dotted Can- yon in Calif.....122</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Illustrations.</b></p> <p>Bald Eagle and Nest..... 4</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Green Heron.... 22</p> <p>Young Green Heron in Nest..... 23</p> <p>Roadrunner ..... 54</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Least Flycatcher. 70</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Bachman's War- bler .....102</p> <p>Calif. Vulture .....118</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Tennessee War- bler .....134</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Ruby-throat Hum- mingbird.... 150</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Clapper Rail..152</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Oven-bird....182</p> <p>Nest and Eggs of Wilson's Plover.184</p>
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

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VOL. XXII. No. 1.

ALBION, N. Y., JAN., 1905.

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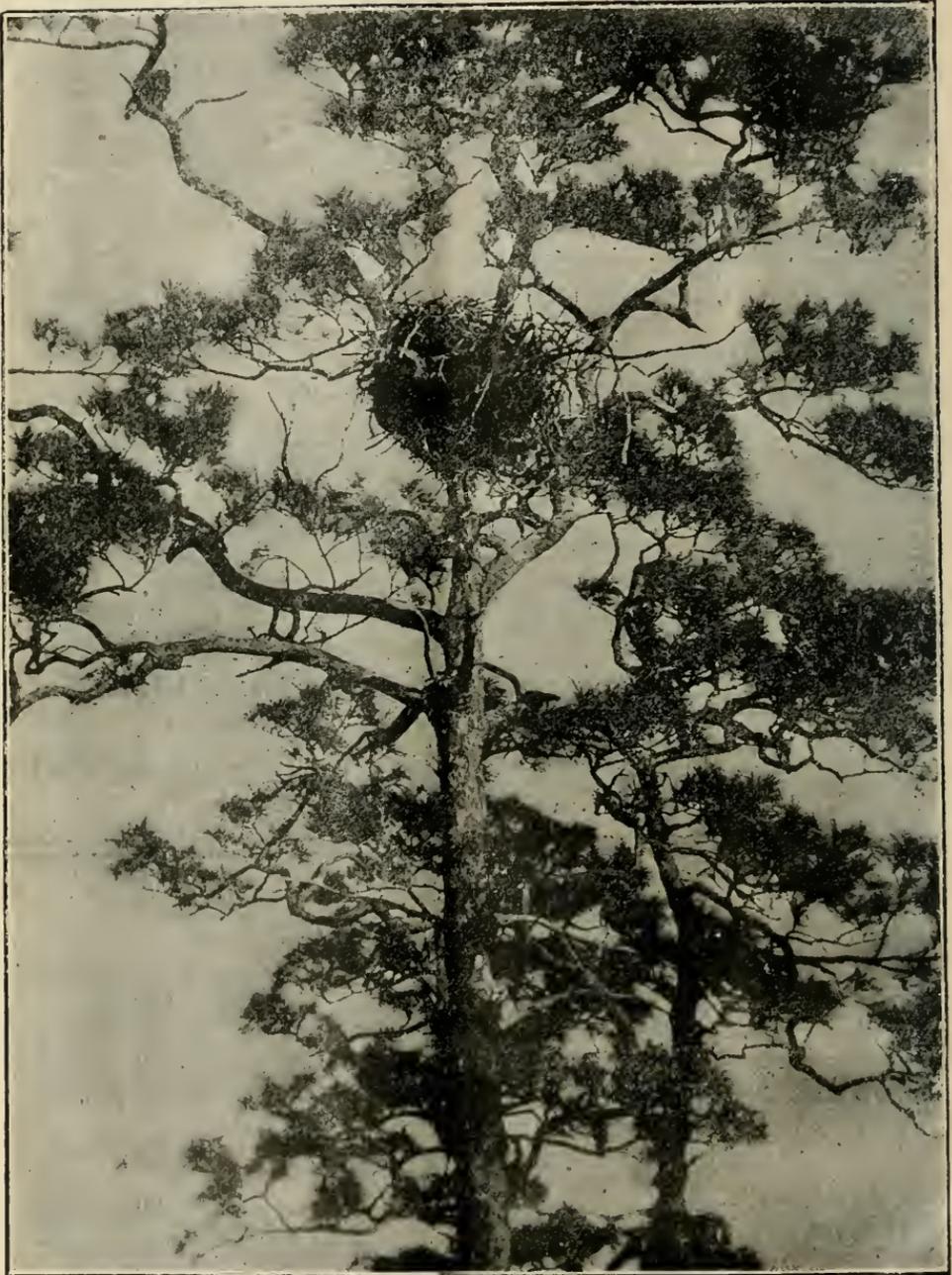
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Compliments of J. J. Ryman.

# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 1.

ALBION, N. Y., JAN., 1905.

WHOLE No. 210

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

Correspondence and items of interest to the student of Birds, their Nests and Eggs, solicited from all.

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### Bald Eagle Experiences in Florida.

*Continued.*

I had so many letters from various parts of the country from Maine to California and one from England about my article on the Bald Eagle in your June, 1904 issue, I thought

another would interest your readers, and I will also furnish you a photo of fine nest with Eagle perched on tree near nest from which I took a set of eggs late in December last.

My boy still being home on his vacation, and something of an everglade trotter like myself, we concluded to go south some 9 miles and in a direction we had seen Eagles fly when we had been down on our launch. Both of us with Minnie started by day-break and poled our boat to the locality, but low water and glowing sunshine made it quite laborious work. Almost exhausted we sat down amid swamps of cypress and saw-grass to eat our lunch with no luck to date.

After lunch I insisted on going another direction and on rounding a point my boy said "papa, I believe I see an Eagle sitting on an old dead tree nearly a mile away." I took in the situation at a glance. When you see an eagle at that season of year perched in that style it invariably means business. We poled the liveliest gait of the day although a few minutes before we were about exhausted.

Nearing the place things looked encouraging, we landed, eagle still perched about 200 yards distant. I said "If a nest is near by we shall soon see both birds" and no sooner said than done, over our heads they soared making their usual screeches and we soon saw the nest. I concluded to climb to it as my boy wished to shoot a bird for mounting and I had consented when we found one a long distance from home. I cautioned him not to shoot until I had examined the nest and when I found 3

eggs I said "dont shoot at all. This is the first case of this kind I ever saw and she may lay 3 next year," consequently that eagle's life was spared by her having laid three eggs. I put them in my pocket and began to descend when Minnie says, "wait and I'll get a picture with you up the tree" which she did. This nest was the smallest I ever saw and I'm inclined to think its the first season used. It was built of coarse sticks, was about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet across but only about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep; small depression only and lined with few fish bones and some moss. Its only about 40 feet high in pine tree and in an ideal spot. We felt well repaid for our days work after all.

The next trip my boy was not along. I had heard of a nest some 13 miles away in a large pine tree along a cypress swamp. I was obliged to go alone that day so I took the train and had conductor let me off in a sort of a paradise place for game. I sauntered along in the direction I had been told and finally I discovered a fine nest but no sight of a bird near. I kept on my course and finally I saw one come to greet me, they always do, they seem to like me. When I was at the tree, 9 feet in circumference and no limb for fully forty feet, wind blowing about 15 miles an hour, I wished for company. Well, I put climbers on and started up. My hat blew off when 20 feet up; my coat was fastened on or it would have gone also. It was the hardest climb I ever had but I made it and was rewarded only by the sight of a pair of little downy young about one week old. I left them of course to do me service later on. This nest was some 60 feet high; 6 feet across; 4 feet deep and was an old one; doubtless has been used many years.

It was my first visit in that section and it looked so fine about there I thought I would continue along the swamp and edge of timber as it was

early in the day and I might find another nest or jump up some game. When about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away I saw an Eagle chasing some buzzards at a lively rate about one mile distant. I said at once "that means another eagle's nest and buzzards are there trying to steal the fish which are usually found on the edge of nearly every nest." I made straight for it. On my way I put in some shells of No. 2, thinking I would shoot an eagle for my boy as this was a long distance from anywhere, but really if there is one thing I dislike to shoot, its the Bald Eagle. I have two, male and female, finest specimens I ever saw which I shot and had mounted three years ago. Well, I jollied along quietly watching their manouvers quite interestedly when to my surprise up went about five or six Jacksnipe. "I dont want to scare the eagle so I'll bag some of them on my return" was my thought. When this was running through my mind up jumped two fine deer, only 25 yards away. We were short of meat at home and had eagles so I got the drop on one fine doe and saw the other run away not daring to shoot another as I did not know how to get the one home already shot. I almost forgot my eagles nest only 200 yards away. I dressed my deer however first, took a breath and up to the nest I went. I got a nice set and didn't disturb nest or birds. Minnie and I went as near as possible in launch a few days later and took picture of nest, having to rough it pretty well to get there through swamps and tall saw-grass shooting one alligator on the way, and for a lady to get along on one of these trips its no "boys play." By-the-way this is the picture shown herewith with eagle perched near nest, quite a thing to get. If you don't believe it try it. This nest is 40 feet high, in pine tree, about 6 feet across, 4 feet deep and was built as all others are of

large sticks lined with bark lining and Spanish moss.

I lunched, put saddle of venison over my shoulder leaving forequarters for the buzzards and started for railroad station 8 miles away. O dear! I never had such a day, and I never want—; yes I do! many more just like it, was home at 8 p. m., and to see the expression on my boys face to think he had not gone, was painful in the extreme.

It was now getting late in the season but my partner and I went out occasionally to investigate new territory and often I would find something that would be of interest later on if not at that moment.

One eve, taking a circuitous route home, I saw at a distance what appeared to be an Osprey's nest or an old Eagle's nest, so I went to it and when there, or quite near, I remarked to Minnie, "This looks very much like a nest my boy and I took a pair of large eagles from several years ago." The swamp had all been burned over and of course I scarcely recognized the place, besides I had not been there for several years and in the Everglades everything changes rapidly. While surveying the situation I thought I saw the head of a bird move in that nest, which by the way, I was going right past because I thought it an old burnt-out nest. I whooped and to my surprise off flew "Old Abe" or his wife and you should have seen my expression. Well, here we were at 4 p. m., 6 miles from home, nest in middle of swamp and no rubber boots nor climbers.

Of course we started right home to return the next day, but high winds and bad weather made the trip impossible for several days. In the meantime we had left our wheels some six miles from home where we expected to return that evening and would have done so but for the fact we could get

home just as quickly by boat and next day be on hand with climbers etc., and then get our wheels and explain to the old settler what we had done, but to our amusement, he had kept a lantern hung up for us all night thinking we were lost and when we did not return he came to town and gave the alarm. We had surely drowned etc. etc. Scouting parties were out at once looking us up and we were finally located at our homes safe and sound and I never saw such a satisfied expression on a man's face as the old settler had. Well when the weather permitted we "hiked" down there again and I climbed to the nest but it was so large and no limbs and the tree was dead and so very shaky that I burrowed through the nest and found but one egg which I was about to put back and return later for the set of two but as only one bird was about and she made no fuss and was not on the nest when we arrived I concluded something was wrong, I found upon examination that the single egg was no good and the Eagle had about abandoned the nest for that season. We took good picture of same with me up tree and returned. This nest was built like all others, was 60 feet high in top of dead cypress, six and one-half feet across and four feet deep. This was almost our last trip especially for Eagles nests as it was getting late in the season about January 1st. Now what do you think I was told a month or two latter when a very fine gentleman and my partner sat on my veranda one beautiful afternoon? he said "well J. J. I've stolen your partner," I replied "you don't mean it." He said "That's a fact I have concluded to take her for life." Of course I was delighted in one sense, but sorry in another as in all my hunting trips I never saw a person who so thoroughly enjoyed the woods and all nature and was so exceedingly anxious to do her part, even

to almost climbing trees, I can now only look ahead next season to hunting alone and it makes me think of one of Nat Goodwin's plays "Lend me your wife."

J. J. RYMAN.

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**Awarded a Gold Medal.**

When the State of Pennsylvania was collecting her exhibits for the World's Fair at St. Louis, Mr. J. Warren Jacobs, of this place, was called on for a loan of his birds' egg collection, or that part of it which applied to this state. Mr. Jacobs complied, and selected the eggs of birds known to this state, and placed them in the custody of those having charge of the state's exhibit at the big show. Mr. Jacobs has one of the finest collections of eggs in the country. The collection has been the subject of numerous newspaper articles, and has received honorable mention with illustrations in State publications. When a child Mr. Jacobs made a study of birds, and spent much of his time in the woods studing their habits and securing eggs for what is now the greatest collections in the country, and is in demand for such occasions as the World's Fair. The interest grew on Mr. Jacobs, and doubtless the birds have not a warmer friend than he and he often reproves boys who seek to destroy the birds. He is a well versed ornithologist and has issued several pamphlets on the subject.

The awarding of the gold medal by the Superior Jury at the St. Louis Exposition is a compliment and honor deservedly bestowed, and Mr. Jacobs will gracefully wear it. The other day he received this notice, "In accordance with the rule, I beg to inform you the Superior Jury has approved the recommendation that you be awarded a gold medal in group 121." This

notice is signed by David R. Francis, President of the Superior Jury. Mr. Jacobs has been notified by the State Department to go to the St. Louis Fair and be there to superintend the packing of his collection for shipment at the close of the exposition. He will leave in a few weeks. "*Independent*," Waynesburg, Penn.

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**Nesting of the Whip-poor-will in Franklin County, Indiana.**

I have been requested by some of the readers of the Oologist and other experienced enthusiastic ornithologists, to relate the experiences attending the taking of a set of Whip-poor-will's eggs by myself in the collecting season just closed. The finding of the eggs was on June 26, 1904, and notwithstanding the fact of being taken so late in the season, the set, two in number, contained only slight traces of incubation.

An accurate description would be a delicate, faint creamy white, slightly intensified at one end, but also showing at this end very faint shell markings of small brown spots of different shades. This beautiful set of eggs was forwarded to Mr. Ernest H. Short, editor of this paper.

The eggs were found at the foot of a hill along Wolf-creek about one mile from my home (Oak Forest, Indiana), the bird when flushed flew across a deep gulch close by and alighted on a bank on the opposite side. I then approached to within about twenty feet of where the bird was sitting, and with the aid of a field-glass I was able to study and observe her at my leisure while in this position, and when I flushed her again she flew back towards her nest, slightly passing in front of and about ten feet above my head, giving me a good opportunity to observe the general appearance of its under plumage.

The place where the eggs were taken was at the foot of a hill in a dense thicket the eggs were lying in a shallow depression in some dry leaves with no attempt of nest-building whatever. Three weeks later I found two young Whip-poor-wills near the same place which were only a few days old. If this was the same pair of birds that nested there before, I am unable to say, perhaps it was.

JOS. F. HONECKER,  
Oak Forest, Ind.

### Much to My Sorrow!

I found a Cuckoo's nest about the time the blueberries were scarce with "6 eggs"  $\frac{2}{3}$  their natural size; two were with holes, three rotten and one is in with my singles. I believe this is very rare.

I find something is "raising the dickens" with Cuckoo's eggs in this part of the country. I find quite a few Cuckoos' eggs with holes picked in them.

I found a Brown Thrasher's nest on the "ground" under an Oak tree or you might call it a bush, situated like a Chewink's nest, but had plenty of stick.

E. S. COOMBS.

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo often lays six or even seven eggs in rare instances. The Black-billed seldom lays over four.

I once found a Robin's nest on the ground at the base of a Railroad embankment. Flushed her from the nest and it appeared to have been built there.

Editor.

### A Pomarine Jaeger.

In October, 1904, Mr. W. A. Ketcham of Toledo, O., while out duck shooting near Cedar Point saw a Pomarine Jaeger out of gun shot. This bird is rare in this section of the country, having been observed only a few times around the Great Lakes or perhaps more definitely; Lake Erie.

It was chasing a flock of smaller Gulls and finally disappeared making a dash after some unfortunate Gull. This Gull was seen plainly and could hardly be mistaken. A fellow sportsman saw it also.

A. C. REED,  
Toledo, O.

### EDITORIAL.

#### Self Explanatory.

HOUSTON, TEXAS, Dec. 31, 1904.

Editor Oologist:

My Dear Sir:

I take the liberty of writing to you in reference to a *Mid-winter tent-outing* and *horseback journey* through South-western Texas and Old Mexico beyond the Rio Grande. The party is to consist of fifteen men, aside from guides, chef, helpers, physician and host. Business men who need rest, diversion and out-of-door life, young men who are not strong and amateur sportsmen are the class I desire to have with me. The camp outfit will be of the best, and the cooking equal to that in any private home. The temporary camps and journey of many miles will occupy two months' time, and will extend through a high, dry country, ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 feet elevation, where the weather is as mild and delightful as Indian summer in New England. Each guest is to be represented by two horses, the one he rides and the one hitched to a wagon. When tired of the saddle, he can avail himself of a seat. The cost will be \$10.00 a day.

A physician of large experience in the care and cure of chronic disorders will be one of the party, therefore, anyone needing medical attention on the trip will be able to secure it, and anyone desiring special treatment while on the journey can arrange for it beforehand. The place of meeting will be San Antonio, Texas or some point west of that city to be agreed upon. New Orleans can best be reached on the Southern Pacific Steamers that leave New York City at high noon twice a week. The Sunset Limited over the Southern Pacific takes one through the old sugar plantations of Louisiana, through the oil and rice fields of Texas, through Houston, the

metropolis of the state, and through San Antonio, a delightful city, quaint with Spanish architecture. It takes more hours to reach New Orleans by water than by rail, but it is the ideal way to get south, having our rendezvous in view. It costs a little more to reach Texas than Florida, but the damp atmosphere of that low country precludes the possibility of camping out. This plateau I am writing about is the land for tents, horses and a life free from conventionalities.

JOHN T. PATRICK,  
Houston, Texas,

The advantages of this trip need no special mention. We would like to have some one in this party as our representative. While the regular rate for this trip would be between \$700 and \$800. If anyone will go as *our representative*, furnishing us notes on the trip, we will make arrangements whereby they can take it all in at about half of these figures. Write at once to publisher of Oologist, Albion, N. Y., if you can see your way to avail yourself of this opportunity.

EDITOR.

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### REVIEW.

#### Standard American Egg Catalogue.

BY H. R. TAYLOR.

After a careful examination of this second edition of Taylor's Catalogue I am glad to pronounce it far superior to the first edition. Many of the inconsistencies between eastern and western forms have been obliterated.

Some of those that are peculiar to this edition may be oversights. I presume this would account for the disparity between the Swallow-tailed and Everglade Kites and also for the pricing of White-faced Glossy Ibis.

Many collectors will join with me in condemning the raise in price on Aplomado Falcon, Bob-white, Vermillion Flycatcher, American Magpie, Brewer's Sparrow, Pileolated Warbler, and others in less degree. And why

were not Mexican Cormorant, Wood Ibis and Cassin's Vireo, lowered?

Was the .60 after Bonaparte's Gull a mistake or has some one a bbl. full back that the Editor has not heard of?

Why raise Mourning Warbler to \$5.00 and leave Blackburnian at \$2.50?

I think that reversing proportions between the California and Valley Partridges was the correct idea and the same applies to Texas Pyrrholoxia and Gray-tailed Cardinal but when this was applied to the Grosbeaks I must differ in opinion. All Collectors will regret that the work could not have been presented on better paper with a clearer print. And the shape seems unhandy too, too wide a little and too long a great deal.

Of errors in nomenclature there are many but fortunately few of a nature to hurt the value of the work. The Wild Turkeys seem a little confused.

The remarks in the preface are good, even if some seem aimed at a mark, and Mr. Dille's "Contraptions" will be endorsed by all. On all sides I hear the complaint—"Why were the Skins not priced?" Well I suppose the job was big enough as it was, as friend Taylor says, "*Its no snap.*"

EDITOR.

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### I Have a Proposition

to make to you Mr. Collector. I have a nice choice line of Indian Relics and coins. If you are willing to send first-class References an approved lot will reach you safely and on time. A few bargains, 5 Indian Bird Points, 35c., 5 different colored, arrowheads, 35c., Indian Tomahawk, 35c., 10 different Indian Implements, 85c., 5 choice War points, 35c. All the above for \$2.00; 10 fine old coins 23c., 3 Liberty cents, 15c., 3 coins 100 years old, 18c. My price list, old liberty cent, and confederate bill for a dime. We have the goods. You do the asking.

W. P. Arnold,  
Peacedale, R. I.

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FINELY MOUNTED Deer Head, Fifteen Dollars; also others from Ten to Twenty-five Dollars, also lot of new Orchestra and Chamber music cheap. A. R. SMITH, 1912 Fontam Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

# THE OÖLOGIST.

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION DEVOTED TO  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMV.

## WANTS, FOR SALES AND EXCHANGES,

Brief Special announcements "Wants," "Exchanges," "For Sales," inserted in this department for 25 cents per 25 words. Notices over 25 words charged at the rate of 1-2 cent for each additional word. No notice inserted for less than 25 cents. Terms, cash with order. Strictly first-class specimens will be accepted in payment at 1-3 list rates.

VOL. XXII. No. 2.

ALBION, N. Y., FEB., 1905.

WHOLE No. 211

## What's Your Number ?

Examine the number following your name on the wrapper of this month's Oölogist. It denotes when your subscription expired or will expire.

211	your subscription expires with this issue		
219	"	"	Oct., 1905
221	"	"	Dec., 1905
257	"	"	Dec., 1908

Intermediate numbers can easily be determined. If we have you credited wrong we wish to rectify.

Entered as second-class matter December 21, 1903, at the post office at Albion, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

I HAVE a few very desirable sets for exchange, such as loons, alabatross, cranes, falcons, kites and other Raptores, ducks with down, etc. Warblers especially wanted. All answered. A. E. PRICE, Grant Park, Ill. stf

WANTED.—Fine sets of Sharp Shinned Hawks eggs. Will give handsome sets of Aplomado Falcon at reduced rates. T. H. JACKSON, 343 E. Biddle St., West Chester, Pa.

FOR SALE.—I have many back numbers of various natural history magazines, including the Nidologist, Osprey, Museum, O and O, Oölogist, Audubon's Magazine and others; Books and pamphlets on Natural History subjects; some good bird and mammal skins; marine invertebrates in formalin; reptile and batrachians in formalin and alcohol; and various curios. Any of above cheap for cash. *No exchange desired.* If you have as much as fifty cents to invest send for my lists, but don't write unless you mean business. F. P. DROWNE, M. D., 20 Benefit St., Providence, R. I. N.4t.

DO YOU ever Trap. If so you want "The Amateur Trapper," by Stanley Harding, tells you how to make traps for catching the Muskrat, Beaver, Otter, Mink, Martin, Fish-eat, Skunk, Gopher, Squirrel, Raccoon, Opossum, Fox, Wolf and Bear, also how to cure and Tan Skins. Cloth. Contains 134 pages, with 50 illustrations. Send 50c. to OLIVER M. DAVIE, Columbus, O., and get one prepaid. J. 2. t.

RADIUM.—I am prepared to furnish Radio-active substances of from one up to one-million activity, and also to make determinations on Radio-active minerals at reasonable rates. I have some of the finest specimens of Radio-active ores to be obtained, some of which have just been returned from the St. Louis Exposition and which I will exchange for fine Indian relics or old U. S. coins, or other Radio-active ores not in my collection. No collection of minerals or curios is complete without a series of these extremely interesting substances. Have also for exchange a fine imported Aneroid barometer, both English and Metric scales. L. V. CASE, Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.

WANTED.—Fresh skins or in the meat, Great Horned Owl (or subspecies), Snowy Owl, Ptarmigan, Mountain Partridge, Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, Sets of Cuckoos, Am. Herring Gull, Least Tern, Laughing Gull, Any Sandpiper or Plover. What can you offer and what can you use? ERNEST H. SHORT, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED.—Five hundred white weasel skins, also furs of all kinds. Good prices paid. For sale in the flesh, one wild cat, perfect specimen, also Mergansers and Golden eyes. J. 2. t. ALVAH G. DORR, Bucksport Maine.

FOR SALE.—I still have about 1000 fine sets left from my private collection which will sell at reasonable prices. Also Bendire's Life histories, Studer's Birds of North America and Bird Magazines. Write for list and price. L. ERNEST MARCEAU, 274 Manhattan Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

FOR SALE.—"Nidologist," vols. 1, 2 and 3, bound in half morocco. Good condition. For best cash offer. CLIFTON E. WEBSTER, Arthur, N. Dak.

WILL EXCHANGE.—During coming season, sets collected in Texas for eggs not in my collection. Full dates. Also butterflies and moths. GEO. GILES, San Antonio, Tex.

WANTED. Correspondence with people who are interested in the painting of birds. ALAN WRIGHT, 31 Kingsborough Ave., Gloversville, N. Y.

DAVIES' Nests and Eggs, 4th edition, 13 Recreations. North American Fauna, 1-3-4-5. Some other good books to exchange for common sets of eggs. C. B. VANDERCOOK, Odin, Ill.

FOR SALE.—Fine quartered oak cabinet containing sixteen drawers 20 x 22 inches, a beauty. Will take part exchange in desirable bird books or perfect sets of Raptors. L. H. PAUL, 59 West Miller St., Newark, New York.

WANTED.—Another copy of Ridgway's Manual, must not be too badly soiled. Will pay cash, or trade Winchester rifle, 44 Cal., Mod. 1873, in good condition. R. PEARCE SMITHWICK, 133 Mariner St., Norfolk, Virginia.

BIG BARGAINS in the following 1st class sets and singles, for some one, 273 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 212 1-7, 359 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 388 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 3, 447 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 466 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 595 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 3, 546 1-5, 511 1-5, 501 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 505 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 596 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 619 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 3, 624 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 687 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2-4, 3, 684 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 766 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 755 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Singles, 2-1, 30a, 3-51a, 58, 64, 86, 4-142, 2-212, 263, 2-273, 326, 337b, 2-308a, 357, 494, 3-505, 2-687, 3, 2d class 228. Write for my cash price for entire lot. GEORGE J. TILLS, Albion, N. Y.

WANTED.—All kinds of Live Wild Birds and Animals. State prices when writing. Don't ask me what I pay. DR. CECIL FRENCH, Naturalist, Washington, D. C. J12t

FOR SALE.—Guitar, Tandem bicycle, Incubator, Bflat cornet, Eggs, Coins, Show books, Oologist's Osprey's Popular Science, Nidologist, Condor. OTHO N. GAY, Mendon, Ill.

ABOUT FORTY species of common Birds' eggs, first class full sets full data to exchange for same; also some books and papers for common sets. C. B. VANDERCOOK, Odin, Ill.

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HAVE thousands of good stamps catalogued from 1c to \$1.00 each to exchange for first class sets and bird books. For every dollar's worth of first class sets will give \$1.50 worth of stamps. Send lists first. GEO. D. FRENCH, Ivoryton, Conn.

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FOR SALE.—A large collection of Minerals and Indian Relics, also Postal Currency, coins, postage and Revenue Stamps. Isaac S. KIRK, Nottingham, Pa., R. 2.

FOR EXCHANGE.—Fine sets of Whip-poorwill, King Rail, Florida Gallinule, Barred Owl, Great Horned Owl; also a fine large hand made Walnut egg cabinet, for eggs. R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Ill.

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DO YOU keep worm eating birds? I can sell you large, fat, live, yellow mealworms. 1000 at 70c.; 1500, \$1; quart (about 4000) \$2. Express paid, terms cash. G. BUETTEL, 7 West St., West Somerville, Mass.

FOR SALE.—A. I. scientific skins of Arizona birds. Will collect to order during season of 1905. First class eggs in sets, skins or insects. Correspondence solicited. H. H. Kimball, Tucson, Ariz. t.f.

WANTED.—Back numbers of the OOLOGIST until further notice we will allow the prices quoted below for the numbers noted. No others wanted. You may select in payment any specimens catalogued by either of us. This offer does not apply to Instruments, Supplies or Books except by special arrangement. For 50c. worth will allow you a years subscription to Oologist. For 25c worth we will send you a coupon good for an exchange. Notice. Copies must be clean and whole.

For June 1888 we will allow \$.75.

For May 1884; Jan. and June 1885, July-Aug. 1886; Jan.-Feb. and June-Sept. 1887; May, 1888; April 1889; we will allow 50c per copy.

For March 1885, Jan.-Feb. and Mar-Apr. 1886; Aug.-Sept. 1888; we will allow 25c per copy.

No others wanted. These can be sent by mail for 1c for each 4 oz. postpaid. Address ERNEST H. SHORT, Child, N. Y. Mgr. Oologist.

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to make to you Mr. Collector. I have a nice choice line of Indian Relics and coins. If you are willing to send first-class References an approved lot will reach you safely and on time. A few bargains, 5 Indian Bird Points, 35c., 5 different colored arrowheads, 35c., Indian Tomahawk, 35c., 10 different Indian Implements, 85c., 5 choice War points, 35c. All the above for \$2.00; 10 fine old coins 23c., 3 Liberty cents, 15c., 3 coins 100 years old, 18c. My price list, old liberty cent, and confederate bill for a dime. We have the goods. You do the asking.

W. P. Arnold,

Peacedale, R. I.



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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 2.

ALBION, N. Y., FEB., 1905.

WHOLE No. 211

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMISTRY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
Chili, Monroe Co., N. Y.

there, but as a pair of high rubber boots seemed indispensable to an investigation, and I did not have anything of the sort with me, my suspicions remained unconfirmed.

During the spring of the present year, I observed a pair of herons about this swamp on several occasions, and it seemed probable that they would again nest there, so when I started on my vacation, May 28th., a pair of high rubber boots formed an important part of my equipment.

The swamp where the birds were seen is about half a mile long by an eighth of a mile wide, being a bog-hole three fourths surrounded by a fringe of hard wood timber. Its edge is protected from the average rambler by a depth of water that, save in a few places, renders high boots unavailing, and extending in a rod or more. Beyond this the bog is a morass of yielding moss, where one sinks into alternating depths of six to eighteen inches of water. It is grown with a dense tangle of bush and vine, in places dwarf tamaracs, and scattered here and there, the knarled and scragly skeletons of large and mostly dying trees.

To this swamp I went, on June 8th, equipped with camera, tripod, ball-and-socket clamp, plate-holders and high boots. After some difficulty I effected an entrance without shipping any water, and steered my course toward that portion of the swamp that I thought most likely to be the nesting site of the herons. Only those who have been similarly situated can appreciate the pleasure of making one's way through such a tangle, carrying tripod, camera, and haversack of plate-holders, where every step one

### A Chapter from the Life History of the Green Heron.

(By B. S. Bowdish.)

During my vacation in the second week of June, 1903, at Demarest, N. J., I became satisfied that a pair of Green Herons were breeding in a swamp

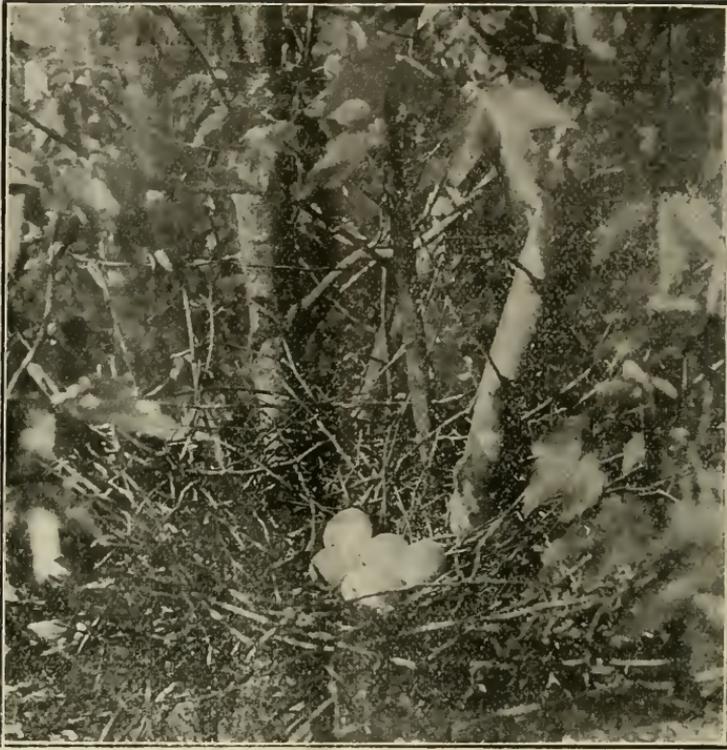


Photo by E. S. BOWDISH.

## NEST AND EGGS OF GREEN HERON.

may plunge unexpectedly into mud and water over boot-tops, and all under the broiling rays of a sun which beats down into the oven-like, breezeless swamp.

Fortunately I did not have very far to go before I came upon the object of my search. The nest was built in the main forks of one of a small clump of maple saplings, about twelve feet up. It was a platform of twigs, somewhat more substantially built, and better hollowed than the average nest of this species, and measured about twelve inches across by three inches in depth. From below through crevices of the platform gleams of pale blue betrayed the presence of eggs. About three feet from the sapling that held the nest grew another. Having photo-

graphed the site I was soon squirming up this latter sapling, pushing the camera on the tripod ahead of me, and with the haversack of plate-holders swung over my shoulder.

It reads easily enough to say that I suspended myself opposite the nest, with my legs wrapped about the stem of the tree, and the legs of the tripod gripped between my knees, while I unpacked plate-holders, focussed, and made four exposures. However if an appreciation of the difficulties of reaching the site required experience, then much more is experience necessary to the understanding of what photography under this class of difficulties implies. The work was accomplished, however, and subsequent development



Photo by B. S. BOWDISH.

## YOUNG GREEN HERON IN NEST.

proved the negatives to be fairly satisfactory.

At this visit one of the parents remained perched for some time in a large dead tree about three rods from the nest, but made no demonstration. The nest at this time contained five eggs, but I made no effort to ascertain whether incubation had commenced or not.

I visited the nest again on June 26th, hoping to secure a photograph of young birds. Two eggs had just hatched and a sixth egg had been laid. I made two partially successful photographs of the four eggs and the two helpless, sprawling young. One week later, July 3d, I returned to the place

and found six young birds of varying sizes, the largest standing about six inches high on his tiptoes, the smallest still rather wobbly. They all promptly stood up on their tiptoes stretching their necks as high as possible, pushing their heads forward and glaring at me, keeping up a continuous hissing, interspersed with screams which even at this age commenced to have considerably the sound of the adults cry. One of the parents promptly responded to these cries, and coming to the large tree where it had on the occasion of my last visit remained a passive spectator, it gave vent to screams differing from the usual cry (which was interspersed occasionally),

and resembling somewhat, the squawk of a hen.

Quite a number of sticks which had failed to remain where they were placed in building the nest lay on the ground underneath, and nest, tree and ground were spattered white with excrement. Needless to say, the spot was not fragrant. The exposures made at this time were unexpectedly successful, but while they were washing a member of the family inadvertently turned the hot water on them, with results too painful to record.

In the hope of replacing the lost negatives made on the 3d, I again visited the nest on July 7th. The last hatched bird had then been dead several days, and one of the other smaller ones had died a few hours previously, apparently. Their bodies lay in the nest, trampled under the feet of their surviving brethren. These latter had grown surprisingly, the largest probably measuring nine or ten inches in length. Three of the larger birds promptly climbed out of the nest and well toward the tip of one of the limbs, and fearing to disturb them to the extent of causing a tragedy, I confined my photographing to the one remaining infant, his dead brothers, and the nest, and afterward two views from the ground of the young on the limb. The latter were not successful, and the former only partially so.

I removed the two dead birds from the nest before leaving, and from the fresher one prepared a skin. This measures six inches in length, and pin feathers are starting on the wings.

Owing to the difficulty of access to the nest, and to pressure of other matters, I did not again have an opportunity to visit the place, and so do not know what was the last chapter in the life histories of these birds, but I hope that the four young were successfully reared. I had the satisfaction of changing the intentions of a young

man whose purpose was to collect one of the adult birds, and I hope that I may find them at the same site another year.

---

#### "Adventures of a Grosbeak Family."

The beautiful rose-breasted Grosbeak is a common summer resident of and a well known and favorite bird in Jasper County. I have found them nesting in fruit trees, in climbing grape-vines, and in osage hedges, but more often in box-elder trees at from six to thirty feet from the ground. Their nests are very frail structures and the complement of eggs three, sometimes four. They are imposed upon by the Cowbird. (Fully agreeing with the article in the November Oologist written by Mr. B. S. Bowish, I have tried to make the above as concise as possible).

A pair of Grosbeaks have nested for the last three years in a box-elder tree in our backyard, hardly twenty feet from the door. Last spring they arrived from their winter resort on May 5th and very soon after commenced nest building. We watched their frail nest grow from day to day until it contained three eggs. After careful brooding by both parents, at the end of two weeks, three tiny chips off the old block were safely ushered into bird-dom. About this time a spying Bluejay thought that something similiar to veal would suit him for breakfast. Happening near, he soon changed his mind, and decided that a brisk walk (or rather a fly) would benefit his appetite and constitution. For the male Grosbeak assisted by two screeching robins, which he had called to his aid, soon made him hike out of sight on the overland route.

One bright day near the first of June, we observed the three youngsters perched at different heights in the tree, uttering at regular intervals

their mournful little cry. They eventually reached the ground, where the children caught and patted them, placing them time and again in the nearby trees and a lilac bush, where they would stoutly cling and climb as high as they could towards the end of of the limb. They would allow us to approach at any time and stroke their heads, at which they would open their mouths at us as if expecting food. The mother would fearlessly come to feed them while I stood only three feet away, but the father would never come out of the trees.

At last after several days two of them disappeared, but the third a little male, stayed several days longer. He, a funny little fuzzy miniature of his illustrious father, was still covered with yellow down, as when he left the nest, and would always be seen hopping or taking three-yard flights along the ground. One morning while I was eating breakfast, I was startled by the excited calls of birds in our front yard. I rushed out to find the mother Grosbeak flitting excitedly from tree to tree, while at the foot of an oak a Woodpecker was waging war against her offspring. I ran toward them, firing a club at the red-headed rascal as I went, and picking up the poor young adventurer, found he had been severely pecked about the head and mouth by the stout sharp bill of the Woodpecker, who was now exulting over his victory from the top of a neighboring telephone pole. The sides of the young bird's mouth were badly torn and his throat was so filled with blood that he could not peep. After washing his mouth out with warm water and rubbing his wounds with cosmoline, I placed him in the sun on our wide front porch, from which on the following day he followed his mother off into the wide world somewhere, apparently none the worse for his exciting adventure.

J. L. SLOANAKER  
Newton, Iowa.

### Birds Removing Eggs From Nests.

In the December number of the "Oologist" Mr. Chas. P. Alexander in his interesting article on "The White-rumped Shrike in Eastern New York," mentions finding a "nest containing 5 half incubated eggs, four which he collected, leaving the fifth as a nest egg to make them lay again but was disappointed as the egg disappeared," also finding another containing 6 eggs four of which he took, leaving, in this instance, 2 eggs as nest eggs. These eggs, disappeared a couple of days later. A friend suggested that the bird ate them. This suggestion is preposterous, and the first instance of birds devouring their eggs that the writer ever heard of.

The birds simply removed the eggs being chagrined at the spoilation of their clutches. Mr. A. would have been richer by two nice full sets had he collected them when he first found the nests. Very few species of birds in the writer's experience will lay more eggs into a nest after the greater part of the clutch has been removed. They invariably desert the nests first, however, removing the remainder of their spoiled clutches. There are some exceptions, however, in which the birds retain their incomplete clutches and brood them and in which they simply abandoned nests and the remaining eggs.

Here is an instance of bird removing an egg from the nest, the case being however unlike Mr. A's. On May 28, 1898, at Torresdale, this county, found a Brown Thrasher's nest situated four feet up in a clump of blackberry briars containing four eggs. As they looked incubated and not caring to spoil four embryo *Harporhynchus rufus* I removed one of the eggs and drilled a small hole in the side to ascertain incubation and was pleased to find it fresh. Replacing it in the nest, carefully con-

cealing the hole, I left the set while I hunted elsewhere. On returning about half an hour later was surprised to find but three eggs. The birds had discovered the hole in the egg and perceiving that it was worthless (to the birds) they promptly removed it. How I am not prepared to say. The remainder of the set was collected. I dare say Mr. A's friend would suggest that the bird ate it.

Had I time to consult my note book I could cite many interesting cases relating to bird removing eggs from their nests. Any reader of the Oologist knows how the eggs are removed. This is an interesting subject, little known and probably unanswerable. Let's hear from you reader.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

#### Nest and Eggs of Pileated Woodpecker.

This bird is quite rare in this locality. They only can be found in the largest bottoms. On April 12, 1902 I and my brother started for a large bottom in the Navasota River in Brazos County in search of different specimens of birds. Going about 5 miles in the bottom we came to a large dead elm stub some 14 feet high, it had several large holes in but they proved to be old homes of these beautiful birds. We kept on going and soon we came to another large dead stub about 15 feet high. In going around it I noticed a large hole some 11 feet up. The ground was covered with chips of rotten wood and bark. We rapped on the trunk of the tree several times but failed to bring anything in sight, so I thought it would be a very good idea to climb it. My brother strapped on his climbing irons, as I am not much of a climber. He was about 2 feet from the ground when the beautiful female bird left her home with a loud cackling voice. He was soon to the hole find-

ing it large enough to insert his hand and arm, it being about 2 feet deep. The nest contained 3 very beautiful glossy white eggs, one of them was incubated but the other two were entirely fresh.

I suppose the readers of the Oologist know how happy we felt as this was the first set of these eggs we have ever taken, but in a short time we did not know ourselves where we were at as we got lost about 5 hours and did not get home until night.

I fell down some 5 or ten times but as luck happens I did not break any of the eggs. This set is in my cabinet now and never to be taken out.

A. D. DOERGE,  
Navasota, Texas.

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#### Do Something.

A physician says: "If you cannot find pleasure in the study of the many wonders that surround you, if you care not for geology, natural history, or astronomy, collect walking sticks, buy and cherish old, cracked china, fill up albums and scrapbooks or even gather together autographs and postage stamps—anything sooner than be idle." The doctor is undoubtedly right, for true recreation requires a thorough change of work and also of thought.—Ex.

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#### EDITORIAL.

##### Review.

Vol. I, No. 2 of the Universal Exchange Magazine, Belvidere, Ill, is a decided success. Well printed on good paper and the Directory of Collectors periodicals is alone worth a years subscription.

The current issue of "The Condor" is XXX as usual but of special interest is the Editorial Comment on Ernest Thompson Seton's position on page 181. "Bird Lore" for December 1904. Unfortunately we can not spare

room to to reprint it but it hits the nail on the head and we were strongly tempted.

"The Warbler," second series, Vol. I No. 1, is before us. Of course it is fine. Coming from "Childs" it was bound to be, but that fine plate of the set of 4 Kirtland's Warbler was an agreeable surprise.

Mr. Arnolds position toward any Oologist who may seek to copy his example of the past season is hardly charitable however.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. G. H. Rodwell of Holley, N. Y., on December 3d last.

Mr. Rodwell was an associate of the Editor's earliest Oological experiences and an active member of the old West New York Naturalists Association now defunct. Under any conditions, whether in connection with his hobby or not, it was always a pleasure to me meet him and his death in early life is a loss that we will all regret. He leaves a small but choice collection.

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#### Publications Received.

December 1st to February 1st.

American Ornithology, Vol. IV, No. 12.

Birds and Nature, Vol. XVI, No. 5.

Nature Study, Vol. XIII, No. 12.

Amatuer Naturalist, Vol. I, No. 6.

Philatelic West, Vol. 29, No. 1.

Journal of Maine Ornithological Society, Vol. VI, No. 4.

American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 1.

Universal Exchange Magazine, Vol. I, No. 2.

"Birds and Naturs," Vol. XVII, No. 1.

"Nature Study," Vol. XIV, No. 1, 2.

"Candor," Vol. VII, No. 1.

"Warbler" (2nd series) Vol. I, No. 1.

American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 2.

Philatelic West, Vol. 29, No. 2.

Collector's Note Book, Vol. III, No. 2.

#### A Question Answered.

L. LAWRENCE, Ohio.

The male Downy Woodpecker has the scarlet patch on nape. This varies much in extent with individuals. The females have none at all.—ED.

Alameda, Cal., Jan. 30, 1905.

*Editor Oologist:*

Kindly allow me to add a word or two to your review of my Standard American Egg Catalogue, and to thank you for criticism conceived in so fair a spirit, while citing a few "bulls" which you have overlooked. It certainly is no "snap" to compile a criticism-proof, all wool and a yard wide comparative "exchange basis." To presume to do so is like taking a shot at the moon. I didn't. Skin prices were omitted as suggestions on that side were almost entirely lacking.

On any schedule, Swallow-tailed Kite's eggs should be priced higher than Everglade's, as the former, having occurred in England, is constantly in demand in that country, where Oology is more fostered than in America. There are doubtless more sets of Swallow-tailed in collections in England now than in America. The increasing rarity of the egg is apparent. In Bendire's Life Histories it may be learned that the Everglade breeds in colonies in South America, where it is known as the "Sociable Marsh Hawk," Mr. Gibson finding "twenty or thirty nests, placed a few yards apart." There is a possible, even though remote, supply down that way of these eggs, but never of Swallow-tailed. White-faced Glossy Ibis, owing to plenty of eggs now available, (in Alameda), are high enough. The star is a palpable error.

The list, which came to me in electro form, contains some "breaks" in nomenclature, but for the most part, I was obliged, per force, to let it go at that. You did not catch error on Bick-

nell's Thrush, which might better have been left unpriced; and Brandt's Cormorant, obviously common, though with no price, should have been about 40 cents. Bonaparte's Gull should be \$6 at least. Haven't seen the bbl. full. The printers certainly led me a devil's chase, as when they worked in Passenger Pigeon at 5 cents and caused me thereby to reprint four pages, but I wish the next man (and no better than the Oologist's editor can be suggested) more luck, and hereby subscribe in advance.

H. R. TAYLOR.

Thanking friend Taylor for his prompt reply in the same spirit in which I conceived my review I would only add, I agree that Swallow-tail Kite is entitled to more than Everglade but think the difference too much. Also agree that White-faced Glossy crowd the demand just now. It was some such condition in 1895 and 1896 that induced Lattin to make the drops on Gt. Black-backed Gull, Cabot's Tern, Tex. Cardinal, Pine Warbler and Sennett's Thrasher, yet these all proved to be mistakes.

—EDITOR.

Owing to pressure of work in our engraver's office followed by an unavoidable delay in printer's hands, partly caused by our new standard catalogue, we are very late with February issue. We regret it as much as you. We note in current issue of "Young American" that we are not the only ones wite these troubles.

March will be *on time*.

#### A FRAUD PAR EXCELLENCE.

During the past seven months the Editor has been quietly investigating what appears to be the tail of the worst of all egg frauds.

Some chapters in his history remind one of the notable records accredited to certain stamp fiends.

I have traced his record back for 11 years and as a successful "Big Game" hunter he seems the shining light.

In late years he has operated from Floral Park, Nyack and New York

City addresses. I am not at liberty to cite all his triumphs. They foot up into the hundreds and are all on the same plan.

The two extracts below I publish by permission.

Stanford University, Cal.,

Dec. 26, 1904.

Editor "Oologist":

DEAR SIR:—"It seems to me that the next crook to get roasted should be one C. L. Brownell, formerly of Floral Park, N. Y. His present address I do not know, but if the number of kicks registered to date is any criterion, in Brownell we have about the smoothest bilk that has made a reputation (but no character) for himself, for a long time. Eminently respectable in his methods, (he represents himself to be the manager of a well known magazine) he has had no trouble in doing every one with whom he has had dealings. I hesitate to name some of those who have been skinned, as I am afraid that Brownell is a tender spot, but I am willing to confess to having been done to the extent of \$61.50 exchange value in Raptores and Warblers.

Brownell did not go out for small game, and this may to some extent account for his success as a fraud. Once he had obtained eggs, he never concerned himself with acknowledging their receipt. Threats availed nothing and he does not care for opportunity to justify his dealings. Apparently "the nine points" satisfy him, and as he seems to desire further advertisement, I am strong for giving it to him. Thinking that he had run out of postage stamps, or needed the money, I wrote to his Post Master, who informed me that he knew Brownell personally, and that C. L. Brownell had received my eggs, and would settle up. That was all the satisfaction that I ever got, but compared with others who have run up against Brownell, I think that

I have them skinned to death as far as satisfaction goes.

I waited for some time for Brownell to say something, but I didn't seem to have anything coming to me. Therefore I sent all the evidence that I had been able to collect to the Post Office Inspectors. They promise to give Mr. Brownell a good run for his eggs, but I firmly believe that a little judicious advertising won't do him any harm (!) For myself, I don't feel sore at Mr. Brownell, as I expect to go East next summer. If he is in the vicinity of Floral Park, I firmly expect to settle with him. The machine says that I can punch—well, I can ring the bell dead easy, with either hand. But I am sorry for some of the other people who have been peeled for their only redress seems to lie in warning their friends."

"Brownell never even gave the victim the satisfaction of knowing that he had received the eggs. I realize that I am perhaps doing Mr. Brownell an injustice, but my vocabulary is limited and you can't call a man anything that is so very much worse than fraud, he might feel hurt. However, I think that C. L. Brownell has it coming to him, with interest; and it is the sincere hope of your correspondent that all those who are *not* looking for experience, should avoid him like the man who sells lottery tickets, for it is a stand off between them. One will steal from you, and the other will rob you. Take your pick.

Yours truly,

CHARLES S. THOMPSON.

*To the Editor:*

One C. L. Brownell of Floral Park, Nyack and other points in New York who once achieved distinction by being a principal in the famous Brownell divorce case the details of which were so delightfully indecent has broken out in a new place in his thirst for

further notoriety. He is now a collector who intends to "publish a book on eggs."

He visited me last winter—was suffering from an acute attack of the "grippe" so he said when he came. We took him in, fed him on quinine tablets, toast, eggs, etc., until he had recovered sufficiently to look over my duplicates from which he selected a little over \$100 worth. He fails to send the eggs he promised in exchange or to return my sets or even to answer my affectionate letters, the latter fact, being a person who likes a good correspondence, I regret almost as much as I do the loss of the eggs, the quinine pills, et cetera.

I understand he is swindling everybody who will send him a set of eggs on "approval." As one friend puts it he is as "crooked as a dog's hind leg" and parties who don't care to part with their specimens as easily as the undersigned did should heed this friendly warning.

A. E. PRICE.

A word to the wise is supposed to be sufficient. Lookout for this gent. "No telling" where he will show up next.

And there are two or three more prospective candidates for honorable (?) mention in these columns.

We would advise them to patch up the weak spots in their records promptly before the sun of publicity brings them into objectionable prominence.

—ED.

We have had a very cold winter for this climate. Mercury registered twelve below one morning and at other times four below but in spite of this weather we have had a Mockingbird (*Mimus Polyglottus*) with us. I have seen him several times in the hedge fences near town and yesterday morning, zero weather, he was in a neighboring yard apparently doing well.

C. B. VANDERCOOK,

Olin, Ill.

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VOL. XXII. No. 3.

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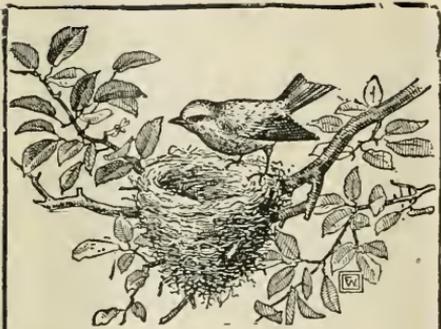
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VOL. XXII. No. 2. 3

ALBION, N. Y., FEB., 1905.

WHOLE NO. 211

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
Chili, Monroe Co., N. Y.

### Discovery of Eggs of the Knot.

WALTER RAINE, Toronto, Canada.

In "Nests and Eggs of British Birds, non Indigenous," the author Mr. Charles Dixon, publishes the following in regard to the eggs of the Knot.

"Several reported eggs of the Knot are in collections, but none of them are authenticated. The reputed egg obtained by the Greely Expedition, near Fort Conger, is unidentified and apparently too small, size 1.10 x 1.00. The egg in the possession of Mr. Seebohm, although unauthenticated is more likely to be genuine so far as size is concerned, being similar to that of the Common Snipe, but paler in ground color. This egg was obtained at Disco, in Greenland; in my opinion a locality much too far south. This however, is not the most southerly locality at which reputed eggs of the Knot have been obtained. W. Raine in his "Bird Nesting in Northwest Canada," figures and describes what he asserts to be two eggs of this birds, taken on the 20th of June, 1889, at Rododavmsi in Iceland. The account is circumstantial enough, but unfortunately the parent birds appear not to have been obtained. It is only fair to say that Mr. Raine's eggs agree apparently in color with that obtained by Lieutenant Greeley, but are larger in size and certainly, judging from the illustrations, very abnormal in appearance. The nest is described as a depression lined with bits of drift wood, the eggs having the ground color pale, pea green, finely speckled with ashy brown."

Although some years have past since the above was published, nothing has occurred to shake my faith in these Knot eggs collected for me in Iceland in the year 1889. It is impossible for these unique eggs to be that of any other bird. What else can they be? The only species nesting in Iceland laying eggs of a similar size to the

Knot's eggs are the Purple Sandpiper and Common Snipe and they are smaller than Snipe's eggs and entirely different in character, ground tint and markings. But I have recently examined a pair of reputed Knot's eggs, kindly loaned me by Mr. Wallis, of Weymouth, England. These were also taken in Iceland on June 13, 1901 and while they are a trifle larger than my Knot's eggs and of a deeper ashy green ground tint and more heavily spotted, still they bear a strong resemblance to my eggs of the Knot. The similarity is at once striking. I have seen hundreds of Snipe's eggs and scores of Purple Sandpiper's, not one of which had any resemblance to these reputed Knot's eggs. Then what else can Mr. Wallis' eggs be but those of the Knot?

I am fully aware that the Knot is a rare bird and only an occasional visitor to Iceland, but it would appear that a few solitary pairs occasionally remain in Iceland during the summer, although the majority of the birds pass on further to the north to breed, and as the Sanderling is known to occasionally nest in Iceland, why should not the Knot do likewise? I have yet another record of a Knot's egg that was taken by myself as far south as Toronto Island, in Ontario, and it greatly resembles the other eggs taken in Iceland, but the ground tint is more ashy green than any other Knot's eggs taken in Iceland. It measures 1.45 x 1.10 and is also finely spotted at the larger end with ashy brown. It was found on May 8, 1897, by myself and two other Toronto Ornithologists.

In referring to my note book I find the following entry:

"May 8, 1897. This evening Mr. Fred Dippie came to my house and reported that while he and his brother, Mr. Sydney Dippie were rambling over Toronto Island they flushed what they

took to be a Snipe and found its egg in a depression on the ground, which they left intending to call a week later and get the full clutch.

The following Saturday afternoon, myself and the Dippie brothers visited the Island, and I took my camera along with the intention of photographing the nest. Judge our disappointment in finding the nest forsaken and still containing the single egg. I saw at a glance it was not an egg of Wilson's Snipe, a bird that never nests so far south as Toronto, and as it greatly resembled my Knot's eggs from Iceland, I could not possibly refer it to any other species. The time of the year May 8th. was very early for a Snipe to be laying. And spotted Sandpipers never have eggs in this locality before the first week in June. This egg was much too large for a spotted Sandpiper's egg; in fact it is as large as a Killdeer, although entirely different to the egg of the latter species, so I consider it safe to name this a genuine egg of the Knot. It corresponds exactly with my reputed Knot's eggs from Iceland."

Now some Ornithologists may laugh at the idea of an Arctic Bird like the Knot nesting so far south, but they must take into consideration that Knots frequent Toronto Island in May during this migration northward. Several local collections containing skins of the Knot were obtained on Toronto Island in May.

So that it is evident that this Knot had an egg developed and had to lay it and then proceeded along with the others of her species on their flight to their nesting grounds in the far north. I am satisfied that before long other eggs of the Knot will be collected on some of the Arctic expeditions and that this will prove that the eggs recorded by myself and Mr. Wallis from Iceland are genuine eggs of the Knot.

[It is not a rare occurrence for migrating birds to lay eggs during migration.

I know of authentic records of this occurring with Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper and Shoveller Duck.

Ed.]

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### The Quail Trap.

*Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin*

By C. L. RAWSON.

The Quail Trap, Midwinter, 1905.—The mild ten days in the middle of January aroused a little activity among local birds. On January 18 and 20 I saw robins in the Public Gardens, Boston, and one at the entrance to the subway on the Common, while the Frog pond was covered with skaters. January 10 I drove from Putnam to the English neighborhood near the state line on the driver's seat of a public hack. From this lofty perch, among many winter birds, I saw a group of a dozen associated robins and bluebirds and a single lone wacup. January 10 and 11 I went into the Quail Trap woods to read this winter's hieroglyphics on the snow. There were rabbit tracks innumerable, many signs of squirrel and mice, and some imprints of skunk, mink, jays and crows. In an open barway, from wall to wall, the different rodents had made a beaten path, plainly flanked by a weasel as big as a ferret. Indistinctly seen among a lot of hound and bird dog tracks, were footprints which I made sure were bobcats, and after a little search, again, as last winter: I found the track of a northern white hare. I measured and compared these impressions with the feet of a jack rabbit which I just received from Manitoba. The hare's front track was larger, but the jack made greater displacement behind.

Our old cock grouse still bears a charmed existence. Gunners who have shot at him during the late open

season tell me that he uses all the known artifices of old birds, by flying straight away, behind the trunks of hemlocks, by "towering" above the tops of bushy trees, and by not "flushing" till the gunner passed by. Three young grouse were spared in our woods this year, and their tracks were seen in several places. The impression of Red Ruff in the snow is in keeping with his size. To a novice it looks like the track of a big partridge cochin cock, and an expert cannot help noticing its resemblance to a ptarmigan's, it is now so heavily furred.

The recent death of Joseph M. Wade of Boston recalls many sunny days of birding with him in local woods, and happy hours in his Laurel Hill study collaborating on bird sketches for various journals. His off-hand monograph on the house Phoebe stands today the best thing extant on the subject. I have his special interleaved copy of the *De Luxe Nests and Eggs of Southern Ohio*, now out of print, and several rare foreign bird books from his library, rich in unique Auduboniana and Wilsoniana. There is a set of Long-eared owls in my collection which he took from a Cooper's hawk's nest near Rockville. I have also sets of Osprey taken by him from rocks, bar-posts, savins and low hornbeams on Plum Island, in the halcyon days before government occupation.

I recall his delightful enthusiasm when I showed him, one morning in early June, "in situ," fourteen nests of Parula warbler containing three score of eggs, showing every shade of variation. Wade thought it "remarkable that in all the pensile nests we examined there was not a single lazy bird's egg."

Many people in the bank building can remember the song of Wade's trained grosbeak, which could be heard for two seasons all along Shetucket street, when the cage was hung out on

the Summer street veranda. At that time it was a *rara avis*, but now the rosebreast dominates everything in song on our shaded summer streets. This particular bird was stolen from Wade's door in Dorchester, and afterwards found and identified in a Tremont street bird store by his pathetic recognition of his owner.

The raven which Mr. Wade brought from Scotland, when freed found a congenial home in the wild ledge back of Summer street. In the fissures of these rocks his American congener in older times no doubt bred in security. The croaks and gutturals of this raven often had half of the crows from "the Commons" and "Hell Gate" hovering overhead. When at last he was taken from his high cave in this ravine he put up the stiffest kind of fight to retain his freedom.

As a climber Mr. Wade was moderate in his ambition, and on his lofty finds I usually did the "shinning" for him. I emphasize this point by recounting the chief incident in a trip we once made in early April over Hearthstone mountain. Near Whip-poorwill ledge I climbed to a Red-shouldered hawk's nest which held young Barred owls in the down. "I am going up to see those squabs if I lose a leg," said Wade.

By chopping a twenty-foot stub I got him up to the first limbs on the tall chestnut. Then, crawling over the big branches for thirty feet more, he did fairly well. Then came a straight shin of fifteen feet. Wade hugged three or four feet of this, slipped back, looked up and down, and said he dared go no higher. My words of encouragement that I had been up to this nest half a dozen times safely, failed to convince him. He began slowly to feel his was down, when the mother owl softly dusted his cheek with her noiseless wings, lit on the next tree, and began to snap her bill.

This gave the climber new courage, and in a second attempt he centived to swarm up within two feet of the nest. Here he had another attack of vertigo, and after ten minutes of frightful nausea he lay pale and exhausted on mother earth. He afterwards described his sensations to me of his last climb, in his characteristic hyperbole. "I tell you, Rawson, that when I was near those owlets, I felt as if I was very close to heaven; but when I took just one look down those seventy feet, I was sure to take a tumble straight to hell! I wouldn't climb another tree like that for a million dollars."

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#### The Other Side.

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It requires little encouragement to launch the average oologist into a glowing description of the pleasant side of his field experience, but he exhibits no such great hurry to portray the other side. This is because he prefers the illustrious light of a hero to the detrimental impression of a blockhead. It is all right, of course, but I prefer Mike's frank impartiality. There was his turkey episode for instance. Instead of the reticence one might expect he took a humorous view and advertised it well. He was in the heavy timber, far from human habitation, when, partly concealed beneath a brush heap and near the base of a beech tree he perceived a turkey upon her nest. No possibility of its being the domestic article entered his mind although he had been told that the wild bird was long since exterminated. He could hardly repress a shout of joy, but did so, and cautiously approached, every moment expecting Madam to flutter away. She did nothing of the kind—just sat and eyed him with a bearing suggestive of calm contempt. When within a few feet he thought of catching her and slowly extended her hand.

Suddenly out shot Madam's head backed by about eight pounds of indignant turkey and Mike went backward and sat down real hard. He had not been expecting this kind of reception and it came as a great shock and surprise. He sat and collected his scattered ideas; then wiggled his fingers and was delighted to find them in working order. Convinced that no bones were broken he turned to the problem of separating Madam from her oological collection without further unpleasantries. A solution was presented in the form of a dead sapling. When pried from the nest her turkeyship refused to stir and Mike had to push her away with the pole. The nest contained eight of the handsomest eggs he ever saw. His feelings, as he packed the set and started for home are left to the reader's imagination. Before leaving the woods he met a farmer. It is one of his characteristics that he can not keep a good thing to himself. He immediately decided to enquire regarding wild turkeys and when told they no longer inhabited that section intended to spring the glad surprise. The sun was shining so Mike started in with the information that it was a pleasant day. The farmer reckoned it was and thought it did not look like rain. Then Mike inquired in a casual off-hand way: "Any wild turkeys in these woods?" "Guess not," was the reply, "but my turkeys all come in here to nest and it keeps me busy looking them up. Am going to a nest now to tote the whole outfit to the farm. It is partly under a brush heap near a beech and I had trouble in finding it but speaking of wild turkeys, now forty years ago—" But Mike suddenly recollected he was in a hurry. When out of sight he started on a run and did not pause until the brush pile was reached. Here he found Madam patiently incubating the empty nest. He wasted no time but pried her off,

replaced the eggs and got out of the neighborhood. Then he sat down, clasped his tired head between his trembling hands and tried to think it all out. The only thing at all clear was the presence of a colossal chump and he bumped his head against the nearest tree and went home. The above is as Mike told it except the weight of the turkey, his estimate being 100 pounds.

J. CLAIRE WOOD,  
Detroit, Michigan.

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### About Some Songs.

ROBIN VS. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK.

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Ask some ornithological friend which song he prefers, the Robin's or the Rose-breasted Grosbeak's. Without hesitation he may reply, "The Grosbeak's of course." Ask another friend and he may answer as readily, "The Robin's is the better". We shall blame neither. Taste is unaccountable, not dependent on the intrinsic value of the thing in question, but the object plus the personality of the one who chooses. Therefore having my own opinion, it will be hard to secure an unbiased verdict concerning the beauties and excellences of the two songs.

The general trend of ornithological writings seems to be somewhat deprecatory to the robin, while the general trend of opinion from investigation made in my locality seems to favor him. Have the writers of books the keener sense, perception and more-matured judgement? Or does this lie with the multitude that do not endeavor to express themselves in written language. Let us consider a few specimens. Chapman writes, "The song of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak is generally compared to that of the Robin, and musical annotation would doubtless show that the comparison is not

misleading. But the similarity is largely one of form: in expression there is no more resemblance in their voices than there is between the birds themselves. There is an exquisite purity in the joyous carol of the Grosbeak; his song tells of all the gladness of a May morning; I have heard few happier strains of bird music." Dr. Kirtland states (per Wheaton, "Birds of Ohio") that in the cranberry marshes of Northern Ohio its song surpasses the Mockingbird in animation. Abbott in his "Birds About Us," is extravagantly in favor of the Grosbeak.

This will suffice for the Grosbeak's side. On the other hand we find the following in John Burrough's "Wake-Robin," in my opinion the fairest, sharpest, double-sided view to be found, containing as much meaning as could well be crowded in one sentence. "It is a strong, vivacious strain, a bright noon-day song, full of health and assurance, indicating fine talents in the performer, but not genius." Elsewhere from the same source I quote the following at some length. "In that free fascinating, half-work and half-play pursuit,—sugar making—a pursuit which still lingers in many parts of New York, as in New England—the Robin is one's constant companion. When the day is sunny and the ground bare, you meet him at all points and hear him at all hours. At sunset, on the tops of the tall maples with look heavenward and in a spirit of utter abandonment, he carols his simple strain. And sitting thus, amid the stark, silent trees, above the wet, cold earth, with the chill of winter still in the air, there is no fitter or sweeter songster in the whole round year. It is in keeping with the scene and the occasion. How round and genuine the notes are, and how eagerly our ears drink them in! The first utterance, and the spell

of winter is thoroughly broken and the remembrance of it afar off."

And now I should contribute my mite of opinion. The basis of this is not mere taste, I trust. The chief reasons why so many prefer the rich carol of the Grosbeak to the uncertain but plaintive and inspiring evensong of the Robin are: 1. The Robin is so much commoner, his notes so much more familiar, and their novel beauty cannot stand the test of eternal repetition while the Grosbeak is rare enough always to command attention. 2. The Robin is heard in prosaic, often hideous situations, while the Grosbeak sings chiefly in the gorgeously bright woods of May and June. 3. The Robin's song has many detracting imperfections, his voice cracks most unmusically at times, while *all* the Grosbeaks are good singers.

Transfer these items in favor of the Robin—where they should be—and the scale will weigh against the Grosbeak. Clothe the beautiful Grosbeak with the Robin's familiar chestnut and grayish brown, bring him to the "back yards" of the city, make him as abundant as the Robin now is, and sing as constantly, and it would take a surprisingly short time to tire of him. It is easy to avow we could never tire of a song, but this cannot be true. I have never yet met the nature lover who could not find a constantly-repeated song monotonous,—

"Variety is the spice of life

That gives it all its flavor,"

says the poet, and this applies nicely to the situation.

I would not have it believed I depreciate the Grosbeak's song; I could listen to it for hours (but not forever). I only seek to "give the devil his due."

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#### Green Leaves in Nests.

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Mr. J. H. Bowles article in "The Oologist" for October set me to look-

ing up data in my note books and I find several instances of nests of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks in which green leaves were used, as follows:

Red-tailed Hawk, April 26, 1896. Incubation advanced. Nest contained some sticks on which were small green leaves.

Red-shouldered Hawk, May 3, 1896. Incubation one-third. Nest of sticks lined with moss, maple twigs on which were small green leaves, strips of bark and lots of tent caterpillar's nests.

Red-shouldered Hawk, May 12, 1896. Incubation fresh. Nest lined with strips of bark, dead and green leaves, a small piece of moss and several caterpillar's nests.

Red-tailed Hawk, Apr. 24, 1898. Incubation fresh. Nest contained green maple blossoms.

Red-tailed Hawk, May 22, 1898. Eggs addled. Nest contained a lot of green leaves.

Red-shouldered Hawk, Apr. 23, 1899. Incubation fresh. Nest lined with rootlets, fine bark strips, birch bark and a few dried green leaves.

Red-shouldered Hawk, Apr. 23, 1899. Incubation, small embryos. Nest, lined with dead leaves, bark strips, some green moss and a green fern.

Red-shouldered Hawk, May 7, 1899. Incubation two-thirds. Nest contained green leaves.

Red-shouldered Hawk, May 12, 1899. Incubation, small embryos. Nest, lined with pine leaves, bark strips, some broad grass, a few green leaves, an old Vireos nest and some down from the bird's breast.

Red-tailed Hawk, Apr. 28, 1901. Incubation. large embryos. Nest lined with bark strips and a few corn husks. A few evergreens were hanging from the edge of the nest and some of the twigs in the nest had green blossoms on them.

In nearly all cases the green leaves

were placed around the rim of the nest seemingly as a decoration.

Nearly all Red-shouldered Hawks in this locality use lots of the old nests of the tent caterpillar to decorate their nests with also an occasional sprig of pine or hemlock with the green leaves on. Around Penn Yan the evergreens are seldom used, although there are evergreen trees in nearly every wood, but at Branchport, only 8 miles from Penn Yan, nearly every nest contains evergreens.

The Red-tailed Hawk uses an abundance of evergreens in nearly every nest.

The Red-shoulder uses quite a variety of nesting material among which I have found corn in the ear, corn cobs, corn husks, tissue paper, Baltimore Orioles, Wood Pewees and Red-eyed Vireo's nests, straw, mullein leaves and binding twine.

VERDI BURTCH,  
Branchport, N. Y.

#### More Green Leaves in Nests.

Mr. Bowles' description of his Broad-winged Hawk's nest with green leaves in October "Oologist" makes an interesting addition to Mr. Short's list of one, (Mississippi Kite) but does not by any means complete the list.

I have found green leaves in nests of Western Red-tail and in Swainson and Red-bellied Hawks. In the cases of the first two it is so rare as to be remarkable and can only be considered accidental or freakish, but with the Red-bellied Hawk it is another story and I have found the nest that does not contain a greater or less quantity to be the exception. My records show scarcely a nest where they were not found.

Out of seven nests of the species taken by me last season, green leaves were in all but one. This contained

three eggs with slight incubation. The other sets ranged from fresh to chicks with feathers.

I am quite well convinced from many years of observation that this Hawk replaces the leaves from time to time during incubation as I have found them in nests containing eggs in all stages, frequently finding badly incubated and leaf stained eggs in nests with fresh leaves.

In the "Life Histories," Major Bendire records finding green willow stems with the leaves on, in lining of nest, containing two fresh eggs and quotes Wm. L. Belding, regarding the finding of three young birds in nest which contained green, but dry, and broken leaves in lining. Both nests of this species.

Davie in the "Nests and Eggs" attributes the green leaf habit to the Florida Red-shouldered Hawk also.

C. S. SHARP,  
Escondido, Calif.

#### Red-winged Blackbird.

The curious notes of the Red-wing, liquid when close by, burly at a distance, have given rise to a variety of phrasings most surprising. Yet, out of the host, not one is perfectly satisfactory. If it were, it would be accepted and used as such. (e. q. the "Teacher teacher", etc. which Burroughs applied to the Ovenbird.) The most generally favored at present seems to be one of the earliest, that used by Thoreau—"conqueree." When the phrasing is changed, the changed form may be very like the original, e. g. the "kong-quer-ree" used by Chapman. All that I have seen have good points, all save one—Flagg's "chip-chip-churee" which might as well apply to any other bird. The general fault (in my opinion, of course) seems to be the lack of an *explosive* syllable, and the fact that the first, almost inaudible syllable, is giv-

en equal importance with the last, the only part of the song audible at a good distance. Why not italicize the last syllable? With the assumed faults corrected, it might stand as "con-ker-plēē."

NORMAN O. FOERSTER.

#### Young Spotted Sandpipers can Swim.

Last summer while out on a collecting trip in a large swamp south of the city, having collected nothing but a set of Yellow Warbler and American Red-start, I sat down to rest on a bank of a small pond, feeling a little discouraged. A small flock of Sandpipers came into view, and while watching these a Least Bittern came and scared the Sandpipers away. I went over after the Bittern. I flushed up an old Sandpiper and her little chicks. Two of these little fellows came in the path and ran towards the pond. I stopped for them to come back, being afraid they would get drowned, but to my surprise they walked into the water and swam out to a small sand bar where I could not get them. In the meantime the Bittern became frightened and flew away. I walked up the bank ways and sat down to watch the young Sandpipers. I caught one with little difficulty and examined them to see if they had webbed feet. They had not. I then took him and flung him in the pond about two rods out, he came to the top and swam to the shore and hid in the grass. This may be a little news to some.

ALAN WRIGHT,  
Gloversville, N. Y.

The young of all the wading birds that I have had opportunity to study swim with perfect ease and voluntarily when a few hours old. Many, though not web-footed, have limited diving powers also. Ed.

#### EDITORIAL.

#### WILD PIGEONS RE-APPEAR.

#### Big Flock of Rare Birds Seen at Chardon.

CHARDON, O., Nov. 2.—A flock of fully 500 wild pigeons passed over Chardon, Saturday afternoon. Hundreds of people who are familiar with

the markings of the wild pigeon, witnessed the sight. The flock was also seen at Aquila Lake. The re-appearance of these birds after an absence of twenty-three years has caused considerable speculation among the sportsmen of this locality. Wild pigeons were last seen near Chardon in April, 1883.

The last great flight of these birds in northern Ohio, was witnessed in the spring of 1876. The pigeons reappeared in the spring of 1877, but in greatly diminished numbers. Their total disappearance later caused the belief to become general that the birds had been annihilated by market hunters. For years the Smithsonian Institution has had a standing offer of \$1,000 for a single specimen of the American wild pigeon. At various times the presence of pigeons has been reported in remote sections of foreign countries, but all efforts to locate the birds in the United States have proved fruitless.—*Toledo Blade*.

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#### Re-appearance of the Pigeons.

In certain localities in New England, wild pigeons are said to have appeared so freely as to suggest the regeneration of a species supposed by many to have become nearly extinct. In times not yet really remote they were familiar as visiting their favorite haunts in prodigious numbers. Their great "roosts" in northwestern Pennsylvania, not very far from Buffalo, are well remembered by the old sportsmen. Considerable pieces of forest would be literally loaded with the birds, so heavily that large branches of trees would give way under their weight; and their slaughter with guns or capture with nets was the simplest of accomplishments. They were destroyed by the million; as relentlessly followed up as the wild buffalos on the plains were, and apparently with similar result. The pigeons were seen no more in anything comparing with their former profusion. The popular belief was that they had been killed off. Some inclined to the opinion that

the instinct of self-preservation had caused them to migrate permanently to some remote part of the world; and this may be true, for stories have been told by travelers of seeing vast flocks of them in the Andes of South America. If it is true that wild pigeons are returning to the North in substantial number, every state into which they may come should provide amply by-laws for their protection.—*Buffalo Courier*.

June 20, 1904.

The above clippings are in line with other reports more or less authentic this last season and it would seem possible that these birds are becoming more plentiful.

If careful observation during the coming season should confirm this, let us welcome them with careful protection and abstain from a rush for Skins and live Birds, which would be a calamity.

I know of one pair breeding in Monroe county, N. Y., last June. Had I taken them I could not reasonably expect any this year. I am hoping that they escaped and will return three-fold this coming summer.

We have Laws enough. Too many in this state. As a prominent Game Protector said this last season. "If the people would co-operate to help us enforce half of the existing laws the Birds would be amply protected."

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#### Publications Received.

- Amateur Naturalist, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Universal Exchange Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 3.
- Bulletin of Dept. of Zoology, Penn., Agri. Dept., Vol. 2, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6.
- "Young Americans," Vol. 38, No. 1.

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Your magazine has certainly had a phenomenal success and it is entirely worthy of its cordial reception.—*J. A. Allen, Editor "The Auk."*

When one considers the low price at which you sell BIRDS the number and excellence of the plates are surprising, and I trust that your efforts to popularize the study of Ornithology may meet with the success it so well deserves.—*F. M. Chapman, Editor, "Bird-Lore."*

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## At it Again.

After some 6 months work building and in more commodious quarters. I wish to call your attention to the fact I am still at the old stand. This month I offer a few choice sets from last season's take: *Holboell's Grebe*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 10c. per egg; *Horned Grebe*, 2-8, 8c; *Loon*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , \$1.00. *Virginian Rail*, 1-10, 10c.; *Sora Rail*, 1-6, 4c.; *Bartram's Sandpiper*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 20c.; *Spotted Sandpiper*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 6c. *Canada Ruffed Grouse*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 20c.; *Prairie Hen*, 1-7, 1-6, 8c.; *Sharp-tailed Grouse*, 1-7, 1-10, 25c.; *Marsh Hawk*, 2-5, 15c.; *Cooper's Hawk*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 10c.; *Swainson Hawk*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , very fine, 25c.,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 15c.; *Broad-winged Hawk*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 50c.; *American Rough-leg Hawk*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , very fine, \$1.00; *Am. Sparrow Hawk*, 1-5, 15c.; *Long Eared Owl*, 2-5,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 1-7, 15c.; *Short Eared Owl*, 2-4, 1-5, 20c.; *Burrowing Owl*, 1-5, 7c.; *Blue Jay*, 1-6, 2c.; *Redwinged Blackbird*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1c; *Bronzed Grackle*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2c.; *Western Savanna Sparrow*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 12c.; *Clay colored Sparrow*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 15c.; *Arctic Towhee*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 25c.; *Barn Swallow*, 1-6, 2c.; *Loggerhead Shrike*, 1-7, 5c.; *Western Bluebird*,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 5c. Prices per egg. Prepaid by mail.

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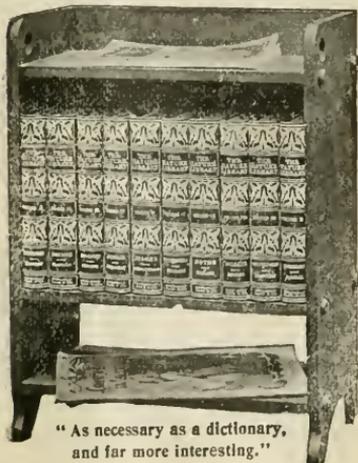
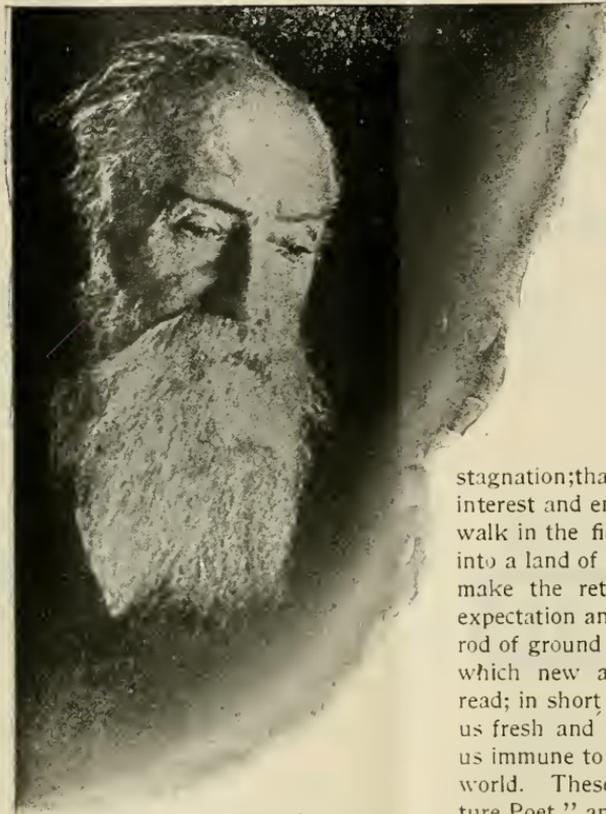
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VOL. XXII. No. 4.

ALBION, N. Y., APRIL, 1905.

WHOLE No. 213

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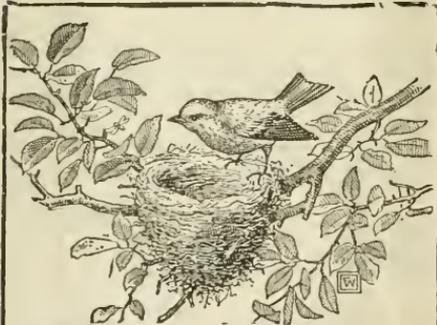
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 4.

ALBION, N. Y., APRIL, 1905.

WHOLE NO. 213

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
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## SOME HAWKING TRIPS.

By HARRY H. DUNN.

After Western Red Tails.

I have been feeling it coming for some time, this longing to get once more into print through the columns

of the Oologist and today I am going to try to tell you just a little of the fun I have had afield in the warm days of many a new year in southern California.

How it is with the rest of you fellows who read the Oologist and contribute good stuff to its pages, I don't know, but as for me, I like to take down a file of the "old reliable," draw my chair up to the fire and spend one of these long evenings reading about the things some other fellow has done in an oological way in some other state. Best of all I like to read about their "takes" of hawks and owls and eagles, sets that are precious because it takes dear effort to get them.

There are always such sets in every collection, and as I turn my hawk's eggs over, one by one, noting each flash of purple, each grotesque daub of brown, I come upon two huge specimens, unmistakably Red tails, yet of size more ample than most Western Red Tails, large enough indeed to have come from some of the famous hawkers of Iowa and Kansas and Minnesota, where the genuine old down east Red tail holds forth. What a day this set recalls to mind! Morning in the hills, me astir at five of a cool March day, the 31st, I believe, the chores done, a lunch box, heavy with mother's good cookery on my arm, my little lathers' hatchet at my belt, my pockets full of cotton, and, last but by no means least, two dogs atrail. One of these, a bob tailed, human hearted old fox hound, answered the death song of a rattle snake almost four years ago. The other, little and nothing, but common "dawg", but a fit companion for the brave old hound, still lives and is the



ROAD-RUNNER.

Photo from life by H. C. Burt, Santa Paula, Calif.

torment of careless boys who come to kill the meadowlarks or other sweet singers on his master's place.

Such was my outfit, and I struck off into the hills like Ponce de Leon on the quest of his fountain of youth. Close together, like the three comrades that we were, we crossed the first low range of hills and then let ourselves down into a canyon filled with low live oaks, here and there a lofty sycamore rearing its white head gaunt against the blue of the California sky.

It was almost noon when we came to this place, and so far I had found just seven nests of the big hawks, most of them filled with green leaves, but none containing eggs. Heartily tired I sat down to eat my lunch beneath one of the oaks, while the dogs bathed and played in the creek below, when, glancing up I, saw, fitted close in against the trunk of one of the largest of the sycamores, a rough nest, huge of outline and surmounted by the head of a hawk!

Lunch was forgotten. I ran down to the base of the great trunk, which could not have been less than three feet in diameter, and rapped excitedly with my hatchet. There was a scream from above, a sound as of flapping wings, and an immense, hawk flew away through the tree tops. The way I went up that tree was a circus and I have no doubt that, if dogs laugh, the sides of both of mine were sore when I came back to earth.

The tree was too large to climb without irons and of these I had none, so I had to crawl into the tree on a low hanging branch. Once there it was an easy climb up to the nest.

Judging from all appearances, I should have found at least a set of three; what I got was two monstrous, badly incubated eggs, evidently a full set, beautifully marked, unusual in size, but too few to be typical. In nine cases out of ten, when a Red tail's

nest contains only two eggs, the set is incomplete, though sometimes the female lays a second set of only two when, for some reason she has been deprived of her first set.

When I had rested from this climb I started down through the oaks and about the first thing I did was to rouse a Long eared owl off six nice fresh eggs in an old crow's nest only a few feet from the ground in an oak sapling. I never saw one of these owls accept a deserted nest in so unstable a position but I expect Madam Owl knew more about this than I did, but I have her set yet. Then I began to investigate the old crow's nests more closely, with the result that, in the next hour, I took two more fine sets of the Long eared and found a family of three young Pacific Horned Owl. These large owls usually lay their eggs in January or February, so that their youngsters had a long way the start of the long ears.

I flushed a number of young Barn owls, birds of the year passed, from among these empty crows' nests, and I judge that they were making use of them as roosting places and hunting lodges, for their home nests, I well knew, were several miles away in a honey combed cliff on the edge of a large canon.

The Red tails seem to sort of shun the oaks except in very rare cases, so I paid little attention to many of the old crow nests until I came in sight of one visible from all sides. It was in the upright fork of a vertical limb of a giant oak, fully forty feet from the ground and without a limb for the last half of that distance. On the nest in plain sight, sat Mrs. Red tail, calmly watching my movements and not deigning to fly until I rapped her tree heavily several times. Then she left with a rush and a scream, rising to join her mate, hanging on motionless wings far up in the heavens.

It took me a good half hour to get to that nest, but when I got there all else was forgotten for there lay four beautifully marked and perfectly fresh eggs. Red tails by their markings and from her scream I knew them to be, but had they been Golden Eagles' eggs, I should hardly have been more delighted.

Then, when I had had a rest, I struck off across the hills for home with a light heart, and you who have wandered far afield in this pursuit know full well that it was well after dark ere the lights of home came into view.

(To be continued.)

Personally I am not competent to state as to completeness of set of 2 of 337b, but am certain that 2 is very often a complete set of the Eastern Bird. Ed.

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## NOTES ON THE WARBLERS OF CANADA.

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By W. L. KELLs.

### The Mourning Warbler.

(*Geothlypis philadelphia*.)

The Mourning Warbler though not abundant in any district, is yet pretty widely distributed over the province of Ontario, as well as other divisions of eastern Canada, but it is among the last of the family to announce its vernal advent amid the wild scenery of its summer haunts. Usually, when the expanding buds of the lower underwood are bursting into leaves, when the yellow bloom of the leather wood scents the spring time air, and the virgin soil of the forest, is variegated by the early wild flowers of the season, the observer of bird migrations, if in the vicinity of its chosen summer home, will be enabled by the sound of its song, to add to his list this species, as among the more recent arrivals from the sunny south. But, as the month of July advances, its nesting period is over, its notes for the seasons are silent, and the bird itself

appears to be among the first of the members of its family to take its departure from the uncultivated scenery of its summer home, and begin its aerial voyage towards its tropical winter residence in the regions of Central America.

Here it enjoys the pleasures of existing amid perpetual summer, during that portion of the year when its Canadian fatherland feels the chilly breath of the ice king, is covered with a mantle of snow, and swept by the wild storms of winter. In March it begins its northward journey, but two months pass away before it reaches the terminus of its winged voyage in the region of its northern range and summer home; and here begins again one of the chief objects of its migration movements, i. e., the propagation of its species, and when the period during which this can only be done, is over, the impulses to return towards the south seem strong, and to yield to the promptings of nature, in this matter, is not long delayed; for, by the middle of September, if not earlier, all the species of the genus have disappeared, though some individuals may linger longer amid the scenery of their summer haunts, in the thicket and swamp, than is now known.

The haunt and home of the Mourning Warbler, during the period of its residence in Canada, is generally on the margins of lowland woods, or second growth swamps, where there is an intermingling of young under wood, fallen brush and Raspberry vines. It may also occasionally be found to frequent wooded ravines, the sides of brush covered hills and the margins of mud bottomed creeks, which are found to meander their courses through what are called "beaver meadows," where there is deep concealment, and here, amid the thick foliage, one strain of the song notes of the male of this species, may often be heard in the midsummer days,

while the little performer itself is invisible. At times he will rise to a considerable elevation, and after a pleasing performance of quite a different series of musical notes, in the venting of which he appears to take much pleasure and pride, and during which he makes a rainbow like circle, he makes a rapid descent into the thicket below, near where, it is probable, the female has her nesting place. Another particular haunt of this bird is small clearings in tracts of hardwood forest, and along the sides of roadways through primitive woods, but it is seldom observed out in the open fields, except in the backwoods settlement, nor does it often approach the garden, or other environments of human habitations, and, except where the woods are open, it will not be found deep in the forest, but as the original forests of southern Ontario are fast disappearing, time will, no doubt, effect great changes in the summer haunts of this species. In eastern Canada, the Mourning Warbler does not appear to advance further north than the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the valley of the Ottawa River, but in the western portion of its range, which extends to the foot hills of the Rocky Mts., it may extend its summer range to more northern latitudes, and higher altitudes, than in the east. Too little is yet known of the nesting history of this Warbler, to describe whether it deposits more than one set of eggs in the season, certainly its nesting period would not allow of its raising more than one brood during its summer stay in Canada; but where the first clutch of eggs are taken it will doubtless nest a second time. But considering the many enemies among the smaller mammals, birds of prey and reptiles to which its eggs and young are exposed it is doubtful if even one brood is raised by each pair of the species that cross our national boundry with each return of spring; even in the most protective localities; though the process

of civilization is rather in favor of its increase except from the presence of the domestic cat and yet it is wonderful how some nests of our garden frequenting birds will escape the attention of this agile feline foe. The chief protective means resorted to by this species is by selecting a deep shady spot either among thick herbage, vines or young underwood on or near the ground, and then when incubation has begun and as soon as the female becomes aware of danger she does not fly directly from the nest but quietly runs off among the surrounding shade and does not take wing till some distance away, nor does she return to her charge till she thinks the danger is over. These efforts to protect her progeny are so far as human kind are concerned so successful that very few of the nests are ever discovered, and its eggs are, and ever likely to remain a rarity in oological collections, but the case is very different with the lower orders of Carnivorous mammals and snakes, which are ever on the search to find and devour the eggs and young of every species that comes within their reach. In this, charge the Red Squirrel, the Chipmunk, the Weasel, the Mink, the Fox and the Skunk, are among the chief transgressors that range the haunts of the Warblers, while nearer human habitations, cats, rats, and even mice do their deadly work, and no enemy of all the Warbler family is more dreaded than the vagabond Cowbird. During the past twenty years a number of the nests of the Mourning Warblers have come under my observations and the finding of these has been rather accidental than the results of continuous field and forest research, Guelph, Ont., Daily Herald.

Probably more authentic sets of this Warbler have been taken in Orleans county, N. Y., than any other locality as restricted.

They much prefer the first nesting site mentioned. They do not nest but once unless disturbed. Ed.

### Adventures of a Grosbeak Family.

The beautiful Rose-breasted Grosbeak is a common summer resident of and a well known and favorite bird in Jasper county, Iowa. I have found them nesting in box elder trees at from six to thirty feet from the ground. Their nests are very frail structures and the complement of eggs three, sometimes four. They are imposed upon by the cowbird. Fully agreeing with the article in the *Oologist* written by Mr. B. S. Bowish, I have tried to make the above as concise as possible.

A pair of grosbeaks have nested for the last three years in a box elder tree in our backyard, hardly twenty feet from the door. Last spring they arrived from their winter resort on May 5th and very soon after commenced nest building. We watched their frail nest grow from day to day until it contained three eggs. After careful brooding by both parents, at the end of two weeks, three tiny chips off the old block were safely ushered into bird dom. About this time a spying Blue Jay thought that something similar to veal would suit him for breakfast. Happening near, he soon changed his mind, and decided that a brisk walk or rather a fly would benefit his appetite and constitution. For the male grosbeak assisted by two screeching robins, which he had called to his aid, soon made him hike out of sight on the overland route.

One bright day near the first of June, we observed the three youngsters perched at different heights in the tree, uttering at regular intervals their mournful little cry. They eventually reached the ground, where the children caught and patted them, placing them time and again in the nearby trees and a lilac bush, where they would stoutly cling and climb as high as they could towards the end of the limb. They would allow us to approach at any time and stroke their heads, at which

they would open their mouths at us as if expecting food. The mother would fearlessly come to feed them while I stood only three feet away, but the father would never come out of the trees.

At last after several days two of them disappeared, but the third a little male, stayed several days longer. He, a funny little fuzzy miniature of his illustrious father, was still covered with yellow down, as when he left the nest, and would always be seen hopping or taking three yard flights along the ground. One morning while I was eating breakfast, I was startled by the excited calls of birds in our front yard. I rushes out to find the mother Grosbeak flitting excitedly from tree to tree, while at the foot of an oak a woodpecker was waging war against her offspring. I ran toward them, firing a club at the red headed rascal as I went, and picking up the poor young adventurer, found he had been severely pecked about the head and mouth by the stout sharp bill of the woodpecker, who was now exulting over his victory from the top of a neighboring telephone pole. The sides of the young bird's mouth were badly torn and his throat was so filled with blood that he could not peep. After washing his mouth out with warm water and rubbing his wounds with cosmoline, I placed him in the sun on our wide front porch, from which on the following day he followed his mother off into the wide world somewhere, none the worse for his exciting adventure.

J. L. SLOANAKER.

One day last summer I discovered a Wood Thrushes nest containing one egg. On visiting it again I found three eggs. Then there was an interval of about a week before I got time to go to it again. Upon arriving I was very much surprised to see a Robin fly off the nest. I climbed up and found that the nest contained 3 Thrushes' eggs and 3

Robins'. A lady told me that about a week before she had seen a dead thrush near the nest, so I judge that the Robins drove away the remaining bird. This is the first incident of the kind I ever witnessed. Is it a common or rare occurrence in bird life?

DAVID HARROWER,  
Swarthmore, Pa.

No! This is not common by any means. Such notes are always of interest and solicited from all. Ed.

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The Editor of the Oologist :

The excellent suggestion of Mr. Price, resulting in the appointment of a committee to whom questionable transactions in the egg line may be submitted, is one which will certainly meet with a cordial endorsement from all who have been through the mill. That the investigations of the gentlemen who have kindly consented to act in the matter will be accepted and duly appreciated goes without saying.

My collection is still a modest one but I find in my note book that my first oological specimens were taken "June 20, 1881"; I have them yet, highly prized and respected, and I would hardly part with that old set of Catbird's for dozens of "rare and curious" eggs that have reached me in the past twenty years. They run all the way from a couple of sets of Lapwing's taken in Dakota some fifteen years ago, to a set of Rock Wren, recently received. The specifications accompanying the latter set call for six eggs, but the Wren through an oversight, no doubt, only supplied five, the other being added by a friendly Vireo to complete the set; all of which goes to show that the cowbird is not the only biped occasionally dropping an egg among strange bedfellows. But after all, it is not the rank, blundering imposter, making up impossible data or freak substitutions that drives collectors "out of the business" as Mr. Price

says; how much oftener do we receive a set with marks obscured or renewed, details on data erased or altered, or that just has a "queer" look, we cannot return it and risk an unjust accusation, and so it remains, an object of suspicion and distrust among its honorable neighbors, until, like an evil weed, it is thrown out and destroyed. Fortunately the egg shark is not easily content; becoming bolder with apparent success, his greed is seldom satisfied until, over reaching himself, detection and exposure finally follow.

In his connection I would like to suggest that, as a matter of precaution and self protection, collectors of rare and valuable eggs, particularly of the larger kinds, such as cranes, eagles, falcons, etc., might do well to note on the data blank in their own handwriting, some natural distinguishing feature of the eggs themselves, such as their size or peculiarity of shape and marking; those are set marks that cannot be altered. I recently received a handsome set of Broad-winged Hawk's eggs upon which the set marks, originally in pencil, had become so blurred as to be absolutely illegible; the collector, however, had carefully noted on his data accurate measurements of each egg, which I readily verified, and I valued these figures a good deal more than the common place "Remarks" that the eggs were taken "From an old crow's nest," 40 feet from the ground." This collector protected himself, for the eggs had passed through many hands and if any substitution had been attempted clearly he was not responsible for it.

One more example may not be amiss. Of two sets of Wren-Tit, one was fresh when taken, in the other incubation was advanced;" in the latter set three eggs have large holes, while the fourth egg was blown through a "pinhole"; no harm in that, to be sure, but if I ever send that set out in exchange to some suspicious stranger he may be

relieved to see the collector's statement that "one egg was added."

T. W. RICHARDS,  
Surgeon, U. S. Navy.

U. S. S. Arkansas, Nov. 28, 1904.

#### Is it a Common Thing?

On June 11, 1903, I started down the road for a little tramp and just as I was about to turn in the field, I saw a Red-headed Woodpecker on a fence post with a mouse in his claw, I went toward him and he flew to a tree taking the mouse with him in his claws the same as a Hawk does. I went to the tree and scared him and he flew to the woods with the mouse still in his claws.

A. E. KIBBE,  
Mayville, N. Y.

The Red-headed Woodpecker is almost omnivorous in his feeding habits, but this is the first time I have heard of their feeding on mice. Might it be that the bird found a dead mouse? Ed.

#### Sparrow Hawk feeding on Cocoons.

During my ornithological rambles in the Delaware River meadows at Bridesburg, this county, during the winter of 1901-1902, I have twice observed the Sparrow Hawk feeding on cecropia moth cocoons, and judging from the large number of torn, empty cases of these and other moths they must feed in the winter to a large extent upon cocoons. Have any other observers observed them feeding on these cocoons?

R. F. MILLER,  
3473 Amber St., Philadelphia, Pa.

In December Oologist, I noticed description of an egg within an egg, and you say that you had never heard of a case of this sort before. For over 20 years I have had a little chicken's egg in my collection found within an ordinary chicken's egg by my aunt. The egg is about the size of a Song Sparrow's and of a dark yellowish color the shell unlike the one described was not pliable. I have read of other cases.

WM. R. WHARTON,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

#### EDITORIAL.

After many vexitious delays our New Standard Catalogue is ready for delivery. We are not conceited enough to claim that it is absolutely perfect.

Recent developments since it went to press convince us that a few prices may not be just right, but we think it is the best obtainable and we trust the shape and style may suit the many who collaborated in its conception. We regret that lack of space and time forbids a Skin Catalogue at this time.

#### A Correction.

Unfortunately, in making up March number our printer cut Mr. Foerster's article on "Some Bird Songs" page 41 into two parts and failed to give the author any credit for Robins vs. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. This on pages 41 and 42 was a part of one article with Redwing Blackbird on page 44.

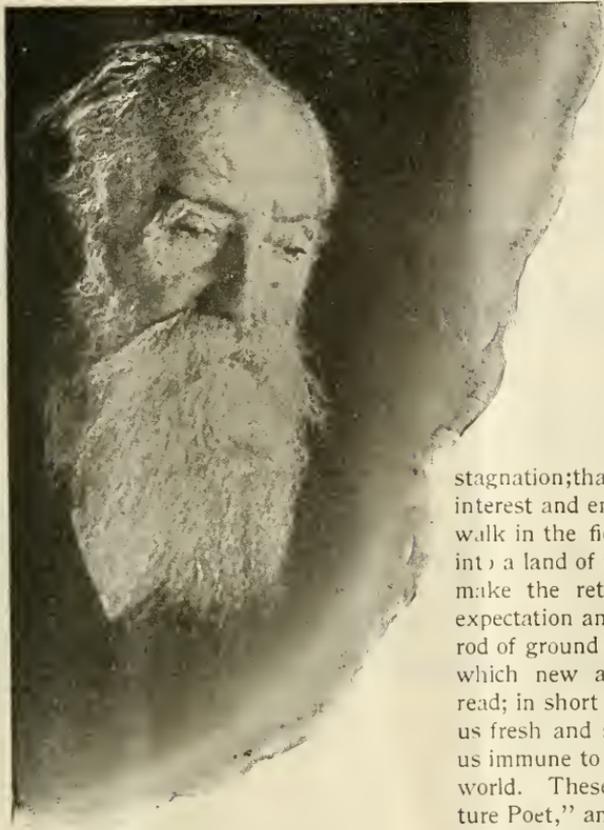
#### Publications Received.

Journal of Maine Ornithological Society, Vol. VII, No. 1.  
American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 3.  
Nature Study, Vol. XIV, No. 3.  
Wilson's Bulletin, Vol. XII, No. 1.  
The Condor, Vol. VII, No. 2.  
American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 4.  
Universal Exchange Mag., Vol. 1, No. 4.  
Amateur Naturalist, Vol. 2, No. 2.  
Penn. Div. of Zoology, Monthly Bull., Vol. II, No. 10.  
Quarterly Bull., Vol. II, No. 3.

#### Review.

Gleanings No. IV, J. W. Jacobs.  
"Some Notes on the Birds of Monongalia, Co., W. Va."

An interesting account of two trips through this territory. Of special interest was his find of Cowbird's egg in nest of Parula Warbler which seems to be unusual. Ed.



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VOL. XXII. No. 5.

ALBION, N. Y., MAY, 1905.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 5.

ALBION, N. Y., MAY, 1905.

WHOLE No. 214

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
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### Pica Pica Hudsonica.

There is a black and white rascal out here in Idaho that has furnished me more amusement and study than all the birds that have ever come under my observing ken. Of all the wise birds that the great All Father has made,

commend me to the Black-billed Magpie. You no doubt recall that old fable of how all the birds came to school in nest building to the Magpie and one by one departed using just so much of the lesson taught as they had learned, until she was at last without pupils, hence the Magpie is the only bird who knows how to build a nest rightly. The story has a moral to it. It is a fact that of all the specimens of bird architecture that I have ever examined the nest of this bird is far and away the most unique in its adaptability. The nest used to be constructed in hawthorn bushes about ten or fifteen feet from the ground, then there came a change. When I first began the study of birds the fact that every bush of any size in the Clearwater valley was the site of one or more nests of the Magpie made me look to that bird first of all. I was struck at once with the great wisdom displayed in the nest building. It is a very bulky affair for so small a bird. Often it is as large as a bushel basket and is cunningly woven of dried limbs that have fallen from the thorns and are a veritable chevaux de frise directed against any too inquisitive and dinner hunting rodent who sought to molest the peace and quietude of the family. It was my good fortune at one time to see a racoon dinner hunting in this manner. He approached the nest amid the storms of protest from the parent birds who dashed at him with shrill cries of anger. They picked and scratched in the most determined manner. With the swaying of the slender limb the poor coon had very little time to defend himself. With grim determination he crept out to the nest and when he found that it was quite another matter to get at the



Photo by B. S. Bodish.

NEST AND EGGS OF LEAST FLYCATCHER, IN SITU., LEONA, N. J.

eggs a look of disgust came over his face that is hard to describe in words. With a zeal worthy of a good cause he sat to work demolishing the structure which he evidently assumed would take only a short time. The longer he labored the more tempting those eggs became and at the same time more futile his labors were for he was tearing up the compact structure of the nest and making it more and more difficult to get a paw in. In fact he had by this time closed the nest up so securely that the old bird herself would be unable to enter. At last disgusted and full of thorns he clambered down and made off without any omelet of Magpie eggs to satisfy him for all the work he had done. I followed him up to the bush and got my hands nicely turned up trying to open the nest so that I might add to my collection. Many times have I returned from the collecting trips my hands one mass of scratches. The game was worth it all however. I have often wondered how the old bird could get her body through the very small opening that she leaves in one side of the nest. She does though, for I have noted them simply dive into the nest without a pause and never break an egg. I said, at first, they built their homes in the hawthorn bushes in the river valleys. Now, however, since the advent of settlement and acquired enemies have taken the place of the natural enemies of the bird, they have begun building in the higher pines upon the hillsides. In fact the last collecting that I did in the Clearwater Valley of some one hundred sets that I collected hardly ten of them were taken from the typical nesting localities. Instead we were compelled to don the "hooks" and skin to the summits of the towering pines for our treasures. I consider this a very remarkable reversion within so short a time.

I can see no objection to collecting all the eggs of this bird that can be found. To the casual bird student the Mag-

pie is a very cute fellow with a fund of humor to his credit and a store of good shrewd common sense under his black bonnet, to the resident of his bailiwick he is a most arrant thief and destroyer of other nests and is not above purloining a young chicken whenever the opportunity presents. Those are minor sins compared with his habit of picking at live animals. I lived among the Indians for several years, and learned that the Indian is never very careful of his horses, riding them until they have sore backs, then turning them out to get well the best way they may. Many and many times have I seen two or three Magpies seated upon the back of one of these poor beasts industriously making a meal. It seemed impossible for the tortured animal to shake them off. They would flap up into the air a foot and realight as soon as possible and resume their tearing at his flesh. The sheep men of the west hate a Magpie above all other pests. They harass the weak sheep in the spring to such an extent that they often kill them. It is a rule on the range to shoot the old birds and destroy their home whenever one is found. This is not a pleasant topic in bird life but I suppose that we are not reading for the breakfast table but for information.

The eggs are quite familiar to oologists hence it is not necessary to describe them. They usually lay large clutches, seven being the average though I have taken many sets of twelve and one of fourteen. These last are under the suspicion of being laid by more than one bird however. The parents are very industrious as indeed they must be to keep so many mouths filled. It is really astonishing the amount of food they will collect and carry to the nest in the course of a day. All is fish that comes to their nets. Everything digestible is commanded and carried to the waiting mouths. When the young are nearly grown and have left the nest they form a very

handsome family and the old ones are very proud of their progeny as they sit in the dense branches of the thorn shrubs.

### Freak Hen's Eggs.

By RICHARD F. MILLER.

Mr. Hobble's very interesting letter in the December "Oologist" regarding "One egg within another" was read with considerable interest by the writer who has observed some interesting data relating to freak Hen's eggs. As they may be of interest to many readers of the Oologist, I have contributed them:

In the spring of 1903, Mr. John Luft, of Barnville, Berks county, Pa., found a Hen's egg in his chicken coop reputed to be the largest and first of its kind ever reported in that county. It measured 6 1-2 by 8 1-2 inches in circumference and weighed 4 ounces. Ordinary sized Hen's eggs weigh only 2 1-2 ounces. Inside its original shell was another perfectly formed egg with a hard shell, measuring 4 1-2 by 5 1-2 inches in circumference. Near Evesboro, N. J., last May, on the Chene's farm, a large Hen's egg was found. Inside was another perfectly formed. The outer egg contained the yolk only. Was unsuccessful in my attempt to obtain the size of this egg.

Mrs. Joseph L. Woodring, of Schoenerville, Pa., had a Hen (and may still have it,) that laid in the spring several eggs within eggs, the outer ones being extra large, and both eggs having hard shells and perfect yolk. Also failed to obtain any definite information regarding these eggs.

A Canton, N. J. man, Mr. E. Smith had an enormous Hen's egg. It measured 9 x 7 inches in circumference and weighed six ounces. This is the largest Hen's egg that I have a record of.

In my collection I have four abnormal Hen's eggs. One is a runt, spherical

in shape and no larger than a Catbird's egg; second is the size of an Antwerp Pigeon. Both of these eggs are of the ordinary shape. None contained any yolk. The fourth is abnormal in shape as well as size. It is alligator egg shaped, double ended, size 3.25 x 1.75 inches and 8 1-2 by 4 1-2 inches in circumference. It contained a double yolk and weighed about four and a half ounces. It was laid, as was the three others, by the Great American Hen.

A farmer of Argus, N. J., had a Hen that laid eggs with three yolks, an unusual occurrence. In my collection of alcoholic specimens I have a four-legged chick. It lived only a short time after birth.

My note book used especially for information relating to freak hen's eggs and other interesting notes regarding the hen, I unfortunately lost. It contained much of interest and value and several list of freak chicks, with one-leg, four-legs and wings, twoheads, etc.

### A Mourning Dove Cronicle.

By MORRIS GIBBS, M. D.

A pair of Mourning doves has occupied our yard or vicinity for a period of eight years successively and the notes taken have been so entertaining that they are offered for publication.

Probably but one pair has occupied the locality during a season and as two birds have never been heard singing at the same time and three old birds have not been seen at the same time, it is quite likely that only the one pair or their descendants have bred in the neighborhood. Our neighborhood is within two blocks of the center of a city of 30,000 inhabitants and previous to this invasion of the locality by these happy mourners it was very rare to hear the notes in this vicinity, though birds are abundant in the surrounding country and frequently nest in the outskirts of the city.

Though the species frequently remains in the county during the winter months, still as a rule the birds are found with us for about seven months of the year and generally less than this. It is evident that the birds leave the neighborhood and spend the balance of their time at the north in the country as they are never seen in my neighborhood after October 27th, while they are to be found in abundance as late as November 1st in the fields and woods.

The following dates of appearance and disappearance are given as recorded for the neighborhood, though these dates must not be taken as the regular dates of arrival and departure for the county.

1897, arrived Ap. 6, last seen, Oct. 21.

1898, arrived Ap. 4, last seen Oct. 17.

1899, arriv'd Mar. 30, last seen Oct. 26.

1900, arrived Ap. 2, last seen Sept. 26.

1901, arrived Ap. 3, last seen Oct. 27.

1902, arriv'd Mar. 30, last seen Oct. 25.

1903, arrived Ap. 7, last seen Oct. 16.

1904, arrived Ap. 11, last seen, Oct. 2.

The birds do not sing upon their arrival and are with us all of a week before the first notes are given and sometimes quite two weeks before the regular song is uttered, though a few half articulate notes are occasionally heard as if the performer were practicing *soto voce*.

The earliest nest construction was begun May 5th, but the birds were not observed in nest building each season. One season, 1901, the pair started two nests, nearly completing one, in evergreens, and then selected another position and reared their young, quite removed from the first location. Indecision seems common with them and one spring the pair did not begin building until May 28th.

In 1904 I had an excellent opportunity to observe the nesting habits as the pair selected a large Burr oak *Quercus macrocarpa* which shaded my favorite seat in our backyard. The nest was placed at the side of a large limb at

about thirty feet from the ground and was built between some slight supports offered by small twigs from a large Trumpet creeper which attached to the limb.

Both birds shared in incubation as with the common tame pigeon and all of its varieties and as I have observed in the Passenger Pigeon, *Ectopistes migratorius* both wild and in confinement. Both birds had low, pleasing notes when greeting their mate at the nest and these subdued notes were nearly always uttered when the birds took their tricks at setting, though the full song was never uttered in the tree holding the nest and the birds were very silent and unobtrusive about their homes at all times. When one of the pair was to leave the nest and make way for its mate it did not fly from the edge of the nest as do the robins and other well known species of perchers but generally stood upon a near by limb and watched its mate settle upon the eggs, but not rarely returning to the edge of the nest and billing and cooing over its mate.

The period of incubation is 16 or 17 days and on June 3rd, 1904, the young emerged from the shells and received their food in the manner of all members of his family. The young are not fed as often as are the nestlings of the in-sessores and after they were three or four days old the parents fed them not oftener than every hour. Not infrequently one of the old birds would sit near the nest and wait until the food was pre-digested; this sometimes taking nearly an hour.

I could not discover that the old birds ever fed their mate but know that they alternate in incubation and judge that the trick of a bird in setting is about an hour.

At the end of fourteen or fifteen days the young were sufficiently developed to step from the nest and sit upon a large limb, returning to the structure the first night. The second day of their

outside life they chose a perch not quite ten feet from the nest and there they remained constantly for two days longer. The two young sat side by side and as close together as possible. On the fourth day of their removal from the nest the father bird, after repeated and unsuccessful pleading with the young birds to fly, deliberately alighted upon the backs of the young and literally forced them from the perch. They flew well at the first and returned but once to the tree and were soon lost sight of, though the old birds were often seen.

The male continued to sing until about the middle of July as in former seasons, though as usual only in the early morning hours after the spring nesting was over, while the song was intermittent through out the day during courting and nesting. The song, when given in full was always composed of the first or long note followed by the three shorter notes, the third and fourth being about half as far apart as the second and third.

And now comes a remarkable instance of second brood raising in a species that is credited with rearing but one brood in a season. The two young disappeared and the old ones were seen repeatedly throughout the months of August and September, though not a song was heard. On the morning of September 28, 1904, I was called out of the house by an interested neighbor who excitedly told me that there was another brood of young in the oak tree. On going to the back piazza I saw two young sitting in the exact position that was occupied by the spring brood. We watched the old birds feed one of the young the next day and the bird was evidently just out of the nest.

This is not only a remarkably late date for this species to nest but it establishes the fact that the Mourning dove does, at least occasionally, rear two broods in a season, and this too without any song whatever being uttered.

### In North Carolina and Virginia:

#### *Progne subis.*

A common summer resident and breeder in all sections, apparently of regular distribution, as I have noticed no variations in their numbers in any locality. By about the 18th of March they begin to arrive from the south, and continue to grow in numbers until about the 25th; by which date, in eastern North Carolina, they are in full force. In the more northern and western sections they arrive a few days later than in the east. In eastern Virginia they become common by the 1st of April, while in the north and west they are not fully represented for several days. Sometimes in southeastern North Carolina, a few are to be noted by the 12th of March, but usually they continue rare for a week or more thereafter. These early spring arrivals are not of common occurrence, about one spring in every four or five. Of all the birds that inhabit this land of ours, the Martin is one of the most interesting species. Observing their graceful movements and admiring their wonderful flight, if we can spare them only a few minutes of our time, is a pleasure alike to all. Behold how gracefully, when at a height of several hundred feet above, they fold their wings and dart downward not to stop until they are perched in the entrance to their nesting place, or how gracefully they wend their way to regions beyond the vision's range. As they dart hither and thither in pursuit of some unfortunate insect, they are soon lost in space. Throughout eastern North Carolina, nest building usually begins by the 1st of May, sometimes a little earlier. Eggs are rarely to be obtained before the middle of the second week in May, and usually not before the 15th. In the west, nest building begins later than in the east; the dates varying with those of their arrival, three to fourteen days. Almost every farmer

has his colony of Martins, therefore nesting sites are easily found. These kind hearted individuals usually prepare boxes for their little feathered friends to use, and under the protection of such powerful guardians they flourish in their haunts. The boxes are, as a rule, so arranged that they supply nesting places for from four to fifteen pairs of birds. Apartments for six nests make a good size, being neither too small nor too large. In some sections they nest in gourds strung on the limbs of poles prepared to receive them; the limbs having been cut off about two feet from the pole, a gourd is tied to the end of each limb; a pole usually supports from five to twelve gourds. With a small hole cut in the side to admit the birds, they seem to form excellent nesting places. But, even at this a few still adhere to the old custom and build in the hollows of dead trees or in cavities used on previous years by flickers. The nest is not very neat, being loosely thrown together in the bottom of the cavity, and consisting of fine roots, grasses, and leaves plucked from living trees. One box, in which I noticed them at work building their nests, was fitted with such large entrances to the apartments that the birds saw fit to fill the extra space with wet clay; which, when it became dry, reduced the size of the entrance to suit the taste of the bird. The eggs range in number from four to six, rarely seven; five and six are the usual numbers, but sometimes only four are deposited. The young leave the nest in the latter part of June or early in July, and then, accompanied by the parent birds, they are to be seen at all times flying around over the meadows or skimming the fields in search of food. By the middle of August they begin to migrate southward, gradually becoming less abundant as the days pass by, and disappearing altogether in the early part of September.

R. PEARCE SMITHWICK,  
Norfolk, Virginia.

This walling up the opening to nesting cavity with clay to regulate size of opening is a habitual trait of the Horn-bill and Syrian Nuthatch, but I never saw a record of this kind for any North American Bird. (Ed.)

---

On the 26th of June, 1902, my little son and I were taking a stroll in the eastern suburbs of the city, when my attention was attracted by the vociferous twittering of several birds on a clump of low bushes in a field of timothy across the street. At the first glance I took them for Yellow-headed Blackbirds, but on closer observation they proved to be Bobolinks. They were evidently nesting, but I did not search for their nests, as the timothy was ready to cut and the place a very public one. A few days later I took my binoculars and identified them beyond all question. The bushes were only about fifty yards from the street where electric cars, other vehicles, and pedestrians were constantly passing, but they seemed to have no fear, except when I stopped to watch them, when they flew to another part of the field. There were at least two males. So far as I know this is the only record for Miami county. The Bobolink nests in several of the counties of northern Indiana, especially on Lake Michigan, and has been seen in several neighboring counties, but in eleven years' residence this is my first record. Butler's "Birds of Indiana" does not record it from Miami county.

W. H. SHEAK,  
Peru, Ind.

---

My train was delayed a day by a washout in Southern Arizona, coming back from New Orleans, and I took the opportunity to do a little collecting about Pantano, a railroad station on S. P. line. A stream ran near, with many mesquite trees and I also got friendly, to my sorrow, with several kinds of cacti. Located several nests

of Cactus Wren just built, six or seven nests of Verdin in same condition (one had three fresh eggs), and took nest and three fresh eggs of Canon Towhee. Found a nest of Crissal Thrasher with two badly incubated eggs. This was on St. Patrick's Day, March the 17th. The Verdin's nests were all in trees on which foliage had not yet sprouted, and were accordingly easy to locate. Had the train been delayed another day, no doubt I would have followed that river and got myself lost somewhere down by the Mexican border.

Yours Sincerely,

H. R. TAYLOR.

#### A Quick Way to Mount Dry Skins.

Take your bird and extract the filling very carefully, then instead of soaking inside and out, simply use luke warm water on inside and under the wings fill with cotton and soak it, being careful all the time not to get the feathers wet. Put in a tight box and in about 24 hours, (according to size of bird)? you will have a comparatively fresh skin. Some of my best birds have been mounted this way, with very little, if any trouble. Roll cotton soaked around feet and legs.

R. A. LEE,

Sanilac Center, Mich.

The Editor has followed this course with success for some years but would add that it is wise to grease the toe nails and beak before soaking to prevent them from scaling off. Ed.

#### Irregular Distribution of Birds.

The House Wren, is said to be a common bird in this state, and I understand it is in many localities; but in twenty years of observations have met with but five individuals in Bristol county. Examined one nest which contained seven eggs. This persistently erratic distribution is difficult to account for. Some say it is due to certain insects, to which this bird is partial, being found

only where the Wren summers. This is not plausible, however, because we then have the anomalous distribution of the insects to explain.

CHARLES L. PHILLIPS,

Taunton, Mass.

#### Turkey Buzzard Near Toledo.

On March 28, 1905, Mr. C. T. Day, Mr. H. E. Emery and myself, all of this city observed a turkey buzzard. It was flying low and could not have been mistaken for any other bird. This bird is very rare in this section of the county.

#### A Sora Rail.

On April 13, 1905, Mr. Paul Kone of this city caught a Sora Rail with his chickens. He shut it up in the shed over night but it was found dead in the morning. This is a peculiar place to find a Rail.

A. C. READ.

#### Editor of the Oologist:

About three weeks ago I put up a bird box for wrens and in a week a pair had commenced to build in it. It is now complete and has a full complement of eggs (7) which are nearly hatched. Although several mornings it has been at freezing point the eggs are alright. Is it not rather unusual for wrens to build so early? Also several sets of Lark Sparrow's eggs have been taken here.

April 19, 1905.

URI WORCESTER.

Evidently the Wrens are early in Oklahoma. Western New York has enjoyed nightly freezes and several snow storms during the last two weeks. Robins, Bluebirds, Horned Larks, Hawks and a few Phoebe's are nesting. Editor.

#### Publications Received.

The Warbler, Vol. I, No. 2.

Nature Study, Vol. XIV, No. 4.

Am. Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 5.

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C. W. C.

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As to the matter of prices, I am not an authority along this line, and can express no opinion, other than that I believe that the names of the compilers, *Lattin* and *Short* is sufficient guarantee of the prices being just about in the right notch. THEY KNOW.

C. F. P.

Gentlemen:  
Your new Price List of North American Birds Eggs was duly received. Many, many thanks for same. It is a Beauty, binding, paper and press work simply fine, size perfect. After only a hurried glance would say that the prices appear to be fair and equitable. The compilers surely deserve great credit, and should meet with the support which their efforts so richly deserve.

Yours truly,  
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VOL. XXII. No. 6.

ALBION, N. Y., JUNE, 1905.

WHOLE No. 215

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WALTER B. BARROWS., Editor.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 6.

ALBION, N. Y., JUNE, 1905.

WHOLE No. 215

## On the Use in Surgery of Tendons of the Ardeidæ and Gruidæ.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE AUTHOR.

The subject of sutures and ligatures and their proper sterilization and use has long been an important subject in the realm of modern surgery. Various materials have from time to time been recommended, many to drop by the way side, and we find even in the materials of the present day, namely, catgut, kangaroo tendon, silk, silkworm gut, horse hair and silver wire, great difference of opinion in the minds of surgeons as to their use.

The recent introduction by Dr. Kieffer of an entirely new material will be of much interest to the surgeon, but it likewise will be of no less interest to the American ornithologist. Dr. Kieffer found after a series of experiments that the tendons of the Ardeidae and Gruidae made an excellent suture and ligature and, moreover, that they seemed to possess some advantages over the present materials, principally kangaroo tendon and catgut. The flexor and extensor tendons of the great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*) were first made use of, and later those of the sand hill crane (*Grus canadensis*) and whooping crane (*G. americana*). The tendons were readily made aseptic by the Claudius method of sterilizing catgut.

Regarding his experiments Dr. Kieffer says: "There is still room in the armamentarium of the surgeon for a reliable, slowly absorbable suture and ligature material. I have been recently investigating a material which I believe to be entirely new. Dr. Geo. P. Johnson, of Cheyenne, called my atten-

tion to the long and strong tendons in the legs of the bird commonly known throughout the United States as the blue crane. He had used this material with excellent results as a suture for the aponeurosis in a case of hernia, the suture giving no trouble and apparently being absorbed in time. I obtained from him a number of these tendons and immediately began a series of experiments to test their value.\*\* As a result of these studies I have come to the conclusion that we have not only a valuable suture and ligature material, but one easily obtained in all parts of the world." It is to be wondered that the tendons of the larger grallatorial birds were not long ago thought of as suitable material for surgical purposes. Dr. Johnson is to be commended for his originality."

Thus the herons and cranes are given an economic value which unfortunately must further add to their destruction. Think of the thousands of these birds which would have to be killed annually should this material be adopted for ligature and suture purposes by even a small proportion of our American surgeons.

It is the least of my desire to criticize the author above referred to. His well conducted experiments are commendable, but only to voice a word of warning to what at present might prove the extermination of the larger members of two great families of birds.

Unlike the Anseres (ducks, geese, swans) and members of the order Gallinae, notably the bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*), the members of the Ardeidae and Gruidae are far from prolific breeders. Members of the latter

named families rarely lay over five eggs, while certain ducks lay as high as fifteen and the bob-white often more than twenty. Moreover, the latter two species often raise more than one brood in a season, and it is doubtful if the herons and cranes ever do. This will partially account for the survival of the game birds in spite of the inroads caused by gunners. Furthermore, herons build in colonies termed heronies, so that once the breeding place is located their capture is made easy. Thus the herons (*A. herodias*) of any one county of Michigan, for instance, might be exterminated by one hunter in the course of a season, should there be a demand

Unlike a great proportion of our American birds, little can be said of the economic value of members of the above mentioned families, either as benefactors to agriculture as insect and weed-seed destroyers, or as articles of food.

A plea for the herons and cranes then can be made solely on sentimental grounds. It is their esthetic value, not as songsters, but their beauty, the grace which their presence adds to the landscape of the various portions of our continent. The history of a departing race is always a sad one and, judging from the thousands of dollars which are spent annually on our zoological gardens, we are inclined to believe that our people admire rather than desire to exterminate any of our native fauna. Truly the places occupied by our herons and cranes is a typical one, and as ornithologists we should aim to preserve rather than destroy.

Already some members of the tribe have been driven to the verge of extermination by the plume hunters. A strong public sentiment has been raised of late in favor of these species, not only in this country, but in various countries of Europe. Under the present conditions the organized bird protectors

of this country, the Audubon societies, had looked for an increase in these species under our more recent laws regarding birds, but it is plain to see that should the tendons become popular with our surgeons for ligature and suture purposes the birds might have a still greater enemy. I do not consider the statement sweeping when I say that the extermination of some species would be only a matter of time.

However, as the author concludes: "Think of the comfort to the civil or military surgeon in isolated places of knowing that he can have a suture material at the end of his shot gun."

ALEANDER W. BLAIN, JR.

Detroit College of Medicine.

Not enough of any American Crane could be procured to even establish a market. If the price made it an object the colony breeding Herons would suffer to some extent unless some semi-domestic industry could be established as with the Skunks and Foxes.—Editor Oologist.

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### Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

*In Review.*

Zoological Quarterly Bulletin, Penn. Dept. of Agi. Vol. II, No. 4, issued under direction of Prof. H. A. Surface.

This is a special Bulletin on Woodpeckers and contains much of value.

Our attention is specially attracted to the Chapter on the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

I agree with the authorities quoted to the extent that this bird is solely accountable for the rows of parallel holes found drilled around the trunks and sometimes the limbs of trees.

But I do not think that the quotation given from Dr. Trimble "that the birds make them (these holes) to attract the ants by such tempting bait is a palpable exaggeration of the reasoning power of this bird," is sufficiently proven.

Fifteen years ago my father had a

fine windbreak of Austrian Pines on the west side of his house. These proved especially attractive to the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Every spring and fall from one to several individuals would make an extended stay around this row of pines. It was placed on the line between the dooryard and small fruit garden and a fine young orchard of apple trees then about 15 years old and very thrifty. As opportunity permitted I studied the habits of these birds carefully. They seldom bored any holes in the apple trees. The orchard stands today in fine condition and the few rings of holes they drilled can be still detected by the scars.

But every pine tree was perforated with many rings of the slightly oval holes in nearby parallel rows and of nearly uniform depth. Just deep enough to secure a free flow of sap.

If they drank any sap I failed to note it. And would the mixture of turpentine, rosin, etc., constituting pine sap be apt to prove a palatable and nourishing diet?

But for some reason these pines were attractive to the ants, whether they relished the sap or were attracted in some other way I failed to satisfy myself. There were many of the elevated nest hummocks of the common black ant all along the sod border beyond the tips of the tree limbs and they were always crawling up and down the trunks.

Whether these ants fed on the sap that exuded from the birds perforations or not, they were, at least, attracted to it and as it dried a little it became sticky enough to annoy them and retard their movements.

Now the birds did all their drilling in a few short intervals during the day but returned often to the trees and spent much time running up and down the trunks of the trees.

I only examined two stomachs but found the contents to be mostly ants.

In Prof. Surface's quotation from Dr. Merriam I read in regard to their food. "Eighty-one stomachs were examined and of the whole 36 per cent. consisted of ants."

Now I believed at the time that the birds selected these pines because the ants were there in numbers and were at least retarded by the sticky sap if not attracted to it also.

Dr. Trimble admits that "Ants are certainly found sometimes about these holes and apparently attracted by the sap" and I do not believe that his assertion that these "holes being designed for this purpose is a palpable exaggeration of the reasoning power" is sufficiently proven.

I have positively proven that the American Crow, when searching for "Cut worms" in a corn field, learns that the grubs congregate in or close to the young hills of corn and digs the dirt away from the hills in search of them.

In many cases the growing corn is not uprooted nor even the kernel taken from the roots and I have seen entire hills dug out and the kernels left to dry in the sun for a well fed crow evidently prefers "cut worms" to softened corn. Of course I don't know that the bird had located a grub every time. I suspect not as the hills will often be examined continuously. But they have evidently reasoned out from experience that the grubs can be found there as they make no attempt to procure them from beneath the surface until the corn appears. Now! would the assumption that the Sapsucker (so called, I believe with Dr. Trimble, that "they should be called woodpeckers") drills the holes for the main purpose of attracting and securing insect food, mostly ants, impute to the bird any greater reasoning power, or nearly as great, as that I know the Crow must possess.

I allow that both birds undoubtedly made the first discovery by accident

and, in the Sapsucker's case, at least, it is now, perhaps, purely instinctive.

More light on this subject is needed. Who knows?

Ten years ago the entire row of trees was so badly tipped over during a wind storm that it was necessary to take them out and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is rarely seen and does not make any extended stay there now.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

### SOME HAWKING TRIPS.

#### II. A Day with Swainson's.

By HARRY H. DUNN.

As has not infrequently proven the case with other oological finds, I came into possession of my first set of Swainson's Hawk eggs in an entirely accidental way. I was driving slowly up the bed of the Santa Anna River in Orange county, California, when I saw the mouth of what was seemingly a short and narrow canyon, breaking out of the hills on the south side. The day was very warm, I was alone and did not feel like tackling the dense growth of willow scrub which covered the banks of the stream, so, unhitching my horse and staking him in a luxurious bed of wild clover, I struck out up this canyon.

One of my inseparable companions on all these trips is a small hatchet and a pocketful of large nails. I have climbed some tough trees thus armed, nailing steps as I went up, and, if I wished to keep the tree for future visits, tearing them off as I came down. I am willing to admit that this method is not so good as the use of a rope, but it is much less work to carry the hammer and nails than to burden one's self with a hundred feet or so of rope of a suitable size. Then, too, rope, like a ladder, some times arouses suspicion in the farmer's breast. And you can bet that the farmer is a "bird protectionist" every time when the oologist comes to him with a

request. Anent this I can and will tell a good story on a deputy game warden of Southern California in a later one of these papers.

Well, to return to my Swainson's—the date was April 16th, late for Raptors in this region, but I hoped to find a stray Screech Owl covering four or five fresh eggs provided the canyon were at all wooded. A few hundred yards up the gorge widened out and I could see it stretching on for some two or three miles into the heart of the hills. All the way it seemed heavily wooded with Sycamores and water beeches, with here and there an oak. Here was a field indeed, one into which I had reason to believe no collector had ever stepped. Kingbirds and other Flycatchers were busy among the green branches, Sparrow Hawks wove leisurely their way to and from their nests in dead trees further up the canyon and then, suddenly out of the clear sky, fell the scream of a hawk. There was no mistaking the family to which the maker of the noise belonged. He was a Hawk, but what species? Not a Red-tail, that was certain; not a Sparrow Hawk; maybe Krider's. I had long been watching for this form of the Red-tail, which I am sure breeds in Orange county, but once more I was disappointed. The second scream drew my straining eyes to a very dark bird, noticeably smaller than a Red-tail, tumbling and playing in midair a short distance up the canyon. At first I did not recognize the bird, and it was evident that he had not even sighted me as yet. Keeping under cover of the trees, I made my way toward a tall Sycamore I had marked as quite near his playground. Arrived there, looking upward through the dense canopy of leaves, I saw, not the flying bird, but a small and compact nest, built close to the body of the tree and not over thirty-five feet from the ground. Here was luck, and I said to myself "Cooper's Hawk!

here's where you get the first eggs of this bird taken in Orange county." But I didn't.

For ten feet in a true circle around the base of that tree lay the thickest cactus patch you ever saw. The worst bit of buckthorn the old down East hills can produce wouldn't be a circumstance to it. It wasn't very high not more than a foot or so, but thick as "hair on a dog's back". At it I went with a big club, making more racket than two men ought to have made. Above I heard the hawk leaving her nest, and this only added strength to my blows. Like a Hindu fakir I rushed rough shod over the thorns and tackled the tree. When I had gained the first limb a huge branch which grew straight out over the dry creek bed some ten feet up. Here I slipped off my shoes and stockings and then up I went.

Not being much of a climber, I sweated and shinned, and I fear, swore a little, ere I gained that nest. But the reward was there, three pale blue white eggs, smaller than those of the Red-tail, yet larger than the Cooper's. The nest was well made, firmly thatched and lined with bark from the dead willows of the river bottom. The old birds were quite fearless, dashing at my head repeatedly as I lowered the set in a small sack to the ground. Their sooty bodies and general buzzard appearance gave away their identity, and the books at home established it beyond a doubt when I returned. Before this I had been unable to connect with the breeding places of this hawk, though I knew them to be fairly numerous in Southern California, but since I have found several sets, none, so far as I recall, of more than three eggs and the majority of only two. For the most part they build in Sycamores or large oaks along the edges of dry canyons, or on the edges of sloping mesas, where their principal food supply, squirrels and gophers, are abundant.

They are of inestimable value to the grain raisers of the western slope, though it may be called, one of the least known to all of the so called "Chicken hawks" of the west.

(to be continued.)

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### A Battle with the Broad Wings.

R. V. HASKIN.

The 15th of May, found me bound for a piece of woodland where my friend Mr. B. had informed me that a pair of hawks were breeding.

As I came to the outskirts of the woods, the male hawk came circling overhead and eyeing me as if mistrusting the object of my intrusion. I did not leave him long in doubt as to my destination, but commenced to look for the nest, which my friend had told me was near a small pond of water. After exploring the woods for some distance around the pond, I finally located the nest in a large black oak and about thirty feet from the ground. As climbing irons were impracticable on so large a tree, I decided to use cleats and proceeded to nail them on.

The female hawk was alarmed at the pounding and raising from the nest, flew about fifteen yards, alighting in the dead branches of an old beech, where she watched my operations with evident unconcern. However, after I had come up within five feet of the nest, she suddenly seemed to realize what was going on, and with a hair raising whirl of wings came straight at my face.

To say that I was astonished would be putting it mildly. I had climbed a tree the year before, and secured one of the young of this same pair of hawks, and they had looked calmly on and never raised their voices in protest. But this year they, or rather she, as the male took no part in the conflict, decidedly meant business, and one dive

succeeded another with startling frequency.

I did not wish to harm the hawks, but as the fourth dive nearly carried away my hat and inflicted a slight scratch on my neck, I promptly resolved to bring Madam Hawk to book, and in the next dive she encountered a bullet which just grazed her wing. She took no notice of that however, but the next shot sent some of her brown feathers floating on the morning breeze, and she wisely concluded to give up the unequal battle, and contented herself with circling overhead and screaming lustily.

By dint of hard climbing, I reached the nest; it was composed externally of sticks, and lined with grass, leaves, etc. The five eggs which it contained were a typical set; a sort of bluish grey, thickly speckled with spots and lines of light brown. Although one might reasonably suppose that the hawks would fight more for their young than they would for their eggs; as before stated, they offered not the slightest opposition in 1900 but fought fiercely for their eggs in 1901. Possibly they had decided to turn over a new leaf with the new century.

[Sets of 5 eggs of this bird are rare. Ed.]

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#### Some Rare Finds this Season.

While walking in the woods where Great Blue Heron's nest, I picked up an egg of the Heron that had fallen from 75 to 85 feet, landing with its point down and sticking in a mulch of leaves and soft dirt and in its downward course it passed through some underbrush, all without breaking.

I report also of taking 1-4 Osprey. All eggs are light in color but one egg in particular is white in appearance at a little distance. Another set of 1-3 Osprey. One egg a runt, about one half

actual size. This is the only runt of Osprey I have heard of.

A set of supposed Screech Owls that take the exact measurements of Saw-Whets. They measure as follows: 1.19x100, 1.20x100, 1.19x100, 1.20x1.00, 1.23x97. Saw-Whets were never known to build this far south although they have been killed here. If I collected the eggs I would know for a certainty.

WM. B. CRISPIN,  
Salem, N. J.

If Mr. Crispin will send one egg of this set to the Editor it may be worth while. The eggs of Saw Whet Owl are distinct.—Ed.

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#### Birds Removing Eggs from Nests.

It was with great pleasure that I read Mr. Richard F. Miller's interesting account about the removal of eggs from a disturbed nest and his criticism of my statements made in a previous number of this paper. Mr. Miller is undoubtedly right in his criticism, the eggs were probably removed by the parent birds but the devouring of eggs by the owners of the nest is not as preposterous as Mr. Miller evidently thinks. Mr. F. M. Chapman, in his book, 'Bird Studies with a Camera' gives a most interesting account of the eating of some Least Bittern's eggs by the old birds when once the nest was disturbed. But enough of this, and to return to the subject of my article, I will state that I also have noted several instances upon this subject. These chiefly come under the heading of Wilson's Thrush, *Turdus fuscescens*. This bird is extremely sensitive and if a single egg or two is taken from the clutch the old birds immediately desert the nest, first destroying the remaining egg and carrying the shell away. I have noted this fact several times. In finishing, I will echo Mr. Miller's concluding words, and say, "Let's hear from you, reader."

CHAS. P. ALEXANDER.

**Apropos of our New Standard Catalogue.**

It has made a decided hit and proven a complete success.

Of course there are a few mistakes in typographical errors, five have come to our notice. The worst are the omission of part of the scientific name of 648a, which should be *americana usnea*; the misprint of price on 722a, this should have been \$2.50; and the omission of the star (\*) after price on Harlequin Duck which is applicable to foreign eggs only. Owing to lack of information on some of the rare West Coast Birds a few serious errors in price have slipped in. After a careful study of the few adverse criticisms at hand and making due allowances for difference in point of view we think that following should be changed to read, viz: No. 81, \$5; No. 93, \$3; 544c, \$2; 632c, \$4; 748a, \$5; 754, 3.50; Numbers 520.1, 424 and 544a had better been left unpriced.

Time will uncover more like these, It is impossible to avoid them as collectors always clamor for a price on many species that it is difficult to get authentic information about. Those in a position to know often have motives involved that incline them to silence. In this connection would say, I made an effort to get better information on many of the West Coast eggs than any at hand and met with an almost universal silence. One party in admitting that our catalogue will be accepted as the Standard complains that these errors will cause endless "bickering" in making exchanges.

Where does the fault lie?

ERNEST H. SHORT.

**Still They Come Like This.**

The new standard catalogue of North American Birds' Eggs I have just received and I am delighted with it.—Very truly yours, JOHN E. THAYER.

In reply to your letter dated May 8, 1905. Beg to advise your catalogue of North American Birds' Eggs, without a question, is the handiest, most reasonable in prices, the most complete extant.—W. S. C. Kansas.

It is the very best and handiest catalogue I have ever seen, neatly gotten up and printed in fine type—DR. M. T. CLECKLEY.

**EDITORIAL.**

Mr. G. L. Fordyce of Youngstown, Ohio, sends us cuts from a series of Photos of Nest, Eggs and young of Cooper's Hawk.

Mr. Fordyce watched this nest closely and found the period of incubation to be 31 days.

Was this a case of delayed incubation or is it more common than has been recorded?

It overruns all records by a full week. Who knows?

We have secured for the "Oologist" in the near future description with fine half tone of type sets, of Bachman's Warbler and the best half tone of California Vulture from life that we have seen.

All will regret the recent death of Walter E. Bryant at Santa Rosa, California.

Mr. Bryant was one of the best known of Western Collectors.

He was a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, an honorary member of the Cooper Club and for seven years curator of the Academy of Sciences at San Francisco.

He had made successful collecting trips to the Pacific Islands, Alaska and Mexico and leaves a large collection of Ornithological and Oological material.

### Publications Received.

“Condor,” Vol. VII, No. 5. Pennsylvania oological Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 4. American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 6.

Editor Oologist:—

I had the good fortune to secure a fine female Kirtland Warbler today. The first one I killed was a male, May 4, 1878, which shows that the males pass through Ohio, nearly 2 weeks before the females as the last female killed some 2 years ago was May 15th, this specimen I took today was one exactly the same line as the first one I took in 1878. Unless a collector sees the yellow throat he will mistake it from some sparrow and had I not seen its warbler beak I should have passed it by.

A. HALL,  
Lakewood, O.

### Delayed Migration.

Dec. 17, 1886, I shot a male Field Sparrow, *Spizella pusilla*, at Dighton, Bristol county, Mass. Examination revealed two quite large wart like growths on one leg. The specimen was not attenuated and it was in good plumage. I am of the opinion that this affliction detained the bird North, as the species habitually leaves this locality for the South about Oct. 1st.

CHARLES L. PHILLIPS,  
Taunton, Mass.

### A Large Set of the Chickadee.

In the Oologist, Lispenard S. Horton, mentions the finding of a set of ten eggs of the Chickadee, *Parus atricapillus*, which he considers a very large set. On the 9th of May, 1897, I found a set of thirteen eggs of this interesting little resident, which were in an advanced stage of incubation.

GLEN M. HATHORN,  
Cedar Rapids, Ia.

A nest of the Varied Thrush within the radius of the U. S. is a rarity. In North Idaho he makes glad every brush patch with song but hies him away to foreign lands to mate. Occasionally however, they do nest here. Last spring while fishing I found a nest saddled upon a white fir tree about 10 feet up containing 4 beautiful blue eggs flecked with amber brown, especially about larger end. In size and shape closely resembling those of the Western Robin. These were promptly added to my collection and right thankful I was to my friends for selecting Idaho for a home.

DR. C. S. MOODY.

Noting your invitation as to an expression of opinion regarding the advisability of establishing a Collector's Protective Committee I wish to vote in favor of such a committee as moved by Mr. Price and supported by yourself. Personally, I have little patience with a deliberate egg fraud and when proved such to the satisfaction of such a committee as proposed there should be no hesitation to public condemnation. The suggested chairman appears to me as one in touch and sympathy with the collector and who would regard it a duty to extend the beneficial influence of his editorial position. Taken as a whole, the knowledge of an existing committee ever ready to act promptly and firmly would have an excellent moral effect, a strong tendency to check dishonesty, and beyond doubt every honest collector will earnestly sanction the election of such a committee especially if he has had his wild turkey and goose eggs collected in a barn yard and his American Curlew and Creeper eggs in Europe.

J. CLAIRE WOOD.

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VOL. XXII. No. 7.

ALBION, N. Y., JULY, 1905.

WHOLE No. 216

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C. F. P.

Gentlemen:

Your new Price List of North American Birds Eggs was duly received. Many, many thanks for same. It is a Beauty, binding, paper and press work simply fine, size perfect. After only a hurried glance would say that the prices appear to be fair and equitable. The compilers surely deserve great credit, and should meet with the support which their efforts so richly deserve.

Yours truly,

PHILO W. SMITH, JR.

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J. C. W.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 7.

ALBION, N. Y., JULY, 1905.

WHOLE No. 219

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
Chili, Monroe Co., N. Y.

### G. B. Heron Collecting in Salem Co. N. J.

In the first week of this month (April) I went to the Heron rookery which was about one half mile from where I was visiting. Putting on a pair of gum boots, my assistant and I proceeded, as

we entered the wood all around us loomed up trees of the virgin forest 90 to 115 feet high consisting of pin oak, white and black oak. The pin oak being about 15 feet taller, and range from 2 to 5 feet in diameter. (One tree here produced 30 two horse wagon loads of wood.) As we penetrated we came to water about one foot deep, here was placed the colony in three of the largest remaining pin oaks. The giant of these I proceeded to ascend by way of a tall gum 80 feet high where I throw a rope over to a limb of the large tree bringing the limbs close together, I cross over, being over I descended down 40 feet to main crotch which is 50 sheer feet from the ground with not a twig to intervene. From here which is central you go up 50 and back 50 feet until you visit 15 nests, which are placed on the utmost ends of the limbs 90 to 110 feet from the ground, made entirely of sticks and about the size of a bushel basket. Out of these nests in two climbs within six days I collected over 50 eggs in sets. I think this is a record for one tree.

On the first climb I only expected one nest to contain eggs. Going up without any bag or pencil I had to take my inner shirt and tie the sets separate which amounted to 37 eggs and put it around my neck, of course about seven eggs were broken. This tree I should mention is 12 foot in circumference. I did not use any climbing irons, and can say collecting G. B. Herons in this vicinity is harder and more perilous than the majority of Bald Eagles I have visited. The other two trees contained 12 nests between them. I should mention two sets contained 6 eggs each.

WM. B. CRISPIN.



NEST AND EGGS OF BACHMAN'S WARBLER.

Taken on Buffalo Island, Mo., May 14, 1898,  
by O. Widmann.

Compliments of J. P. Norris, Jr.



**Bachman's Warbler.**

Some time ago I stated, in speaking of the then recent discovery of nest and eggs of Kirtland's Warbler, that "Bachman's Warbler now occupies a unique position and we trust for trustworthy information in regard to its nest and eggs before long." (See Oologist, No. 201, pp. 60.)

No one called my attention to it at the time but the nest and eggs of this bird had already been described.

In the "Auk," July, 1897, Mr. Robt. Ridgway described a set taken in Missouri as follows:

Type set now in U. S. National Museum taken by the veteran collector, Otto Widmann on Kolb Island, Dunklin county, Mo., May 17, 1897.

Nest a somewhat compressed compact mass composed externally of dried weed and grass stalks and dead leaves, many of the later partially skeletonized.

Lining of black fibres, apparently dead threads of the black Lichen (*Ramalina* sp.) which hang in beard-like tufts from Button bushes (*Ophalanthus*) and other shrubs growing in the wet portions of the south-western bottom lands.

Nest  $3\frac{1}{2}$  by 4 in. outside. Inside cavity  $1\frac{1}{2}$  by 2 in. Eggs three. Regularly ovate. Pure white in color. Measurements .63 by .48, .64 by .49, .63 by .40.

On May 13, 1898 Mr. Widmann secured another set now in the collection of J. P. Norris, Jr., Phila, Penn.

Through the kindness of Mr. Norris I am able to describe this set as follows:

Nest was found on Buffalo Island, Dunklin county, Mo., was placed 2 feet from the ground in a blackberry bush in full bloom. Similar in structure to the type nest and not attached to branches but simply supported between half a dozen of them.

Eggs three. Pure china white and glossy. Size practically as in type set.

The female was sitting when the nest was found at 10 a. m. on the 13th, and Mr. Widmann left it until the next day but secured only the three eggs. Evidently three is a full complement. Possibly they never lay more though it would need a more extended acquaintance to make this certain.

Through Mr. Norris' kindness we are able to present on another page a good half-tone of this set in nest.

E. H. SHORT.

### The Quail Trap.

Housekeeping is over with our seven species of resident hawks, except with a few of the late Accipiters and harriers. The fluffy young redtails I have seen afield appear larger than the old buteos. Dozens of Red-shoulders are out of the nest, and with their parents are just now very silent foragers. The early launcher in Fishers island sound can see trios of eaglets balancing on the spindles, dreading the first essay with their long wings, but soon to be pushed off the huge nests by the old ospreys, when they must fly, or get a salt bath. A laborer on a farm in Bristol threw two eaglets from their nest to the ground to die. The angry ospreys have since followed, made such threatening dashes and so pecked at the man that he could not work, and he was discharged. New help was at once hired, and the birds quieted down seemingly satisfied with their revenge. From my own experience I should say that this was not a fish story, for I knew a Noank man who climbed to a fish-hawk's nest and had his straw hat seized by the fierce talons and dropped in the middle of the Sound. The only wonder is that the hat was not added to the olla podrida in the catch all of a nest.

The portable saw mills have made so many gaps in the cordon of big timber that used to surround Norwich, that observers have feared the birds of prey would be driven away from this vicinity. Partly to allay these fears and partly to visit my old friends, I have visited nearly all the scattered groves that are left fit for nidification, and I can report more favorably than would seem possible. There are still breeding pairs of Red-shoulders in Rockwell's at Spalding's dam. Cobb's city reservoir, Bowen hollow, Whip-poor-will ledge, Hearthstone mountain, McCall's hill, Bashan, Wauwecus Barrytown Leffingwell Paradise woods Mohe-

gan, Sunnyside, The Commons, Brickyard, Hell Gate, Cindy's cedar swamp, McClimon's, Benjamin's, Bundy hill and Zion hill. On the Baltic road Al. Lillibridge reports that the Red-shoulders breed in the time honored sites and Barred owls were raised "in the same old stub." It is worth noting that under too frequent observation these buteos will line and feather two or three old nests before deciding where to lay. Trios were the rule with these sets this season, there being only two sets of normal nest washed fours.

The eyries of the Redtails are in a periphery just outside the circle of its cogeners. I find pairs of the largest buteos still at home at Ayer's mountain, Lamb's woods, Blue hill, Gardner lake, Kingsley's woods. Montville, Spicer ledges, Gungawamp, Lantern hill, Broad brook, Rix road woods, Brown's mountain and in three groves in Lisbon, in one in Sprague and in two in Canterbury. May day a North Stonington farmer brought me an old Redtail which he had trapped on a nest holding two young and an addled egg. On cutting the thong from one of the hawk's feet, the claw quickly seized the farmer's hand, and on freeing the other leg the talons at once sank deeply into the farmer's wrist. The hawk was at once placed in an empty pheasant coop, with the intention of carrying it towards its native woods the next day. But the hawk secured its own freedom by twisting with its powerful grasp the wires which had been proof against many dogs. The old hawk waited a moment in an apple tree, as if to get his bearings, and then, after soaring a little at a mile-a-minute clip straight over Scalpingtown towards the Anguilla district.

Marsh hawk also girdle the city in about the same numbers as the Red-tails, and their homes are not often broken up by the farmers and choppers. I visited the bogs named below, and

while every nest was not located, the hawks were all at home: Cranberry at Wauwecus, Long Society cranberry bog, railroad bog in Lisbon, and bogs in Sprague, Franklin, Preston and Ledyard. Mr. Brand used to find the mole hawk breeding in the bog now covered by the Sachem park skating pond. There are two bogs on the Davis-Kimball trout brook and one in North Stonington, always peopled by harriers. It was here that Mr. Trumbull, on suddenly coming on a nest with a full complement, exclaimed: "Gracious! There are more than a bushel of eggs!" A set of seven eggs from this place now in Washington, are as brightly marked as the average set of Red-shoulders. Two harriers I saw in woods this season, and I saw both in trees for a wonder. But though terrestrial in habits and oftenest seen skimming low over the surface of the ground, yet when standing by a nest of young marsh hawks I have seen the parents soar overhead, higher and higher, in narrowing spirals, till lost in the sky.

The total disappearance of the Sharp-shinned hawk around Norwich has been a matter of much comment. Indeed, it is growing rarer everywhere, for I am constantly receiving letters from collectors in the west and south desiring Sharpshins' eggs and offering in exchange choice foreign rarities. The Sharp-shinned hawk used to be common here, and I have found it breeding at Brewsters' Neck, Harvey's Grove, Rockwell's woods, ex-Senator Barnes' woods, East Side, in Bill park, in hemlocks back of Harry Jennings' barn on Laurel Hill avenue, in a grove opposite the Norwich and Worcester depot, and at Pinehurst, in the heart of the city. Indeed, its domestic habits and its fearlessness has led to its destruction. In town and country it has been hunted by the small boy with a gun, whose ambition has been "to shoot a pigeon hawk." Mr. Thurston Lilli-

bridge, farmerlike once threw a set of six eggs on the ground from a nest in an easy hemlock in the Widow Law's brook, above the city reservoir. Only think, ye oologists! Throwing away a set of these incomparable eggs, the very showiest hawk's eggs, and displaying more variation than any eggs known!

The larger Accipiter, Cooper's hawk, though much more destructive to farmers than its cogener, the little Sharpshin, has fared much better locally. Wherever I was looking up the buteos, I found this saucy robber at home, in evergreen, or deciduous trees, in swamps, or on high land, building his own house, or using old crow's or cast off hawk's nests. Coopers are sharp enough to put off laying until they can have leafy screens, while the poor buteos, whose homes in leafless chestnuts are easily found by farmers, have to suffer for the poultry raids of the Cooper.

April 27th, I saw a Sparrow hawk come out of a wacup's hole on the Brickyard road. There are three instances of its breeding in dove cotes in in this city. Somehow, through its inconspicuous habits and dress, this bird has escaped the too handy shotgun, and is increasing in this locality. By actual trial I find that all kinds of young hawks taken from the nest can be easily raised in confinement, but for many reasons do not make desirable pets. While at Dr. Fitch's school at Windham I had many tame hawks. By means of long kite strings and other rude appliances, I tried in vain to revive the old art of falconry. But I did discover that the easiest obtainable and the best food for the hungry hawks are the descendants of the ancient frogs of Windham.

C. L. RAWSON.

I lately saw a nicely marked set of Marsh Hawk taken in Orleans county, N. Y., some 9 years ago. Not many Oologists would throw away a set of

Sharp-shinned Hawk still I can't quite agree with Mr. Rawson as to their showing the most variation. For a display of variation from plain white to beauties in umber, chestnut and lilac, from speckled to streaked and blotched, from pointed oval to globular in shape give me a full series of Ferruginous Rough-legs. Editor.

### The American Barn Owl in Orleans County.

After an absence of two years from the old home scenes among which I was born, passed my boyhood, and continued to reside until the fall of 1901, I stepped down from the train in my old home town of Medina in the morning of June 20th, last.

Among the former friends and acquaintances of mine who were about the station platform coming and going on different errands was Mr. Henry Freeman, who was just taking that train for Rochester, conveying with him to a taxidermist there, a specimen alive of a peculiar bird which up until that time he had been unable to correctly name, nor had he been able to find any one in town who had seen such a bird before.

My arrival at that moment seemed timely, for otherwise I might have missed seeing the bird all together, as my stay in Medina will be brief.

Mr. Freeman was pleased to have the birds' identity established and to learn that he had secured one of the rarest birds that ever visits Western New York, for it was nothing less than an American Barn Owl (*Strix pratincola*) which he had captured alive in his barn on his farm about four miles southwest of Medina.

At the time I removed from Medina to Vincennes, Ind., in the autumn of 1901, I had in course of preparation and not far from completion, a proposed work on the birds of Orleans county; which on account of my removal to the West, was never finished.

In consequence of having such a work in preparation, I had made a most thorough study up until that time, not only of the ornithology of this county, but of Western New York generally, and knew precisely the status of each species occurring, and had a record of all rare bird occurrences for Western New York. In the four years that I have lived in the West, I have still kept myself posted on the new things and rare occurrences in bird life of this section. I am therefore able to state regarding this occurrence of the American Barn Owl at Medina, that it is the first and only record for Orleans county. In Niagara county, Mr. J. L. Davison of Lockport has a specimen which was taken at LaSalle.

In Erie county, Dr. W. H. Bergtold's "List of the Birds of Buffalo and Vicinity," published in 1889 mentions this species as a rare straggler, on the authority of Otto Besser.

In Yates county, one was taken by Mr. John B. Gilbert near Penn Yan, prior to 1879.

If there are other records of the occurrence of this owl in Western New York, they have escaped my notice and I shall be interested to hear of some through the columns of the "Oologist."

CORNELIUS F. POSSON.

Medina, N. Y., June 21, 1905.

### A Freak Crow.

In the Oologist for March, 1904, a Michigan correspondent recorded the capture of a freak Crow, whose bill was abnormally developed, viz: to quote his own words "the upper mandible being 1 1-2 inches and the lower mandible 3 inches in length. Compare this abnormal shaped bill with a normal sized one, which is two inches in length, and the differences in the length of the mandibles will be readily seen. I have a somewhat similar freak to record.

On June 9, 1903, at Sandiford, this county, we found a Crow's nest containing 4 young nearly three-fourths grown, situated between an upright crotch in a slanting willow on the bank of a creek, 25 feet from the ground.

Nothing unusual about the nest or its site, though a late one, but what struck me as remarkable as I glanced into the nest at the four erect heads and gaping mouths, was the singular shaped bill of one of the birds. Had not the birds opened their mouths for food, when I gazed into the nest, in all probability the freak would not had been noticed. It was as vociferous as its companions in clammering for food when I made a noise "like a crow" to attract their attention, which caused them to raise their heads and open wide their capricious maws for food they expected but didn't get. It was normal in all other respects, fat and healthy. Here is the description of its abnormal bill as I wrote it down at the time in my note book, after a careful examination. Its bill was not quite 2 inches in length, straight for half an inch, or one quarter its length; where the mandibles sharply diverged the upper one to the left and the lower one to the right. Then they recurved inward so that the tips of the mandibles nearly met, being only half an inch apart. The shape of this curious formed bill strongly resembled an oar lock.

I meant to secure the freak when it had attained a proper size so as to make an attractive pet, and rear it, and learn whether it would have been possible for it to pick up food or other objects with its curious shaped bill, which I doubt it could have done. But my rascally cousin spoiled all of my contemplated experiments, for he discovered the nest several days latter and cruelly killed all of the young by throwing them to the ground. Those that survived the shock of the fall met their fate in the creek by drowning. And

when I remonstrated with him for his cruelty in recklessly killing them he weakly pleaded that "Crows steal corn," but the amount of corn the Crows are accused of stealing, I told him, did not amount to one-fifth of that which is consumed by the Pigeons his father permitted him to keep in the barn. As far as my observations go the Pigeon is a greater devourer of grain and other seeds than the Crows and Blackbirds combined. But I am digressing.

In his answer to the Michigan freak the editor attributed the abnormal shaped bill to some accident and asks for an explanation which has not as yet been forthcoming. He thought it would interfere with the bird feeding as it undoubtedly would. He does not say whether he thinks the accident occurred to the bird in its embryonic stage or after it had emerged into the world.

I confess to being an incompetent authority upon the subject of incubation but I am inclined to believe that the abnormal growth of both of the birds' bills was caused during their embryonic period of growth for I cannot see how it could have happened latter, my own freak being a young bird supports my theory. I think that the abnormal growth of the two Crows' bills occurred in the eggs and offer this explanation. The formation of the embryo occur first in the yolk, and, as it is here that the change first occurs which determine the form of the future individual the cause of these abnormalities then, it is my belief, was occasioned by some vital action which occurred in the earliest stage of the formation of the embryos. A friend offered the suggestion that they were born in abnormal sized or shaped egg, but I think it unlikely.

Have any other readers an explanation to offer?

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

July 1, 1905.

If the birds in these two instances emerged from the shells as they grew they were, of course the product of disarranged cell growth in the early embryonic stage.

This matter is not well understood as yet though many attribute it to mental or physical disturbance of the parent in mammals. This would hardly account for the condition occurring in eggs.

We agree with Mr. Miller that Pigeons are worse nuisances agriculturally than Crows, but have concluded after years of careful observation that the balance of the Crows account is against him.—Editor.

---

#### Rough-winged Swallow at Hartford, Conn.

It has been my good fortune to carefully watch a pair of these Swallows for the last three years using a water conductor or pipe hole in an embankment wall on the Park River in the city for a breeding place. This year they have raised their young in this place which seems an unusual one, the hole is 18 inches above high water and 10 feet up from the bed of the river. They arrived May 4, 1904 and May 13, 1905. This Swallow is rare in Hartford county.

CLIFFORD M. CASE.

---

#### Red-tailed Hawk.

A High One.

While on a collecting trip Good Friday, April 23, 1905, after Red-shouldered Hawks' eggs, I found an extra tall piece of woods covering some 7 or 8 acres. I found two or three old nests; a little farther on a new one, with a good vigorous clapping of my hands a bird flew of which proved to be a Red-tail from a nest in a white pine tree. On measuring it proved to be 92 feet from the ground. It contained 2 dirty and badly incubated eggs. I think this is one of the oldest pieces of timber in Hartford Co., and the highest

tree that I have met in 25 years in collecting in Connecticut.

CLIFFORD M. CASE.

I was interested in Mr. Smithwick's article in the May issue. The following notes may be of interest to some. For several years Purple Martins had reared their broods in a box placed on a pole. During last winter a storm blew the box off the pole. On April 6th of this year the Martins were seen alighting upon the pole, chattering and flying about it until a new box was erected.

Does this not show that birds have a remarkable memory and that the same pair or pairs return to the same nesting site?

The following may be of interest. A pair of Blue Jays built a nest upon a pole in my barn but the rats destroyed the eggs.

C. W. PRIER.

C. B. V., Ills.—and others.—No. 51a was omitted from our last Standard Catalogue because the A. O. U. has now concluded that 51 and 51a are not distinct forms and combined them as one Herring Gull.—Editor.

To-day I have just got a set of Song Sparrow's eggs and nest with a Robin's egg in it. Something new to me.

Yours truly,

ED. DIXON.

Unionville, Ont.

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#### Publications Received.

Bulletin Michigan Orn. Club, Vol. VI, Nos. 1 and 2.

Journal of Me. Orn. Soc. Vol. VII, No. 2.

Bulletin Penn. Dept. of Agr. Zool. Vol. III, No. 2.

Philatelic West, Vol. XXX, No. 2.

Am. Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 7.

Condor, Vol. VII, No. 4.

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VOL. XXII. No. 8. ALBION, N. Y., AUGUST, 1905. WHOLE No. 217

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#### *Polioptila cærulea.*

A common summer resident of regular distribution in all suitable localities, and a common breeding bird in all sections of the states. Not being of

irregular distribution so far as I have been able to ascertain in any particular place, but they put in their appearance on dates varying as much as eight or ten days; on some seasons arriving by the twentieth of March, while on others they do not reach us before the first of April. In the west they are a few days later than in the southwest, and much later than in the east. In northern Virginia they arrive several days later than in the southeast, and much later than in the southeastern sections of North Carolina. In Bertie county, North Carolina, nest building begins by the 25th of April, but sometimes the nest may not be begun before the first of May. In beginning the construction of the nest, as if from some definite cause, all the birds seem to be late on the same season. Mr. H. Gould Welbourne (see Oologist, Sept. 1895), gives them as a common summer visitor around Lexington, North Carolina, and describes a nest in the upright fork of a plum bush only five or six feet from the ground. On the 20th of April, in Norfolk county, I observed a pair of birds building their nests in the "V" shaped crotch of a small willow at the height of 11 feet from the ground. The nest was visited several times, and on May 5th was found to contain three fresh eggs. As in the north and west they arrive a few days later than in the south and east, so, also, are they from three to eight days later in building their nests. During the construction of the nest both birds share alike in the labors, but the male seem to be devoid of that hustling quality that so well marks the efforts of the female; even then he is far from being a lazy



Photo from life by H. H. Dunn.

THE CALIFORNIA VULTURE.

mate, helping to carry the materials to the nest to be arranged by the female. The nest is placed on the horizontal or drooping limb of some tree in a grove or heavily wooded tract, or occasionally on the limb of a tree by the side of a road, and more rarely in the shade trees in the yard. Their favorite trees are oaks and sweet gums, on the limbs of which they place their nests at heights ranging from eleven to sixty-five feet from the ground; but frequently do we find them on the limbs of beeches, elms and other trees common to our forests, and rarely in the trees in the orchard and garden. The nest is often placed in the twigs that shoot upward from the main limb, but in such a manner that it is seated on the main limb, and is so firmly seated in and around the twigs that often it is with difficulty that the nest is removed as it is woven around the twigs. The nest is an exceedingly neat, but rather frail, structure, made of the withered blossoms of plants—those of the beech being used to profusion in some nests, fine grasses, occasionally some wool and skeleton leaves, securely felted with a kind of vegetable down, and is ornamented on the exterior with lichens which serve to deceive the collector. The interior of the nest is very neat and well shaped, being about one and a half inches in diameter by slightly less in depth. Usually the walls are inclined to turn over, or slightly roll inward at the edge, thereby giving the nest a very neat appearance. The usual number of eggs are five, but sometimes four and six complete the set. With the exception of the piney tracts, Blue-Grays are equally abundant in all kinds of wood; but on some seasons, however, they are more abundant than on others. The readiness with which it removes the material of which its nest is being constructed to some other site, is one of the most interest-

ing of the peculiarities of this bird; always using the same material in the new nest that was used in the deserted dormatory, often not carrying it more than a few rods, but sometimes to the most remote part of the woods. This, I think, is never done unless they are watched by some human foe, and then only to defeat his efforts to dispoil their treasure. One unusually interesting instance of this kind came under my notice in 1899. I chanced to discover a nearly completed nest on the limb of a sweet gum about 20 feet from the ground, after seating myself on a convenient log I passed several minutes watching the birds; and then departed, having approached to within not nearer than twenty-five feet of the nest. On returning the next day, greatly to my surprise, I found the birds as busily engaged removing the material, as, on the previous day, they had been in bringing it to the first site. After a short search I located the nest on the limb of another gum about twenty-five rods away. I found, on visiting the locality four days later, that they had removed the material to some distant part of the grove. After all they succeeded in defeating my attempts at securing their eggs, I found the nest of young several weeks later. From the 10th to the 25th of September they depart southward.

R. PEARCE SMITHWICK,  
Norfolk, Virginia.

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#### Chat with a Naturalist.

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From J. Welsh, Victoria, Australia. "Melbourne Argus."

The time and the surroundings were appropriate for a chat about birds, for we were sitting in one of the soft cushion bushes amongst the sand-dunes and banksias of Phillip Island, waiting for the incoming of the nut-

ton-birds. A little later conversation upon any subject would have been out of the question, for black wings whistled around us in the black night, the air was dense with the musky odor of seabirds, and all the uncanny noises of earth seemed to be gurgling and shrieking under foot, over one's head and round about us in the strange voices of these strange seabirds. It was while waiting that I asked my companion, Mr. A. J. Campbell, how he first got that taste for nature study which he has made the life work of his leisure hours, and which is so splendidly recorded in his two illustrated volumes, "The Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds." What I can remember of that chat long ago can only be a memory interview.

"I became interested in the subject," he said, "when I was a boy about eight years old on the Werribee Plains, and the first nests that interested me were those of the black and white fantail, the red-browed finches—which built in an old hedge—and quails, which were then very plentiful. My grandfather was a strict old Highlander, who thought the taking of eggs a sin, so I kept my collection hidden in a stone wall, and by mischance left it there when we came away. My mother encouraged me in the study of all forms of nature. The first puzzle I met as a boy was finding the brown egg of the bronze cuckoo amongst the white eggs in the nest of a yellow-tailed tit, the second, equally a surprise and a delight, occurred years afterwards, when I climbed a gum sapling on the River Darling, and found the curiously marked egg of the bower bird, which looks as if it were wound round about with brown cobweb. As a schoolboy in Melbourne, I spent all my spare time nest-hunting in what was then a happy hunting ground of birds—the line of shore and bush stretching from Sandridge past the

Red Bluff at St. Kilda. The oldest egg in my collection—that of the yellow-breasted shrike-tit—was taken in those days in Albert park, and the lovely swinging nest, with that peculiar bulge at the sides, which prevents the eggs being rolled out of it in a high wind, looked as beautiful to me then as now. It was only on getting hold of Gould's 'Handbook' that I realized little or nothing had been done on the domestic side of bird life, so I took that up, both as a hobby and a scientific work."

What do you consider your most interesting trip?

"That to West Australia in 1899, when Sir James Patterson, then Commissioner of Customs, gave me fur- lough for the purpose. There were certain unknown eggs and nests which I required to complete the material for my book, and I got them all, with the exception of the western scrub bird, which has not yet been discovered. That is strange, because the conspicuous call of the bird is so often heard. Still more curious is the fact that no collector has ever found a female scrub bird. One of the birds I was anxious to get was the pied robin, and calling at a sawmill I found the bird and its nest close beside it. The discovery was interesting, because instead of the apple-green eggs expected they were more like those of a wood swallow, and the generic name of the bird was altered in consequence."

What is the finest bird sight you have seen?

"The most impressive was the first sight of the sea-bird rookeries on the islands of Bass Straits, which were then unknown. I remember landing one morning on one of the Flinders group after a storm so heavy that we feared we could not attempt it, and we dressed lightly, lest we should capsize and have to swim for it. We walked

up through the tussocks towards the crown of the island, and suddenly the acres of gannets upon their nests, their white plumage gleaming in the morning sun, burst upon us. Rat Island, one of Houtman's Abrolhos group, off the West Australian coast, was another wonderful spectacle, for spread over its 300 acres was not one but three layers of nesting sea birds, averaging about a bird to every square yard. On the top of the seaweed and salt bush were the noddys, beautiful and harmless as doves. On the ground under the bushes was a layer of nesting sooty terns; underneath it the island was honeycombed with the burrows of great myriads of mutton-birds."

Have any preferences for a particular order of birds grown out of that wide experience?

"Well, I like, perhaps, the honey eaters best. They are so beautiful, so happy, so graceful; their eggs are a charming feature in a cabinet, with that warm tone of pink running through most of them; and their nests—such daintily woven baskets, swinging amongst the foliage of blossoming trees. Curiously enough, the last egg of the honey eaters I wanted to complete my collection was that of the interesting helmeted honey-eater, which is peculiar to Victoria. One Saturday a party of us went up the Olinda Creek, amongst the native hazel, where we found the helmeted honey-eater on a beautifully woven nest of bark. Two of us climbed for it, but the bough suddenly broke, and nest, and eggs, and collectors went into the water together. The eggs were saved only through the bird sticking to the nest until it reached the water. In the same way, I wanted the brown eggs of the pilot bird to complete my collection, and I walked up another gully, and sat down within a few feet of the nest. Once on my way from

Adelaide I left the train at Nhill, and went out into the mallee to look for the nest of the wattle-cheeked honey eater, and was fortunate enough to find it. The bird had been known for 60 years, but its eggs then were undiscovered. The eggs of some birds that have been known for a hundred years have yet to be found."

What do you consider the most rare of the beautiful eggs and nests in your collections?

"The most beautiful nest, I think, is that of the rose-breasted robin—so neat in its cup shape, so artistically decorated outside with colored mosses and lichens. The most valuable egg is that of the rifle bird, worth more than its weight in gold. When I first went in search of it I asked a settler if he ever found the nests. 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'that's the bird that builds its nest with snake skins.' I was amused at the absurdity of it, but the first nest I found had woven into it the cast skin of a carpet snake. The pale green eggs of the cassowary—the largest egg in Australia—are getting very rare. They are only found in a little area of Queensland, and it is being taken up by planters."

You have done nothing in the collecting of birds?

"Very little, except in cases where it was necessary to shoot a bird in order to settle some point in dispute, or where specimens were wanted for the museums. Sometimes I regret lost opportunities, but then it is a satisfaction to look back and feel that one has been able to do this work without destroying much life."

To what extent has the study of the domestic side of bird-life been covered?

"There are about 770 species of birds in Australia, and the eggs of perhaps a hundred have yet to be discovered and described. But there is no genus which is unknown to science, and reasoning by analogy, we know pretty

well what these unseen eggs are like. We have birds whose eggs are unknown and eggs whose birds are unknown. I have in my collection at home the white egg of a rail, which, although it differs in color from other rails' eggs, we still know is the egg of a rail, but we don't know which rail laid it. The rufous-headed bristle-bird is peculiar to Victoria, but the only eggs I ever obtained were got by a friend at Lorne. One peculiarity about eggs that I have noticed is that, while the main tone of the American and European birds is blue, that of Australian birds is distinctly red. Less than a third, I should think, of the eggs of Australian birds are white."

What are your methods and equipment in searching for eggs?

"Very little—a tomahawk and an egg basket. Most birds build low in warm scrub. It's largely a matter of going quietly, constantly keeping your eyes open, and making the most of the daylight. A discriminating ear is also a guide. It finds a significance in bird notes that the untrained ear does not discover. But most finds come from the eye—the fleeting glimpse of a bird darting silently off through the scrub as she leaves the nest. It is a strange circumstance that as soon as I had got all the material for my book I lost the tomahawk I had carried for years. I took it as an omen that my work amongst nests and eggs was finished."

Most people will hope not. Mr. Campbell, from the very nature of the wholesome outdoor life to which his leisure has been given, is still a young man, and as he strides along through the bush the man who keeps with him for a day is a good athlete. His work is a fine and fascinating contribution to natural science, much more generously recognized, perhaps, amongst the scientists of England and Germany than in his own country. Perhaps in

the material sense he would be better off if he had given his leisure to cricket or some other game that commands the universal approval of Australians. Only a few know the value of the work he has done, but by those few it is appreciated. Lately I received the third volume on bird life issued by the Geological Survey of Canada; the annual reports of the Agricultural and Forestry departments of New Zealand give much space to the subject. In Australia it has been left to a private individual to do out of his own means and leisure the work which the state has done elsewhere. He has been elected a colonial member of the British Ornithologists' Union—an honour limited to only ten persons in the world; while the American Ornithologists' Union has elected him one of its corresponding "Fellows." All honor to him that his work has been so well done.

#### Nesting of the Dotted Canon Wren in Alameda county, California.

BY STANLEY G. JEWETT.

On May 8, 1905, while collecting bird skins and eggs in the Upper Alameda Canon in the Livermore Mts. of Alameda county, California, I had the good luck to find a nest of the Dotted Canon Wren, *C. m. punctulatus*. The nest was discovered by accident, as most good things are, on the 8th of May, when it contained two eggs and the set of five was completed on the 11th and added to my collection on the 12th. Both male and female birds were observed up and down the canon on several occasions so the identity is complete. The female was sitting above side of nest in cleft of rock when we came to photograph it, in its gloomy retreat amid the rocks beside the roaring waters of the wild gorge.

The nest was composed of a mass of

bits of moss in a green state, mingled with bits of dry grass stems and tree leaves, well bound together with spider webs and cocoons. Inner part of nest was fitted with many soft feathers of different birds. Depth of nest one and one-half inches, across the top three by two and one-half inches, height of nest in front where it lay on the rock two and three-quarter inches, being two inches only in the back. The under part of the nest was built up in front with a lot of dry sycamore twigs of one to seven inches in length, this acted as a support to the front of the nest to level it up. The extreme length of nest was nine inches, several twigs were scattered all along the ledge for two or more feet as though the bird was undecided where to start her nest proper. It was placed on a slight shelf in a cleft in sandstone rock, back fifty-one feet in a cave, entrance of cave only five feet from running stream. The cave was fifty feet high at entrance and twenty feet high at extreme end. The bluff where this nest was located faced the north in a gorge some two hundred feet deep where the roaring creek rushed down the mountains, and far above the scraggly black oaks, reared their long branches over the poison oak thickets below.

Description of eggs. A crystalline white, having a slight polish marked with fine cinnamon specks of one shade, centered mostly in a ring around larger end, numbers one, three and four are more marked over the whole egg than numbers two and five. No under shell color is seen as in many of the other wren's eggs. Eggs measured by m. m. Five specimens perfectly fresh. No. 1, 19 x 13 m. m.; No. 2, 19 x 13 m. m.; No. 3, 20 x 14 m. m.; No. 4, 20 x 14 m. m.; No. 5, 18 x 13 m. m. Average of the five eggs, 13 x 19 m. m.

### The Red-breasted Nuthatch.

(*Sitta canadensis.*)

IN EASTERN NEW YORK.

I have noticed very little in regard to this interesting species in the columns of the Oologist and only one mention of its breeding in New York (Mr. Clarence N. Davis, in Oologist for June, 1904, mentions the finding of some young nuthatches) has come before my notice. Sets from New York are probably very rare and I consider myself very fortunate in finding two nests of this species during this spring. One nest contained three eggs (showing traces of blood upon being blown, and consequently a full set, though few in number) and I have not examined the other nest as yet but hope to find a fuller set.

On April 23rd, while out walking in a small woods near here, I heard a pair of nuthatches calling and upon following them, noticed one fly out of a small hole in a poplar stump, about five feet above the ground. I did not lose any time in investigating that stump and was soon looking into the nesting cavity. The hole was excavated about an inch and I quickly decamped, as I did not want the birds to desert such a promising "bonanza." The old birds were quite shy but I easily identified the species by its small size black stripe through the eye, and reddish under parts. On May 7th, I again went down there, and was pleased to find the hole so deep, that I could not see the bottom. On May 13th, I decided to go and investigate my find and did so with the above mentioned result. The entrance to the nest was about an inch and a quarter in diameter and the hole was five and a half inches deep. The wall of bark was so thin that I could easily break it with my thumb. At the base of the cavity, was a large mass of bark strips, probably from a poplar tree, which made quite

a soft nest for the eggs. For a foot below the entrance, as well as slightly above it, the bark was thickly covered with pine pitch. The reason for this, I have no idea, unless as suggested by Mr. O. E. Crooker, in *Oologist* for July 1892, it is for the purpose of keeping ants, woodticks and other insects from the nest, and imprisoning them in the sticky substances, enables the birds to devour them at their leisure. This supposition is undoubtedly correct, as the birds, it appears, could have no other purpose in view.

The eggs were of a delicate pinky white hue, retaining the same color upon being blown, and they were spotted all over with reddish brown chiefly about the larger end. Their average size is .61x.48 inches.

CHAS. P. ALEXANDER.

Bangor, Me., June 2, 1905.

Accept my thanks for the copy of *Standard Catalogue* recently received. It is a most excellent and up to date work and very handy for reference.

I have found time to do some work in the field this year, and though I do less collecting than I did years ago I do more studying of the birds and their habits and accomplish much more practical results. The photographing of nests and eggs, flowers and other nature studies occupies considerable of my leisure time. In fact I do not think of collecting a set of eggs now days unless I have first secured a number of photographs of the nest and surroundings.

To-morrow Mr. J. Merton Swain and myself are thinking of trying to find a nest or so of the Yellow Palm Warbler. Though the birds nest regularly in an extensive peat bog near Bangor it is hard to find a nest save by accident.

Very truly,

O. W. KNIGHT, B. S.

Referring to Mr. Wm. E. Crispin's article on the Screech Owl eggs which take the measurements of Saw-Whet I wish to call his attention to the fact that the Saw-Whet while not being a regular breeder as far south as Salem, N. J., might possibly do so. I am located at Odin, Illinois and I find I am about sixty-five miles further south than he is and I am positive I collected a set of five of the Saw-Whet Owl on March 18, 1890. See page 205 Vol. 10 No. 7, July 1893 *Oologist* for account of said taking. I had this bird in my hands about a dozen times and a fellow collector and myself carefully compared her with the description given in Coue's *Key and Ridgway's Manual* and we are confident we made no mistake. While his eggs by not being fully identified at taking would remain in doubt, yet there is a degree of possibility of this being Saw-whet Owl's eggs.

C. B. VANDERCAMP.

Since June "*Oologist*" went to press I have seen the set of Owl's eggs in question. They were simply small eggs of Screech Owl. I think the Saw-Whet might breed in that latitude but these would not do for Saw-Whet.

EDITOR.

#### A Snake in a Hawk's Nest.

In reading the articles of green leaves in Hawk's nest reminds me of a Red-shouldered Hawk's nest I peeked into a few years ago, it contained one fresh egg and a spotted or milk snake 16 inches long, but they nearly all have green twigs from hemlock in this section.

A. E. KIBBE,  
Mayville, N. Y.

#### Publications Received.

- Nature Study, Vol. XIV, No. 7.  
Amateur Naturalist, Vol. II, No. 3 and 4.  
Am. Ornithology, Vol. V., No. 8.

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VOL. XXII. No. 9. ALBION, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1905. WHOLE No. 218

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## BIRD SKINS.

I have left, the following A No. 1 Bird Skins: 6 American Crow, 3 Blue Jay, 1 Least Bittern (poor), 2 Cedar Waxwing, 4 Pine Grosbeak—females, 13 Snowflake, 2 Purple Finch—females, 1 white-breasted Nuthatch, 1 black-throated Green Warbler. I will send the above 33 Skins and add 2 of the Gray Squirrel and 1 very fine mounted Crow. Entire lot is cheap at \$10. I'll box them all and express at purchaser's expense, for only \$5.75. FRANK H. LATTIN, Albion, N. Y.

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WANTED.—All kinds of Live Wild Birds and Animals. State prices when writing. Don't ask me what I pay. DR. CECIL FRENCH, Naturalist, Washington, D. C. J12t

## Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher.

ED. OOLOGIST:

In reading Mr. Smithwick's article in the Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher in Aug. OOLOGIST, I was struck with the difference in the breeding habits of this species in his locality and in mine—more particularly because it seems the reverse of what we would naturally suppose. In Bertie Co., which is in eastern N. C., he says nest building begins about April 25th. In Iredue Co., western N. C., which ought to be later, I have found nests under construction by March 28th, and in no case have I found nests later than the 4th of June. Nests holding eggs are rarely seen in this county later than May 1st.

As to the nest itself, I have never seen one less than ten feet from the ground, and that not often. Twenty feet seems about the average. Usually a horizontal branch is chosen, generally at a considerable distance from the trunk, so pronged that one fork will be over the nest, forming a kind of roof. Oaks, white or post, are the favorites. Out of many nests that I have examined, all were in oaks except three in pines, one in maple, one in dogwood, and one in peach.

Going out in the woods after the breeding season one never finds old nests. On the young leaving the nests, the old birds immediately tear it in pieces. Why this is done, I have not been able to find out.

The new Catalogue is *all right*.

JACOB BOSTAIN,  
Statesville, N. C.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 9. ALBION, N. Y., SEPTEMBER, 1905. WHOLE No. 218

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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### Editorials.

In last issue (Vol. I, No. 3) of the "Warbler" appears among other good things an account of the nesting of the Passenger Pigeon near Minneapolis in 1890 by W. Otto Emerson.

This brings authentic collecting of the eggs of this species down to a much later date than I have seen recorded.

The set, like all authentic records I have investigated, consisted of one egg.

On page 59 Penn. Bulletin Div. of Zoology Vol. III, No. 2, I notice as follows: "We should hesitate to recommend the destruction of skunks as these animals are known to be among the most valuable of our insectivorous creatures and are certainly the most valuable fur-bearing mammal in the State."

The editor of the OÖLOGIST began on skunks with a steel trap when he was a boy of less than 14 years and he has been studying skunks from various points of view ever since.

Inevitably he has arrived at a few conclusions.

Unquestionably the skunk is insectivorous but they are also practically omnivorous along the line of animal matter. The greatest point I find to their credit is the number of young field mice (meadow voles) that they dig out of the nests and devour. If it were not for one characteristic this alone would turn the balance in their favor.

In the spring and summer the skunk is a light feeder. They wander but short distances from their home burrow and get along with a minimum of effort and food. While this period lasts they destroy birds' nests, mouse nests, etc., including young chickens if located in the near vicinity of their home but they do not as a rule attract much attention by their depredations until along in September when cool



SET OF FOUR EGGS AND NEST OF TENNESSEE  
WARBLER IN COLLECTION OF J. P. NORRIS, JR.

Taken by Allan Brooks at Carpenter Mountain,  
British Columbia, June 15, 1901.

nights bring a suggestion of coming winter.

Then the skunk remembers about the coat of fat that sustains them through the winter and immediately becomes industrious. Birds' nests and young are practically out of the way now and mice are not so easy to secure though they breed to some extent the year around.

Turning over stones and clods for beetles and crickets is good as far as it goes but they know a trick that yields much larger results with less labor.

After the middle of August the common toad has a habit of inflating himself with air after a good full meal and retiring to some spot where the digging is good where they burrow down from four to seven inches and lie there. The period and purpose of this I have not yet satisfied myself about.

The skunks know all about this and their keen noses will locate the toad without any waste of time.

They simply claw the toads out and capture a generous meal with little effort. I have seen the sides of sandy knolls almost dug over by them.

It continues from early in September to November and it would be useless to attempt to estimate the number of toads destroyed. Now the toad does his best work destroying insects during the growing summer months and each one is nearly worth its weight in gold.

One skunk will destroy in six weeks a host of toads that have been the farmers and gardeners best allies all summer and I cannot see that they do enough good at any time to balance this. As to their value as fur even a black skunk at \$1.00 is a poor proposition to balance 50 or 100 industrious toads and it may take \$5.00 worth of effort to catch him at that. No! I can't find where the skunk earns enough credits to balance his debit account and I advise everyone to com-

pass their destruction where possible with safety to their person whether with Bi-Sulphide, traps or firearms—  
*Editor.*

#### A Day in the Field with Walter E. Bryant.

Early in May 1901, I invited my friend and fellow oologist, Walter E. Bryant, to accompany me on the following day's trip. The next morning I got my ropes, lines, hatchet, 3 sizes collecting boxes, cotton, etc., ready, put my book of field notes in my pocket and started before 6 o'clock, picked up Mr. Bryant at his home and made for the country north of Santa Rosa.

About three miles from town in driving over a small bridge we flushed a Black Phoebe. Mr. Bryant took a look under the bridge and reported "too early, try again in two weeks." We stopped to examine some bridges but saw no signs of nests. While driving along we noted the following birds:

Red-wing Black-bird, Brewer's Black bird, Western Lark Sparrow, Ark Goldfinch, Black-headed Grosbeak, California Partridge, American Sparrow Hawk, Violet-green Swallow, Western Meadow-lark, Golden-crowned Sparrow, California Towhee, California Shrike and Western Bluebird.

When four and one-half miles out and the road followed the edge of the hills we tied to the road fence, taking our apparatus with us we made for the timber, going through a small vineyard. In going over a pile of brush at the foot of the hill I started a pair of California Partridges. We examined the brush thoroughly but no sign of eggs or nest. We made up our minds that Mr. and Mrs. *Tetraonida* were out on a house inspecting tour. As soon as we reached the top of the ridge we saw and heard plenty of bird life. Quite frequently we were halted by hearing the buzz of Anna' Hummer. We would set down very quietly and

and watch but with no result.

After an hours slow walking without seeing any new nests, we were stopped by another Annas. We sat down on the ground and kept very quiet. After about ten minutes wait Mr. Bryant got up and said, "We have got it." He explained by saying that he heard the peculiar buzz the female makes when setting on her nest. We soon located Mrs. Anna on her nest four feet from the main limb. Mr. Bryant stripped his coat and claimed the honor of getting the nest. On getting opposite the little lady he politely asked her to vacate, which she declined to do. He took off his hat and made two or three passes at her before she did leave. Then the next move was to cut a twig right length and place a wad of cotton in the nest over the eggs. I then sent up the hatchet, (which by the way was not so sharp as it might have been) and by easy and slow cutting he cut the branch nearly through, then pulled it toward him until he could get hold of same close to nest. I then sent up the smallest of the collecting boxes (made from Mr. Bryant's idea of a collecting box) and he placed the eggs in same, placed the rubber band around the box and threw it down to me. He then cut the branch off about four inches each side of the nest and lowered it down to me, then came down himself.

After a short rest we started on. We heard more Hummers, Warblers, Bush Tits, Jays, Towhees, California Thrashers, Spurred Towhees, but no more nests. As it was now about eleven o'clock we began to work back towards the buggy and lunch. When we got back to the buggy we drove about one-half mile further on and down a side road before lunching.

After lunch we started out again along the side hill. We walked about one-half mile without seeing a nest, so turned back. On the way back we started a Jay, and about forty feet from

where we first saw her we found the nest, about ten feet up in second growth white Oak. I made the climb up to the nest and looked in and saw as fine a set of five eggs as an oologist would want to see. Placing them in my collecting box I passed the box down to Mr. Bryant, then cut away a small branch that was holding the nest. I very carefully took out the nest and came down. We worked our way towards the buggy and left the nest of the Jay there then went further on. We noticed a couple of Bush-tits acting in a peculiar way so sat down to watch. We were on the bank of a small cut where there was some water running. During the fifteen or twenty minutes we were there we noted the following birds that had come for water: California Bush-Tit, Arizona Goldfinch, Western Chipping Sparrow, Western Bluebird and Western Lark Sparrow. We got up from where we were sitting and started out to find some of their nests, Mr. Bryant on one side of the cut and I on the other. Mr. Bryant called to me and told me to come and find the Bush-Tit's nest. I did so and very readily found the beautiful nest of this peculiar bird. I think that this bird and the Hummingbirds' are entitled to honors for nest building. The nest was about nine inches long and four inches in diameter, growing smaller near the top, where the opening or door to nest was. We soon found that the eggs were hatched and that we were too late. We spent another hour looking for more nests but found none, so started for home.

On the way home Mr. Bryant suggested that we go out about a mile east of town and visit a Bush-Tit's nest that he had found two weeks previous. When he found the nest it was not completed. But when we got there we took the nest and on pouring the eggs out found seven diminutive pure white eggs, one of which was cracked. I

took the nest and eggs and have them added to my cabinet.

It being nearly sundown we made for home, first driving to Mr. Bryant's home to let him out. He insisted on my stopping while he showed me his den as he called it.

Here it is that he has his work shop and storage room for his boxes of mounted birds, mammals, etc. He has a room about 10 x 12 feet stacked full. He showed me one small box of about forty or fifty Hummers that he had mounted, all taken on one trip to Guatemala. They were gems of their kind. Mr. Bryant will leave for Alaska on May 1st.

H. F. DUPREY.

This article written before Mr. Bryant's untimely death is particularly interesting now. It is now thought that the city of Santa Rosa will secure his collections which include many type sets of Coast Is. species.—Ed.

#### in North Carolina and Virginia.

##### *Wilsonia mitrata.*

An abundant summer resident and breeder in Bertie county, North Carolina, arriving in the first ten days in April, and becoming more numerous than in any other section that has been visited by me. The males arrive a few days in advance of their mates, and are in full song by the time they reach us. In Lenoir county they become of more casual occurrence, being tolerably numerous on some places and rather rare in others; further to the westward they do not appear at all. Their total absence is noticed in some parts of the East; this absence must be permanent as I failed to note them in Beaufort county, North Carolina, in the month of May, 1900, and among my friends there were none who had seen them there. Whether or not this is the case every season yet remains to be proved. They appear in Norfolk county. Vir-

ginia, and, while not so numerous as in Bertie county, North Carolina, are fairly common; but they are of less even distribution, very likely being influenced by the density of the population. A few have been noticed by me within the city limits (Norfolk) during the fall migrations; it is strange, however, to note that all were females. By some writers (the correctness of whose observations I do not doubt) the song of this bird has been described as consisting of three variations; notwithstanding this fact, two variations are all that I have been able to discover. I have spent two seasons with them, giving more time to their habits in my observations than have I to those of any other species; and fortunately having the opportunity of examining more than one hundred and twenty-five nests, within the short period of two years, with contents in all stages, from fresh eggs to nearly fledged young. The two songs are very distinct and different from each other, but when once heard are easily distinguished from those of any of the other birds. In its favorite haunts, the deep shady woods and swamps, it revels amid the under-brush and reeds, filling the woods with its melody as it sounds and resounds from throat to throat. Their songs carry away the fortunate ornithologist who may be in their midst as would the appearing of a vision, as his heart is filled with raptures and his thoughts carried far above until some sudden rustle causes him to awaken, and leaves him wondering at what he has just heard. Perhaps it was the clumsy efforts of a toad as it resumes its weary journey, or the sudden screech of a hawk as it cleaves the air with nimble wings, tireless and strong, that carries it through air with such wonderful rapidity again to be lost in space; or perhaps it was the sudden and shrill notes of a Wood Thrush coming from some near by tree, or the

plaintive scolding of a Cat-bird,—that brings me back to earth. A visit to their haunts is one sure to be a pleasure to all who are lovers of the beautiful, of which the bird himself is the fairest model. Nest building begins in the latter part of April, and continues until the latter part of June, or early in July. Two, sometimes three, broods are reared in a season, nests being as numerous in June as in May. The latest date for fresh eggs that I find in my note book is June 11. The nest, a neat cup-shaped structure, is always placed in the upright fork of some small bush or reed ranging in height from six inches to five or six feet from the ground. The nest is made of collection of leaves, fine strips of bark, and fine grasses, neatly lined with fine grasses, or hair from the tails of horses and cattle, or a kind of very fine black moss; the latter is used in the linings of more nests than both the former, and on rare occasions all three appear. The number of eggs are three or four, rarely five. Three typical specimens taken by me in Norfolk county, Virginia, measure as follows: .64x.54, .67x.52, .66x.52. By from the middle to the latter part of September they begin to migrate southward disappearing by the fifth of October.

R. PEARCE SMITHWICK.  
Norfolk, Virginia.

#### Last Year's Birds' Nests.

Much valuable information can be obtained at this season by the Oologist by studying the location and nesting material of unfamiliar birds' nests, thus enabling one to more easily locate the new species in the breeding season.

Last year I located a new herony in this way. Always make a note of anything peculiar about a nest or nesting site.

Sincerely,  
A. W. COMFORT,

#### SOME HAWKING TRIPS.

##### Cooper's Hawk in Southern California.

By HARRY H. DUNN.  
III

In my last paper I promised to tell something of an adventure, or rather an accidental meeting I had with a deputy game warden and its results in an oological way. My friend, Mr. A. H. Bradford, of Placentia, California, and myself were driving up the "River-side road," a splendid bit of highway some thirty miles long leading across the eastern boundry of Orange county one bright March morning some three or four years ago when he suggested that we "investigate" a wide-mouthed canyon that came down to the very road, its level bed separated therefrom by a high wire fence. This was famous hawk ground and we were on the lookout for anything from Red-tails to California Vultures, though with little hope of the latter.

Accordingly we drove up the well defined road in the bed of the canyon until we came suddenly upon a large ranch house, looking as out of place as a hummingbird's egg in an ostrich's nest. Beyond the house were large sycamores through which the road wound on and on. We drove along hailed by a half-dozen curs of various lineages, but seeing no one until, flashing into view around a corner of the house appeared a half-breed Mexican, a star on his breast of the size of a full-grown pie and two huge revolvers of undoubted argumentative ability strapped to his middle. He demanded our business in his canyon. We told him we were after natural history specimens; he stared at us in blank amazement. Then: "Well, if ye've got any bizniss up ther' be at it, but I don't allow no trespassin' on my land." As time proved he was a minion of the Bixby Ranch company, a mongrel

half-breed whom the misguided sheriff of the county had given a star and who lost no opportunity to kill such game as he wanted, in season or out, irrespective of State laws or county ordinances. Of course we turned back, but a day or two later Bradford and his younger brother went up the canyon on foot and collected five or six (I no longer remember the exact number) as fine sets of Hawks, Red-tailed and Swainson's as I ever saw. This was evening matters with a vengeance, and since then we have been in the habit of collecting with impunity almost in this fellow's door yard. I have all kinds of respect for a game warden who does his duty, but for any law-breaking rascal like this, whose sole claim to standing as an officer rests on his pull with the county's executive I have less than for a professional poacher.

But I wander, as usual. After this we turned back down the river bed, and, leaving the horse and rig well hidden in the larger trees beside the road we plunged into the dense growth of willows which every where clothes the sandy bed of this stream. Here and there throughout this bottom land rise tall solitary willows, their heads raised well above the surrounding forest and the haven of their branches the nesting sites of countless Orioles, Flycatchers, Hummingbirds, etc. Now and again some Hawk, usually a red-bellied builds a bulky nest in one of them and time was when the Kites, now so scarce in the southwest, were comparatively common here. The most we hoped for this time, however was a set of two or three Red-bellied Hawk's eggs. Most all the afternoon we kept at it, finding a number of abandoned nests in various degrees of despair, and taking one badly incubated set of six Long-eared Owls from an old Crow's nest in the top of an unusually tall willow—one which would never have been climbed had we not hoped to find

the small Hawks at home here. As it was the Owls made a desirable addition to my cabinet and served as well to revive somewhat flagging hopes. The day wore on, however, and beyond the taking of an occasional set by my companion or myself from some one of the many occupied smaller nests that we found there was nothing doing. Among these were two or three fine sets of the Ash-throated Flycatcher, which fell to him. Indeed I have never yet been to take a set of the pretty and attractive eggs. At last all our day slipped away and as nearly as we could judge from our position in the tangle, we headed for the buggy. Inadvertently I leaned rather heavily against a leafy willow, somewhat larger than its surrounding mates and heard the peculiar sound made by a Hawk as she leaves her nest. From the ground no bunch of sticks could be seen, but it was the work of less than a moment to "shin" up that tree. And there sure enough was the nest, small and round, but not so compact as previous homes of the western species of the Red-shouldered with which I had had dealings before, so I was not so much surprised after all when I raised myself up even with the edge of the nest to see four pale blue eggs, unmistakably those of Cooper's Hawk, the first I had ever seen in their nests, and, as you may imagine, an interesting sight to any western collector. Thus by accident I became acquainted with this species as well as with Swainson's of which I wrote in my previous article. I know that Cooper's Hawk is quite common back there where most of the boys who will read this live, and you may wonder at my going home well contented with so small a "take," but you must remember that Cooper's is a *rara avis* out here, and "personally collected" sets are not at all common.

(To be continued.)

## A Query.

Editor Oologist:

Did you ever note or hear of any one else seeing Hummingbirds pierce the sides of blossoms whose corollas were deeper than the birds' bills were long?

Last May I was living near a house on a porch of which was covered with a morning-glory vine laden with huge pink blooms. This vine was a gathering place for bees and other insects as well as for several pairs of Phœbes and any number of Hummingbirds. One afternoon, while passing about ten feet from this vine, I was surprised to see a Hummer fly rapidly up to one especially large blossom and drive his bill directly through the side of the corolla, down very near to the enveloping leaves of the calyx. At first I thought I had not seen aright but a few moments pause showed me several such operations being performed by many birds. They seemed to plunge their bills in by the very force of their flight, holding themselves in a position perpendicular to the axis of the flower while collecting the minute insects that had crawled into the flower and been unable to escape.

I examined several of the flowers after the birds had left them and found each one to be neatly split for a distance of an inch or more, instead of having the round hole I had expected to find. To me, at least, this was a new experience, though there may be others who have noted the same habit among the Hummers.

HARRY H. DUNN.

Los Angeles, Cal., July 25, 1905.

No! I have never seen an instance of this happening with our Eastern Ruby-throat. We have few flowers of a shape to require such treatment here.

The trumpet blossoms are deep but with wide throats which they fly entirely into.—*Editor.*

## White-tailed Hawk.

On a camping trip this spring while staying at a gentleman's house through a rain I mentioned the fact that I was interested in the eggs of birds and that my companion was gathering a collection of skins. Upon finding this out the gentleman volunteered to take us to a Hawk's nest and as he stated it, the largest Hawk's nest he had ever seen. In a very thick part of the forest we saw a Sennett White-tailed Hawk circling around which my friend promptly shot as we had never found this Hawk so far north as Oklahoma. On arriving at the nest it proved to be of the same bird and my friend secured the mate and I, after much difficulty, brought the eggs down to terra firma. They were three in number, dull white marked faintly with brown and measured 2.25 x 1.80, 2.23 x 1.79 and 2.24 x 1.81.

URI B. WORCESTER,

Enid, Oklahoma.

## Five Eggs of Red-tail.

An unusual set of five eggs of Red-tail Hawk, taken in Kankakee county, Ill., Apr. 12, 1904, by A. E. Price. Mr. Price says:

"This wood was examined on April 2d, except a small portion and I was within 100 yards of this nest at that time but I first saw it from another grove on the opposite side  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away on April 12th. Had I found it on the 2d it would probably have contained 2 or 3 fresh eggs as the set had been incubated about one week on the 12th. And yet some people don't believe in luck."

We took photo of this set through kindness of Mr. Price, but owing to an unfortu ate selection of background the photo would not make half-tone.

We specially regret this as one egg was cracked in transit back to Mr. Price's Collection, an accident we greatly regret though he kindly refrains from a very hard kick.—*Editor.*

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A FEW SETS left from August ad still for sale. Horned Grebe 1-4, 20c., 1-5, 25c.; Ringed Neck Duck 1-10 down, \$5.00; American Bittern 1-3, 60c.; Wilson Phalarope 1-3 1 egg chipped, 50c.; Canada Ruffed Grouse 1-12, \$1.50; Gray Ruffed Grouse 1-10, \$5.00; Swainson Hawk 1-3, 60c., 1-2, 40c.; Broadwinged Hawk 2-3, \$2.25; Long Eared Owl 2-4, 40c.; Short Eared Owl 1-5, \$1.00; Artic Horned Owl 1-4, \$4.00; Least Flycatcher 3-4 n, 20c.; Bobolink n-4, 50c.; Brewers Blackbird 1-3, 10c., 1-4, 8c.; W. Savannah Sparrow 1-4, 50c.; Clay colored Sparrow 3-4, 20c.; Yellow Warbler 3-4 n, 10c.; House Wren 1-7, 15c. Nests, postage extra. CHRIS P. FORGE, Taxidermist, Carman, Manitoba.

EXCHANGE.—For A. 1 sets new to my collection or special deriderata: 11-5, 7 1-2, 11 1-2, 30 10-1, 30a 10-1, 31a 1-1, 32 5-1, 34 1-1, 37 1-2, 44 1-3, 1-4, 47 1-3, 51 1-3, 121 1-4 1-5, 130 1-10 down, 141 1-11 1-9 down, 141 1-11 down, 154 1-9 down, 155 1-6 down, 179 1-5, 206 1-2 slightly defective, 210 1-8, 220 1-7, 222 1-4, 223 1-4, 225 1-4, 226 1-4, 229 1-4, 267 1-4, 269 1-4, 271 1-4, 289 1-13, 297a 1-7, 302 1-10, 325 1-2, 326 1-2, 328 1-3, 329 1-11-2, 332 1-5, 333 1-5, 336 1-3, 337 1-2, 339 1-3 1-4, 341 1-2, 342 1-3 1-4, 343 1-2 1-3 1-4, 347 1-3, 347a 1-2, 349 1-2, 354a 1-2, 358, 1-5, 359 1-3 1-4, 359 1-1, 362 1-3, 364 1-2 1-3 1-4, 378 1-9, 384 1-7, 385 1-5, 390 1-5, 394a 1-4, 410 1-5, 416 1-2, 417 1-2, 419 1-2, 421 1-2, 428 n-2, 429 n-2, 434 n-2, 449 1-4, 473 1-4, 493 1-5, 481 1-4, 533 n-4, 554a 1-4, 578 1-3, 593c 1-4, 641 n-4 n-5, 645 1-5, 646a 1-4, 648a 1-4, 654 1-3, 656 1-4, 657 n-4, 658 n-3, 659 1-4, 661 1-4, 667 1-4, 675 1-4, 976 1-5 1-6, 679 1-4, 680 1-3, 681b 1-4, 684 n-4, 685b n-4, 702 1-3, 707 1-4, 735b 1-6, 736a 1-6. A. E. PRICE, Grant Park, Ill.

FOR SALE.—5 Moose heads unmounted. 1.44 in. spread 13 and 11 points; \$18.00, 1.46 in. spread 9 and 10 points; \$18.00, 1.41 in. spread 9 and 10 points; \$15.00, 1.38 in. spread 10 and 10 points; \$15.00, 1.35 in. spread 9 and 10 points \$12.00. 2 big horn sheep heads, \$15 base curve \$16.00, 1 1/2 base, 2 o. curve \$16.00. The lot for \$100.00 spot. CHRIS P. FORGE, Taxidermist, Carman, Manitoba. This offer not good after Dec. 1, 1905.

FOR SALE.—Some nicely mounted game birds in splendid condition; cheap and good, also chamber and orchestra music and sportsmen journals. RUSSELL SMITH, 1535 Fountain St. Philadelphia, Penn.

FIRST CLASS EGGS for sale in full sets with data, at end blown prices, also tools cabinet trays. Send stamp for list. FRED TRUESDALE, Shandon, Cal.

NOTICE.—I have one set of Marbled God-wit, but want 3 sets more. I will give a good cash price for one or more sets of four eggs each. Must be from the original collector. W. H. BINGAMAN, Algona, Iowa.

A NICE LOT of gold-filled jewelry consisting of fobs, charms, lockets, shirt waist sets, baby pin sets, scarf pins and brooches, also silver plated forks, butter knife and sugar spoon set, child's knife, fork and spoon set, knife and spoon set, gilt easel photo frames, hand mirrors, atomizers and silk handkerchiefs to exchange for eggs in sets. Send me your list of sets and your wants and I will make you offers. VERDI BURTON, Branchport, N. Y. O. 3. 1.

WANTED.—Oregon Naturalist I and nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 of II; Auk 1 to VI new series; Bull Nuttall Club I, No. 2; II, No. 3; Avifauna No. 1; O. & O., any complete volume; Osprey V, VI and VII; Proc. U. S. N. M., VII to XX; Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., I to X; any good books on birds or fishes. I have for exchange skins of Lencosticte, Melospiza, Ammodramus, etc., from Alaska; collection of 95 copper and 55 silver coins mostly from Asia, Japan and Philippines; 6 or 8 daggers and bolos from battlefields in Philippines; 2 grass rain coats from Batanes Islands, very fine and rare; or will give cash if prices of books are reasonable. R. C. MCGREGOR, Palo Alto, Cal.

WANTED.—To exchange mounted birds of 219, 191, 93, 199, 153, 241, 255, 278, 294, 409 and others, also bird skins, eggs in sets and singles. Wanted bird skins, eggs in sets. Can also mount bird to order, from stock in exchange, or will sell for cash or mount you any bird skin you may have for cash or trade. Send lists. JESSE T. CRAVEN, 572 Hubbard Ave., Detroit, Mich.

FOR SALE.—Collection European eggs in singles, at less than European prices. Also American and Canadian sets with data. LEWIS BROWN, 29 Admiral Road, Toronto, Canada.

FOR SALE.—Bendire's Life Histories of N. A. Birds, 2 volumes. Price and particulars stated upon request. R. W. WILLIAMS, Jr., 1122 Vermont Ave., Washington, D. C.

SPECIAL EXCHANGE.—150 eggs White Necked Raven. In sets 4 to 7. Full data. Personally collected except 2 sets. Some beautiful series. List price \$112.50. Exchange whole lot to anyone for \$90. 20 per cent. discount. Half of them for \$50. Nearly 100 other varieties for exchange. J. M. CARROLL, 714 Speight St., Waco, Tex.

## BIRD SKINS.

I have left, the following A No. 1 Bird Skins: 6 American Crow, 3 Blue Jay, 1 Least Bittern (poor), 2 Cedar Waxing, 4 Pine Grosbeak—females, 13 Snowflake, 2 Purple Finch—females, 1 white-breasted Nuthatch, 1 black-throated Green Warbler. I will send the above 33 Skins and add 2 of the Gray Squirrel and 1 very fine mounted Crow. Entire lot is cheap at \$10. I'll box them all and express at purchaser's expense, for only \$5.75. FRANK H. LATTIN, Albion, N. Y.



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112 Alexandrine Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Dear Sir:—It may be of interest to you to know that the "Oologist" is the best advertising medium with which we exchange. Replies came in answer to our advertisement from almost every state in the union, as well as Canada.

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I have recently issued a list of what I have left in the above lines. If at all interested it will well repay you to drop me a postal for a copy of same.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 10.

ALBION, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1905.

WHOLE No. 219

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMISTRY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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### On Bird Migration.

As is well known most species of birds migrate at night, at least it is generally believed that this is the case, and it has been conclusively proven

that many birds follow this method of movement. However, many species perform their seasonal movements in broad day light. Wild Pigeons did not migrate at night though they were frequently seen making for a forest late in the day and were again on the move at a very early hour. It cannot be understood by any person who has not studied the subject how vast were the seasonal waves of the Pigeons. I have often stood on a southern slope of a hill and watched the incoming flocks. There would be as many as twenty groups of birds seen at one time. These groups in the form of ranks would be stretched out in a line from ten to an hundred yards long and embracing from a score to a thousand birds. At the time of greatest flight these ranks were almost continuous and the noise of their rushing wings was almost like the noise of a tempestuous stream escaping from confinement. At times there would be a lull in the incoming flight and then one would see a faint line in the sky to the south and this very quickly grew to tangible dimensions, succeeded by other faint lines which in their turn resolved themselves into flocks; and again the flocks would sweep on to the north. This would continue morning and evening for the space of two or three hours and covering a period of three to five days. Then the birds would practically disappear for a space of three months and only return to us in the autumn; occasionally in augmented flocks but generally in detached groups.



NEST AND EGGS OF RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD IN SITU.

Photo by B. S. Bowdish

Geese principally move in the day time while the ducks generally migrate in the dark. Gulls and Terns move as a rule during the day, for though they are as well provided with means of transportation they are still among our most deliberate migrants, and seem indifferent as to time. I have watched a flock of Gulls following our steamer on the great lakes and Atlantic and have in one instance proven that a particular bird has followed a boat continuously for three days. This I was enabled to do from the fact that this particular bird in the flock had received an injury to its leg which caused the foot to hang low and thereby we were able to identify the follower. At certain seasons, most any time when the birds are not engaged in nesting, the Gulls are much given to following ships and a great many gather their principal living from the scraps thrown out from the ship's galley.

Hérons generally migrate at night and also often fish during the darkest nights when they have young to provide for. Rails and all Snipes, Plovers and other shore birds migrate under cover of darkness, but very often Golden Plovers and several species of Sandpipers move in the daytime. Turkeys and Quails would migrate in daylight if they were given to seasonal movements, as they are like the domestic birds and given to early retirement.

Many years of careful observation have convinced me that the Rails move in the darkness, but I cannot say whether they select a starlight or cloudy night. No one has ever told me of meeting with a migrating Rail in the day time and I have never yet seen a Rail of any species, excepting the Coots, flying across the land in the day time. Coots, however, migrate in flocks in the daylight, at least at times as I have noted.

If observers are questioned they will probably tell you that more species select dark and cloudy nights for their migrating movements. This is also my opinion, though we may all be in the wrong. If we are alert to catch the notes of passing birds we shall hear ten to twenty times as many on a cloudy night as compared to a clear night, which would seem to indicate that the birds generally select this kind of a night for travel. When many birds are found dead in the city, from being killed by violent contact with the electric lights, or when vast destruction from the tower of the coast light house, it is almost invariable that the evidence of havoc follows a cloudy and tempestuous night. Some may say that this does not prove that birds prefer cloudy nights, and simply shows that destruction may follow on these nights; the dead and maimed birds simply proving that the migrants selected the wrong time for their journey, and the many notes heard on a murky night as compared with those of a moonlight night, simply shows that the migrants are confused and unable to keep well together. It is at these times that the birds fly against the destructive electric lights and are killed in great numbers, all over the land, and both on the coast as well as interior. Let us call attention of observers to one point in this connection; namely, that it is after a cloudy and often tempestuous night that we meet with the greatest number of fresh arrivals in our morning trips in April and May.

Over forty species of dead birds have been brought to us as evidence of the vast destruction of light and wire in this vicinity, and over one hundred species have been listed as having met destruction along our line of light-houses on the Atlantic seaboard. The lights of cities, especially the tower electric lights, are very destructive to



NEST AND EGGS OF CLAPPER RAIL.

From photo by Dr. M. T. Cleckley taken at Sandy Point, S. C.

birds. The effects are readily observed and we find the destruction to be vast. There is another danger which is not generally considered, but which is, I believe greater than electric wires of the cities. I refer to the wires which are stretched all over our land. The lights though destructive are only occasional, when the whole territory is considered and are only especially destructive when large migrating waves pass upon murky nights, whereas the wires are to be found everywhere throughout our broad land and in a perfect net work.

Take the Rails for instance and other species which fly low in migrating. The flight of the Rails is weak and slow, yet they must necessarily take quite long flights across dry stretches of country in order to reach the ponds and lakes where they find their selected quarters. It is not unusual to find mutilated Rails in sections far removed from localities of their choice.

Among the smaller birds that migrate to my neighborhood, the Cuckoos are night journeyers; the Gnatcatchers, Orioles and Sparrows also. The Vireos are sure to be with us in numbers after a suitable night for migrating in spring. The dear little warblers drop into our forests and fairly swarm in suitable quarters after a murky night. The Wrens and Thrushes also blow in over night and it is reasonable to say that the little short-winged Winter Wren makes night trips with the rest of the migrants. I once surprised a Winter Wren which had probably become tired in making a night flight and had dropped down in a cleared section. It was the first and only time that I have found one of this species away from its woodland haunts. The devices resorted to by the midget to elude my vigilance were amusing. The bird dodged along the ground, fluttering between tussocks of grass and securing tempo-

rary hiding places behind small bushes and debris. It finally reached a rail fence where it played peek-a-boo in an animated manner for several rail lengths and finally disappeared, probably hiding beneath the bottom rail. Nor would any efforts of mine dislodge the "timorous beastie."

There is nothing to make me think that the blackbirds migrate at night, though the Bobolink may do so, though in the August journeys the flocks may be seen as they start on their trip to the rice fields. Most of the blackbirds are very deliberate in their movements, but the Rusty passes through our section in a very rapid manner. The Rusty seems to contain both males and females in the spring flights, while the Redwing and Bronzed Grackle send delegations of men before the women arrive; the latter bird showing males as much as seven or eight days before the females are seen.

Flycatchers are deliberate in their movements and are night migrants. This leads me to ask if anyone knows of the destruction of a flycatcher, whippoorwill, swift or night hawk by flying against an electric light? If these birds are killed in this manner it is probably a rare occurrence. Swallows perform their seasonal movements in the day time, as do also the Rubythroat and Chimney Swift. I have seen a disconnected flock of several hundred swifts flying to the south; all moving in revolutions which gradually trended toward their winter's home. Of course the Night hawk and Whippoorwill can and do move at night, as might be expected in the case of night feeders. However, the former generally makes its autumnal trips in the broad daylight, more often in the late afternoon. I have seen disconnected flocks of several hundred winging their way to the south in late August and early September.

Of the birds that visit us from the north in winter, most, if not all move in the day time and I have yet to learn that any winter visitants have ever been killed by contact with electric lights or wires in my neighborhood. Birds that straggle about as the Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Waxwings, Crossbills, Siskins and Snowbuntings have no need to migrate at night.

Why birds move at night is a problem in itself. Many are the answers given, but there are good reasons for disputing most of these attempted explanations, for the reasons presented are all liable to contradiction from comparable cases in other birds which differ in a marked degree from nearly allied species; for instance, some maintain that night movement is chosen because of the less likelihood of danger from enemies.

If this is so, then why do not Swallows, Hummers and many other day migrators move at night? Others claim that the birds move at night in order to avoid the glare of the sun. This is too nonsensical to require refutation, as are also the theories that birds migrate at night that they may have the day to search for their food; or that they employ the hours of darkness that they may have the stars to guide them on their trip.

The truth is, that there are reasons for the times selected as well as the methods chosen, but we are not as yet able to comprehend the principles which govern the birds in their choice, and speculation is idle. Practically all that we know is this. That we look about us some fine morning after a shower and find a score or more of arrivals that were not with us the day before.

These pleasing migrants of spring come to us invariably from the south and the earlier they reach us in the spring or late winter then the nearer they have wintered to us, while those

species which reach us in May are, many of them, known to have spent the colder months in the tropics. For instance, the Purple Finch, which reaches us in March does not generally migrate to the south over three or four hundred miles, returning to us at the opening of the season; but the Redstart is known to visit Central America in its winter vacation. The finch finds its food of seeds distributed for its refreshment; while the Redstart confined to a diet of living insects, must wander further to secure a living.

The hawks are invariably migrators by day and I do not learn of an instance where these rapacious birds move at night. The owls of my vicinity are mostly permanent residents, with the exception of one species. Then we have several winter visitants from the far north. These are all night migrants as might be expected in the case of birds that are principally night feeders. There is one species of owl, the Short-eared, which is transient with us, spring and fall. This owl has never been seen to fly about voluntarily in the day time. It undoubtedly migrates at night, but it secretes itself in the prairie grass and passes the day in these situations. I have routed a number of these owls from a lot of grass and weeds, and have seen as many as six or seven in a group; perhaps a family. They have been seen in flocks of over a score, and it is the only owl which I can learn about that migrates in flocks in this section.

Birds of a species have regular routes of travel in their seasonal journeyings and these lines of movement are very interesting. Some, as the Golden Plover, have a route north in the spring that does not take in any portion of Michigan that I have visited or can learn about. Therefore we do not see these birds in the spring. However, in the autumn the Golden

Plover appears in large flocks in many quarters where they were not known the previous spring. It is said that these plovers are known in spring in the states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, and it is probable that our autumn visitors are birds that have gone northwest of Lake Michigan.

There are many of the smaller birds which have a circuitous route for migration and are found at the north in numbers while in certain sections to the south of the sections inhabited in summer they are not to be found at any time, whether in spring, summer or autumn. For instance, the Mourning Warbler is commonly found in Montcalm county and several sections to the north of Kalamazoo county, and yet I have met with but one bird of this species in Kalamazoo county in a period of thirty years. Then there are birds that have varying routes of migration. This is more general probably than is supposed and there are undoubtedly many species that change their routes from year to year. More will be said upon this subject in the chapter on the effects of civilization. One well known instance of variable route in migration is evident in the case of the Wild Pigeon, which was known to vary its route as well as its summer quarters, as often as every three years for many years and finally each season, after the inroads of the netters became unbearable. Finally, after being driven from pillar to post and over the wilder part of the territory of three states, the imposed upon pigeon yielded up the ghost and has become extinct or so near to it that no one can tell where the possible remnant has hidden itself.

In passing through the land there are many species of birds which follow practically the same paths and pass the same points in their journeys north and south spring and autumn. One of these points is at Mackinaw,

Michigan, where the birds in countless thousands pass to the north in spring and autumnal trips. Another spot for crossing is near to Fort Gratiot, Michigan. At this point which is the short cut into the Canadas from the south, the birds pass over in great numbers. Of course it is difficult to identify the smaller birds on the wing but the larger birds are easily studied. For instance, hundreds of hawks have been observed flying over the river at this point in a single afternoon, and sixty specimens, embracing four kinds have been shot by one man in a few hours. A needless waste surely, though I doubt not that shooter considered himself doing humanity a service.

MORRIS GIBBS, M. D.

I have had brought to me specimens of Ruby-throat, Am. Woodcock, Song Sparrow, Short-eared Owl, Kingfisher, Wilson's Snipe, Am. Robin, killed by Rural telephone wires near Rochester, N. Y.—Editor.

#### Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher.

*Dear Mr. Editor:*

I must say that I was struck on reading Mr. Bostain's article in Sept. Oologist replying to mine in the August number. He says they begin to build with him as early as the 28th of March, but at Lexington, about 30 miles to the eastward of Statesville, Mr. H. Gould Welbourne says: "The earliest date I have for the beginning of nestbuilding is May 1st. The Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher arrives here in the first part of April being common about the fifteenth." (See Sept. 1895, Oologist).

The following are from C. S. Brinkley's datas: "Raleigh, May 4, 1889. Nest 8 feet high in the fork of sweetgum. 4 fresh eggs. Raleigh, May 24, 1890. Nest 7 feet high in small pine on horizontal limb. 5 fresh eggs."

John S. Cairnes gives the following: "Weaverville, May 30, 1891. Nest twenty feet from the ground in small willow tree. 4 eggs with incubation begun."

The remainder of Mr. Bostain's article bears out what I have already written.

R. PEARCE SMITHWICK.

---

### Nests of American Dipper.

STANLEY G. JEWETT.

While on a fishing trip near Mt. Adams, Wash., I found five nests of the American Dipper, *cinclus mericanus*, all of which were placed on the central stringer under bridges directly over the water ranging from eight to fifteen feet high. The bridges were on well traveled roads, where teams passed hourly every day. Have any of the western readers found nests of this bird in similar places?

---

"A Fair Exchange is no Robbery." An unfair one is. ???

There are some collectors who think it is smart to palm off a fictitious set of eggs to an inexperienced person for something of unequal value.

There may be some advantage in these kind of trades at the time but sooner or later they will be found out.

About five years ago I traded some old copper pennies for one-three Broad-winged Hawk. One of my friends who collected a set of 343 some time afterwards pronounced my set a fraud.

I could not believe that I was cheated until I got a genuine set of Broad-wing myself, then I could see that my set was not Broad-wing but a nice set of Red-shouldered Hawk.

The set came from Mr. F. A. Sinclair of Skenanettles, N. Y. and when I was sure it was not Broad-wing I wrote him to that effect.

He insisted the set was genuine, declared he had handled a great many

eggs of all the Hawks and I was mistaken.

The set was collected by S. Washington West, Apr. 19, 1894 in Saratoga county, N. Y., locality Ballston, eggs fresh, nest made of sticks, lined with moss and feathers. From the collection of A. S. Brower.

I have 9 sets of Red-shouldered and two sets of Broad-wing in my collection now and certainly know what I am talking about when I say the set is not Broad-wing.

It is very easy for a young collector to be humbugged.

When I was a boy I collected singles in Chester county, Pennsylvania, and sent them to Mr. Justice in Philadelphia for exchange. He always sent me what he choose and at the time I was perfectly satisfied.

After I commenced to collect in sets and acquire more knowledge I found out that Mr. Justice had sent me Caracara for Goshawk, Red-breasted for Hooded Merganser. Some kind of spotted egg for Anhinga, and many more that were fictitious and misleading to a young collector.

Mr. Justice may have been mistaken or the eggs may have been marked wrong by some one else, at any rate he was willing to part with them and send them to me.

Experience is the best teacher they say but sometime it is expensive.

E. J. DARLINGTON,

---

### Publications Received.

Journal of Maine, Orn. Soc., Vol. VII, No. 3.

Amateur Naturalist, Vol. 2, No. 5.

"Condor," Vol. VII, No. 5.

American Botanist, Vol. 9, No. 3.

American Ornithology, Vol. V, No. 10.

Photographic Times, Vol. XXXVII, Nos. 9-10.

Nature Study, Vol. XIV, No. 10.

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Vol. XIX.	1902,	Nos. 184 to 195.	.. .	\$.50
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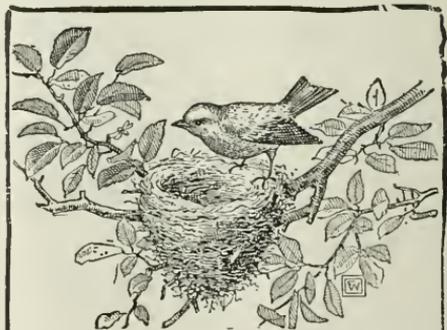
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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
Chili, Monroe Co., N. Y.

## SOME HAWKING TRIPS. IV.

### My Desert Sparrow Hawks.

By HARRY H. DUNN.

One of the finest things about Oology is the memories that go with each and

every set; thoughts of the long tramps over field and hill, wading rivers and swamps, climbing gaunt dead trees or slippery live ones, but always coming back, laden or unladen, with a light heart. There is no game like it in the world for happiness, none like for the insight it gives into what goes on day by day in the wild world round about.

In one drawer of my cabinet there is a set of five eggs, gray white in ground color where it shows, but for the most part so blotched with rusty red that they seem one solid color. They are not well marked, they are not valuable as exchanges go, but they represent to me the accomplishment of a purpose, the fulfilling of a desire, for I was many years in this Land of the Afternoon ere I took my first set of Desert Sparrow Hawks, often though I saw the birds.

They came to me one afternoon in May I believe, the first week or thereabouts. I had started back over the hills, searching for nothing in particular, listening to the quail call among the sage brush, watching towering redtails, and marking their nests, now filled with young, for next year's trips. And so I came to the house of a friend who watched over a cattle pasture just at one corner of the great Chino Ranch. Below his house in the canyon a huge sycamore raised its head from above a small fissure spring. The main part of the tree was green and sound, but one branch, at least a foot thick and a good twenty feet long, had died and now nothing remained of it but the hollow shell. Yearly in it the Flickers nested as well as a pair of Parkmann's Wrens. Above, the

Kingbirds and Orioles had their homes in the leafy top, but on this day they were all strangely silent. Of course I went down the hill from the shanty to the tree, and there, perched on one branch of the dead limb, sat a Sparrow hawk, smoothing his feathers as if this had been his life long home.

About midway out the bare, dead branch was the hole of a pair of Flickers, which time and the wind had enlarged to proportions comfortably adapted to the use of the hawks. From this to the bottom of the creek bed was about twenty feet, and the earth itself was covered with fern brakes, dead and alive, to a depth of not less than two feet. From the side-hill whereon the tree grew to that first limb was only ten feet or less, but the hill went down precipitately from this point and the climb was no easy one.

Up I managed to go, however, and with my little hatchet I chopped a hole in the side of the dead limb. Anyone who has ever tried to chop a woodpecker out of a dead limb knows what I was up against, but I went at it good and strong and soon had a hole through in which I could easily put my hand. Down about six inches was the set. One at a time I lifted them out until I had counted five. Then I started to go down, but thought I might as well take a look at the inside of the nest, and there, lying on the chips as nice as you please was a sixth egg. It is the only set of six I have ever seen or heard of, though I have been told that they occasionally lay six eggs further south, in Mexico and on the Baja California peninsula.

These eggs were perfectly fresh, but very poorly marked, possibly, because there was such a big set, the pigment did not quite go around. My friend, Mr. Bradford, of Placentia, Cal., has a set of this bird, taken in Orange county, which is marked fully as heavily as a set of red-footed fal-

cons from Russia now in my collection. They are indeed beautiful eggs, rivalling the famed osprey in their markings. As a rule, however, the eggs of the Desert Sparrow Hawk are not heavily marked. Full sets are almost always of five, sets of four being extremely rare. Since that time I have taken many sets, from pigeon boxes, from hay lofts, from outbuildings, from holes in dirt cliffs and even from abandoned woodpecker holes in telegraph poles, but never such a set as this.

#### Spotted Bank Swallow's Eggs.

On September 3, 1903 I sent to Mr. J. Warren Jacobs, of Waynesburg, Pa., with several other abnormal sets, a set of four spotted Bank Swallow's (*Clivicola riparia*) eggs, and received from him on the 12th inst. a postal acknowledging the receipt of the eggs. He said "that the spots may prove to be dirt from small insects," and in a postscript added "that he expected six sets from E. H. Short, who thought the marks was insects but could not judge."

Upon the receipt of this meagre information I determined to investigate next year (1904) and learn if possible, whether the marks on "spotted" Bank Swallow's eggs are made by insects and not colored with pigment like the eggs of the Cliff and Barn Swallows.

In Philadelphia County the Bank Swallow is a rare summer resident, seldom nesting, on account of the scarcity of suitable banks, consequently my investigations had to be conducted far from home.

In New Jersey, along the Pensauken Creek, Pensauken Township, Camden County, there are several large sand banks where the Bank Swallow breeds annually by the hundreds, with few Rough-winged Swallows and an occasional Kingfisher for companions. It was at one of these colonies that my

Investigations was conducted on Memorial Day, May 30, 1904. Results of investigations briefly stated are as follows:

Several "spotted" sets, consisting of four and five eggs, with incubation fresh to advanced, had been collected, and in each nest—all feather lined—were noticed ants and small worms (*larvae*), some nests having only the larvae and others ants, but in several ants and larvae were mixed.

The larvae is a thin, slender "worm," averaging three-eighths of an inch in length, and in color a pale brown to almost white. The ants were small and of a reddish color. They were found also in nests containing unspotted eggs and in grassy-lined nests. The larvae were found only in feathery-lined nests, being more numerous in those lined with duck and geese feathers, and presumably feed on the matter in the shafts of the feathers. The marks on the eggs are made by these "wigglers", as following results will show.

The egg when first laid is damp and would easily absorb marks of dirt being porous, when any dirty "worms" crawled over them. An experiment to ascertain whether the marks were made by these larvae proved satisfactory. A nest containing 5 immaculate eggs, incubating advanced, was placed in a nestful of wriggling "worms" but after 5 minutes of expectant watching we failed to discern any marks on the eggs although many of the wrigglers had crawled over them. They were removed and placed in an ant-infected nest with the same results. My experiment I thought was a failure and I began to feel disappointed when a happy thought struck me. It was to wet or dampen the eggs, which I did, and replacing them in the larvae-infected nest I soon had the satisfaction of proving that the marks were made by the larvae, for every one that crawled over the eggs left dirt marks upon them. Removing

the eggs and wiping off the marks, I rewetted them and placed them in an ant infected nest, but though left in it for about ten minutes, during which time they were fairly over run with ants, no traces of dirt marks were discernible upon them. These experiments demonstrate that the dirt marks on "spotted" Bank Swallow's eggs are made by the larvae of a species of insect.

Being a poor entomologist I can not name the ant nor the larvae, and not having no small vials, which I generally carry with me, I could not bring any home for identification. The larvae is presumably that of a dipterous insect, probably that of a small horsefly which infest Bank Swallow's nests. These small flies fairly over run some nests when they contain young and make life miserable for the helpless birds, and often compel the birds to abandon their young, leaving them to die a horrible death, being literally eaten alive. There are other kinds of vermin that infect the burrows and nests, as well as the birds also rendering their lives miserable. The results of my investigation proves only that the marks on the eggs I collected were made by larvae of a species of insect. They are probably caused by other kinds of vermin which I did not find in the nests that have come under my observations.

My observations are far from being complete on account of the distance I live from the colonies and lack of opportunity for investigations. This year I investigated no further in the matter, in fact, did not do any collecting whatever in New Jersey.

Next year shall positively investigate the cause of the vermin infected nests and the spotted eggs.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

This is quite in line with my suspicions on this subject.—Editor.

### Western Red-tails.

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According to Mr. Dunn's excellent article in April Oologist two is an unfinished set of the Western Red-tail. Although not far apart this locality seems somewhat different. I have in my collection five sets of two of this Hawk. All were well along in incubation when taken.

April the 9th of this season ('05) I and a young friend started for a nest of a Red-tail, which I had observed some months before while out hunting about five miles back into the mountains. It was rather late for Hawks but had been unable to go before on account of heavy rains. The day was cloudy and misty, a good sign of more rain, but as I had been delayed so long, was determined to risk it any way. After climbing hills until it began to get old came at last in sight of the cliff. On getting closer discovered the nest was the same as when first found, and as no Hawk was in sight concluded she was on the nest. A shot from my revolver and sure enough off came Mrs. Red-tail with a loud scream that brought the old male off from a neighboring peak. The nest looked easy at first, but our minds were soon changed about that. About 30 feet up a ledge projected out and upon this the nest was built. As we only had 50 feet of rope the cliff was too high to reach the nest from above. So all there was left to do was to go up from below.

Cutting footholds on a sandstone cliff is no cinch with only a small pocket knife and a drizzling rain coming down on a fellow. But after about an hours work, I was able to help my friend over onto the ledge with the assistance of some solid rocks sticking along the side. "Two beauties," were his first words as he crawled over into the nest. The collecting box was next pulled up on a string and the set safely lowered.

This nest was a large bulky affair evidently used for a number of years. The two eggs were advanced in incubation. One was unmarked while the other was faintly spotted over the entire surface with reddish brown.

Cliffs are the favorite nesting places for the Western Red-tail here and the same nest is used year after year if unmolested.

HOMER C. BURT,  
Santa Paula, Cal.

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### Co-operative Nest Building.

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After taking dinner with a friend in town and while sitting on the porch my attention was called to the actions of four or five Sparrows, who were all very busy and noisy in reconstructing a nest that had been torn down in the morning to allow the painters to finish painting over a window.

We watched them for a couple of hours and they seemed to be as much pleased and noisy over it as people over a house raising. Wishing to see the outcome the next day I examined and found one egg in the nest, needless to say, and was not again disturbed. I think this must have been a case of hurry up, or necessity and neighbours called in to assist. Have you ever heard or know of a similar case of co-operation. I never have noticed the habits of Birds much before, but this set me thinking.

J. B. LEWIS,  
Petaluma, Cal.

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### Another large set of Hawks.

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In corroboration of Mr. W. K. Hatler's statement that he was fortunate in taking a set of 5 Red-tailed Hawks eggs, will say that in the early part of May 1897, while trying to locate a much needed nest of the Broad-winged, I ran across a nest of the Red-shouldered Hawk that had somehow escaped my earlier visits, and which con-

tained three newly hatched young, and two eggs on the point of hatching.

I have never found another set of more than four eggs in my sixteen years of experience, during which time I have collected hundreds of sets of this bird.

WILLIAM I. COMSTOCK,  
Norwalk, Conn.

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### THE CALIFORNIA CUCKOO.

By HARRY H. DUNN.

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One of the most interesting birds of the Southwest and one concerning which there seems to be little known by writers of Oological books is the California Cuckoo. Here it is a habitually silent bird, seldom if ever uttering the *Kuk-kuk-kuk*, which it is supposed to give as a signal for approaching rain among the Eastern hills.

In the east I am told that the two species of cuckoos inhabit both hilly country and the lowlands, high forest and thick underbrush. In this end of California, however, they are almost exclusively confined to the willow groves of the lowlands along the coast. They do not seem to seek exactly swampy ground, around the muskegs and small pools, but rather the thick undergrowth of water-mootics and short willows, where blackberry and other vines have formed entanglements, keeping out even stray cattle, let alone weak-kneed oologists like the writer of this sketch.

The first acquaintance I made with the eggs of this bird was by the way of a small, dirty-faced, bare-footed lad, who, wandering through the swamp's edge, came upon a flat nest containing two large blue-green eggs which he did not recognize. These he brought to me, together with the bird, and I was so placed in possession of a species I had been seeking for years

and had not been able to see, let alone its nest. The eggs are noticeably larger than those of either of the eastern varieties, but have the same wave-like markings, common especially to the eggs laid by the Black-billed Cuckoo. As best I could learn from the boy, the nest was placed about fifteen feet from the ground in a dense tangle of vines, growing around a dead willow stump. The bird sat very closely, and at first he thought her to be a Pasadena Thrasher, or, as he called it, "a sickle-billed thrush," the common local name for *harporhynchus*. When he climbed to the nest, however, he noticed the strange eggs and shot the female with a .22 rifle from her perch in a neighboring willow.

All this information was of course, interesting to me and a week later—the first week in May—found me in the neighborhood wherein he had made his "find," and the net results of six days collecting was three sets of the cuckoo and a set of six eggs of some small rail, which I am practically sure is the Sora. Unfortunately these eggs were badly incubated and could only be saved with very large holes, yet, in spite of all this they are undoubted rarities in this state.

Two of my sets of the cuckoo were of three eggs and one of four; the eggs of the set of four are scarcely larger than those of the Black-billed Cuckoo, smaller even than those of the Yellow-billed. The other two sets are larger than any eggs of the eastern birds of either species that I have ever seen. All the eggs were practically fresh, thus showing that the set was laid in regular sequence (evidently an egg a day), and not at intervals of several days, as are those of the near relatives of this bird, the Roadrunners. Possibly some of the sets of three would have become four had I left them, but my newspaper work

in town drew me from the countryside and I had to take what I could get.

The nests were very poorly made, mere platforms of twigs, scarcely better than those of Mourning Doves, and I could not see anything to prevent the eggs from rolling out in high wind or rain storms. I suppose, however, that the willow trees, growing very close together, as they do here, do not move much with the wind but turn a sort of impenetrable wall to its force. There was no noticeable lining in any of the nests, the eggs resting on the large sticks of the outer nest, through which their pale blue colors could occasionally be seen.

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#### THE QUAIL TRAP.

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The Quail Trap, June 1, 1905.—Bob White has bobbed up serenely at last in East Woodstock, and in Village Corners. When I was watering my horse below the village on April 24 a female flew across the road. She had six or eight broodmates nearby who have been calling for two weeks. These are not the small introduced species from the south and west, but lusty Connecticut-bred birds, two of which would make a meal for an epicure. This strong covey has been brought safely through two winters by the intelligent care of Mr. Bradshaw, the village gardener. May 28th I saw another by the roadside near Dudley, Mass., and the same evening for the first time this season, heard a cock whistle on our home farm. I shall inquire of our trout fishermen here how many they have heard. And this week on our long drive from town straight to the Massachusetts line, inquiry will be made of all the intelligent farmers, so that with my own observations I can record data on Bob White's standing in Eastern Connecticut today. June is the quail's noisy breeding

month, and now the ice is broken we shall expect to hear more whistling from survivors of the fittest.

To see a woodcock simulating death at their feet in the woods on the 12th of May, was the experience of Mr. Justin Holden and his son. In stooping to secure her the flattened snipe limped a few feet away with broken leg and drooping wing. Not led away by these feints, the Holdens picked up for a few minutes the four exquisite bits of down—the cause of the display of maternal solicitude. While they were admiring and fondling the young, the old mother came directly overhead and hovered like a hummingbird before the honey cells of flowers. All novelties in the home bird world have a charm for Mr. Holden and his son. Last season they found a wood-duck's nest in the suburbs of Norwich, and this week they will look after the herons of Hell-gate.

The ruffed grouse is the wildest of our game birds. Quail will breed in confinement and are even raised on demand in the west and south. Two or three kinds of its cogeners on the Pacific coast are also domesticated. I have seen large coveys of showy mountain partridge in coops at Yuma, Arizona, and near Mt. Hamilton. But all efforts in pheasantries and aviaries to domesticate the grouse have been emphatic failures. Many of us can recall instances of farmer's boys placing sets of "partridge eggs under the old Dominicker," and how we frowned on these ill-advised and fruitless attempts. But the time has come in this quest when we can no longer say: "I told you so." By modern appliances, by ascertaining the proper chickfood and exercising the greatest possible care, gentleness and patience, the untamable grouse has now been raised in confinement.

May 29th we visited the only successful Grouserie in the United States.

It is conducted on natural lines by the president of a university in a sister city. The first sets of eggs were hatched in an incubator one year ago. A cold wet June in the woods will kill two-thirds of the wild broods, but the mortality from this cause was not as great with the protected chicks. By turning over logs and stumps in the woods, the proper larvae were procured to nourish the game infants. Later in the feeding process, meal-worms were used to advantage, and when maturing the required amount of grain given. Good covered runs and shady bowers were furnished the growing covies, with sanding and budding places. In short, by constant attention to their necessities and wants, as if in a state of nature, the birds thrive exceptionally well, gradually losing the inbred fear of man by his familiarizing care. After a year's devotion, the gamekeeper is being rewarded by having the birds come at his call and by some especial pets perching on his hands and flying upon his shoulders.

The breeding season was eagerly awaited, so it was no surprise when two of the young hens mated and very soon began to lay. Drumming was so long delayed it was looked for with feverish impatience. But early last week, to the delight of all looking for the wonderful performance, one of the cocks began to drum. For nuptial reasons, this year-old cock is kept part of the time in a separate enclosure, where he is often heard drumming for his wives. But when returned to the harem histympani were silent till again separated from them. On the 28th of May, this year, a hen came off with nine young grouse; on the 29th, when I saw the chicks, they were strong and lively, acting much like the tiniest tots in the poultry yard. In another secluded corner I saw a hen grouse close covering her clutch of ten eggs. In

fifty sets of grouse eggs found in New London county, I never saw one over fourteen. But Mr. Brand found one in Rockwell's woods of sixteen, and L. E. Rawson of North Woodstock found one in his own woods of sixteen.

Success in this trial will determine many things. It will show that the hens and cocks are not monogamous, tell the exact time of incubation, and will forever settle the much argued question about the way the so-called drumming is produced. For other reasons every detail of this new feat of domestication will be watched and chronicled with interest. The present season's game chicks are the second generation in confinement. With added knowledge of their requirements, the birds should prove better than the first year's output. By the fourth generation of home-bred grouse the wild taint should be eliminated and the reclaimed ruffed grouse prove a toothsome addition to our pheasantries. Then for your after-play bite your waiter can more easily and with a more modest bill fill your order for "a broiled chicken pat."

C. L. RAWSON.

Norwich, Conn.

#### The Oology of a Farm.

Two miles west of Statesville, in Iredel county, Western North Carolina, is a farm of about 250 acres. It is bordered on one side by Third creek, a quiet, shallow stream, flowing lazily on between miles and mile of bottom land on either bank. From the bottom the ground rises abruptly, forming numerous hills and knolls, seared and broken by woodland brooks and washes.

For fifteen years this has been the chief scene of my cares as an egg-crank; and for fifteen years I have found many birds breeding abundantly there. Marsh birds are not numerous. Of these the Green Heron is most common, finding in the wet meadows an abundant pasturage and an ideal breeding place among the neighboring pine-clad hills. The Snowy Heron

sometimes occurs in late summer, but never breeds.

Several years ago I found two nests of the Woodcock—called here "Mud Snipe"—but in both instances the young had left the nest. I have searched diligently since, but have been unrewarded. Bob-white is abundant during the winter, but not so common in summer, and nests are hard to find. The Mourning Dove is plentiful at all seasons, and nests may be found from March to June. I have not found any later than June, though some authorities say nests can be found as late as September. In winter they congregate in small flocks, commonly feeding in deserted stubble fields.

Owing to the absence of any large tracts of woods, Raptores are not abundant. I have in my collection a set of Turkey Vulture's eggs taken in '91, but know of no nests being found at a later date, though young have been frequently observed prior to that time. Red-shouldered and Cooper's Hawks are the only breeders of that family that I know of, the former being more common. I took a set of three slightly incubated eggs 9th of last May ('05), which I consider unusually late, since the nesting season usually ends in April. The Am. Sparrow Hawk possibly breeds, but I have no authentic record; likewise, several species of owl.

The Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Whippoorwill all breed sparingly, the latter the most common. Chimney Swift and Ruby-coated Humming Bird are common. I have found but one nest of the King Bird on the farm, but its nests are frequently found in the adjacent country.

Of the Fly-catchers, the Green-crested is an abundant breeder, but the Crested is not common. Phoebe was formerly plentiful, but rarer of late years; and the same may be said of the Wood Pewee and Blue Jay. The American Crow is omni-present, always in fair numbers. The Bobolink, Meadow Lark and Baltimore Oriole are seen in early spring, but I have found no nests, though an Oriole's nest was found on a neighboring farm. Gold Finches are common during the winter months, but few remain to breed.

Chipping and Field Sparrow are abundant, the latter breeding from April to September. Grasshopper is not so common. Bachman's has been

found breeding on the next farm, but I have failed to locate any here. As to Cardinals, their nests can be found in every thicket in company with the Yellow-breasted Chat, which is almost as plentiful.

Blue Grosbeak breeds sparingly. Indigo Bunting commonly. Summer Tanagers can be found any time. Purple Martins formerly bred but not of late years. Rough-winged Swallow rare.

Red-eyed, Yellow-throated, Mountain Solitary, and White-eyed Vireos all bred, the first and last commonly, the others rarer.

Of the Warbler family, the Yellow-breasted Chat and Maryland Yellow-throat are most common. In my estimation there are no handsomer eggs of the smaller birds than those of the Yellow-throat. On the 14th of June ('05), I took an exceptionally fine set of four fresh eggs of this species—without doubt the finest I have seen. One nest each of the Black-and-white, Yellow-throated, Parula and Worm-eating Warblers, and occasionally Yellow Warbler, together with a single Oven bird's nest complete the Warblers. La. Water Thrush and Am. Red-start have been found breeding just outside the limits.

Cat-birds and Brown Thrushes are abundant; House and Carolina Wrens fairly common. Brown-headed and White-breasted Nuthatches are rare; and the Tufted Titmouse is hardly common. Carolina Chickadees are found in large numbers all the year round, Wood Thrush in summer only.

Phoebes and Blue-birds have alike disappeared and only a few nests are found now; of these the Blue-birds more frequently occur.

Thus far, these are all the birds that I have found breeding within these confines, though I am sure it is far from complete, for each season I am adding new species to my list.

Statesville, N. C.

JACOB BOSTIAN.

#### Publications Received.

- American Botanist, V IX, No. 9.  
 Am. Ornithology, Vol. 5, No. 11.  
 Photographic Times, XXXVIII, No. 11.  
 The Warbler, New Series, Vol. I, No. 4.  
 Nature Study, XIV, No. 11.

## EDITORIAL.

Owing to business complications, the result of too many "irons in the fire," have been unable to give the Oologist or my mail business the prompt attention they deserved during the past seven months. Thanking my friends and patrons for their patience and charity, I will now try to make up for it as fast as possible.

We notice the color plate in the last issue of "Warbler" of three eggs of Carolina Paroquet laid by pair of birds kept in captivity by Robt. Ridgeway.

The plate is fine and the eggs agree with the conception of these rare Mr. Dunn's article on the Calif. Cuckoo suggests some comparisons. The nesting habit like the eggs is evidently more like the Yellow-billed than the Black-billed until you get to the interval between the eggs where the California bird seems to incline to the Black-billed style.

I have generally found the sets of Black-bill small in the West. New York usually 2 eggs and incubation I find by careful observation is generally delayed until the 2 or 3 eggs, rarely 4, are laid.

The Yellow-bill begins incubation at once and sometimes lays as many as 6 eggs at long intervals.

I have found a young bird and a perfectly fresh egg in the same nest. eggs formed by most oologists from descriptions, though we may seldom look at the real article.

Pure glossy white, size varying between 1.30x1.17, a broad egg to 1.42x 1.06 for an elongate specimen.

Mr. Childs believes there was a decrease in English Sparrows around Floral Park this past summer. He asks for information on this point from other localities.

Certainly they show no material decrease around Rochester, N. Y. I think the contrary.

The egg fraud is still in the land. Look out for him. A whole collection examined lately contained nothing rarer than Cowbird, Cardinal and Mocking-bird.

While no copy of Friend Reed's new "Bird Guide" has yet reached our table, we can safely presume that it is convenient, tasty and big value at the price quoted.

EDITOR.

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## BIRD SKINS.

I have left, the following A No. 1 Bird Skins: 6 American Crow, 3 Blue Jay, 1 Least Bittern (poor), 2 Cedar Waxwing, 4 Pine Grosbeak—females, 13 Snowflake, 2 Purple Finch—females, 1 white-breasted Nuthatch, 1 black-throated Green Warbler. I will send the above 33 Skins and add 2 of the Gray Squirrel and 1 very fine mounted Crow. Entire lot is cheap at \$10. I'll box them all and express at purchaser's expense, for only \$5.75.  
FRANK H. LATTIN, Albion, N. Y.

Dear Sir: It gives me great pleasure to tell you that your paper is a peach for advertising. I received 10 letters to my ad. before I received the paper, letters are coming yet, although the eggs were all gone two weeks ago. BERT NICHOLS, Granville, N. Y.

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VOL. XXII. No. 12. ALBION, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1905. WHOLE No. 221

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Remember we must be notified if you wish paper discontinued and all arrearages must be paid.

207 your subscription expired Oct. 1904  
209 " " " " Dec. 1904  
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232 " " " " Dec., 1906  
257 " " " " Dec., 1908

Intermediate numbers can easily be determined. If we have you credited wrong we wish to rectify.

Entered as second-class matter December 21, 1903, at the post office at Albion, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

WANTED.—Fresh skins of the Great Horned Owl (or subspecies), Snowy Owl, Ptarmigan, Mountain Partridge, Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, and other sets of Cuckoos, Am. Herring Gull, Least Tern, Laughing Gull, Any Sandpiper or Plover. What can you offer and what can you use? ERNEST H. SHORT, Rochester, N. Y.

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WANTED.—To exchange A 1 skins common to this locality, or pay cash for those of others. Must be suitable for mounting. Want especially smaller Owls, all Jays, A 1 pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and all game birds. Send lists and wants to W. C. NEWBERRY, 415 Chippewa St., Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXII. No. 12. ALBION, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1905. WHOLE NO. 221

## THE OÖLOGIST.

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMISTRY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
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Twenty-Third Annual Congress of the  
American Ornithologists' Union.

The Twenty-third Annual Congress of the American Ornithologists' Union was held at the American Museum of

Natural History, New York City, with the exception of the final session, which was at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. Meetings open to the public were held forenoon and afternoon, Nov. 14, 15, and 16, the programs being made up of the reading, illustration and discussion of papers by members. Luncheon was served at noon on each day of the three days, by the Linnaea Society of New York, and on the evening of the 18th, the members met at the Hotel Endicott, at an informal dinner.

Four pages were on the program for the opening session, commencing at 10:00 a. m., Nov. 14th. "Some Unpublished Letters of Wilson and Some Unstudied Works of Audubon," by Wither Stone of Philadelphia, Pa., was the first paper. It was received with the interest always shown by bird-students for the works of these pioneer American Ornithologists. The second paper was "The Evolution of Species Through Climatic Conditions," by Dr. J. A. Allen, New York City. The paper spoke of the manner in which our present geographic races illustrate the differentiation of species whose distribution covered a wide area including very diverse climatic conditions, which in time affected the plumage and appearance of the birds. The third paper was "Summer Birds of the Mt. Marcy Region in the Adirondacks," by Elon H. Eaton, Canandaigua, N. Y. Mr. Eaton enumerated many birds, and recounted interesting facts regarding them in their northern forest home. The final paper of the morning was "Pelican Island Revisited," by Frank M. Chapman, New



NEST AND EGGS OF OVEN-BIRD IN SITU.

From photo by L. S. Horton.

York City. Mr. Chapman illustrated his paper by a beautiful series of views of the home life of these interesting birds on their own exclusive island in the Indian River region of Florida. This island is now a government reservation, set apart especially for these birds, and is the only place on our coasts where they breed. The slides showed old birds and young, of varying sizes, nests, eggs, and method of feeding, in which the young bird puts its head well into the throat of the parent.

The first paper on the afternoon program was "Some Breeding Warblers of Demarest, N. J.," by B. S. Bowditch, Demarest, N. J., illustrated by lantern

slides. Ten species were enumerated as known to breed, as follows: Black and White, Blue-winged, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Oven-bird, Northern Yellow-throat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Hooded, Redstart, and the Louisiana Water Thrush, and several others were spoken of as probably breeding, though the nests had not been found by the author. Thirty slides of the birds, nests, eggs, young, and nesting sites illustrated the paper. The second paper was "Notes on Wing Movements in Bird Flight," illustrated by lantern slides, by William L. Finlay, Portland, Oregon. Mr. Finlay has accomplished the most wonderful results in certain branches of bird pho-

tography, notably birds on the wing, probably, of any living photographer and nature student, and the series of slides shown on this occasion were a wonderful revelation of his success along this line. The possibilities of bringing out the principles of wing movement in flight were strongly indicated, though Mr. Finlay regards his work as only a step in this direction. The third paper of this session was "The Status of Certain Species and Subspecies of North American Birds," by J. Dwight, Jr., of New York City. In this paper, Dr. Dwight, following a line of reasoning which he adopted several years ago, regarding the procedure of the American Ornithologists' Union in the matter of nomenclature, argued against the hair-splitting methods of differentiation that has led to such confusion in the case of certain geographical forms.

The case was discussed from the opposite side by Mr. Oberholser, impartially by Dr. Allen, and very strongly in favor of a more simple and less complicated method, by Mr. D. G. Elliott. The last paper of this session was "Wild-fowl Nurseries of Northwest Canada," by Herbert K. Job, Kent, Conn. Mr. Job is one of the pioneer bird photographers, and his work is among the best. His slides illustrated the home life of the waterfowl, which are still to be found in great colonies in this wild northern country.

After the dinner of that evening, the members returned to the Museum for an informal reception, at which there was a demonstration of a new projection apparatus. This apparatus, not only projects slides, but a magnified and beautifully clear colored reflection of any small object, introduced into the objective is shown in color on the screen.

The first paper of the morning session of the second day was "Andrae

Hesselius, Pioneer Delaware Ornithologist," by C. J. Pennock, Kennett Square, Pa. This paper dwelt principally with extracts from the notebooks of this Swedish missionary, whose observations were made some two hundred years ago. At that time ornithological observations were few, and those included in these notes were extremely interesting, and couched as they were, in the quaint style of the time, often very amusing. Following this paper came one by Witmer Stone, of Philadelphia, Pa., on "The Probability of Error in Bird Migration Records." Mr. Stone spoke of the conditions that tend to admit error in the records as gathered by single isolated observers, and recorded the methods he has adopted, of grouping observers in parties of three or four, who practically cover the same ground, thus affording the opportunity of checking and averaging the observations of others. Mr. Stone followed this paper by one on "Some Observations on the Applicability of the Mutation Theory to Birds." The discussion of this paper which followed, by Dr. Allen and others showed a disinclination to admit the applicability of this theory, to birds. Henry Oldys, of Washington, D. C., followed with a discussion of "The Song of the Hermit Thrush." Mr. Oldys has for some time devoted himself to the study of bird song, and gave an interesting account of his experience in securing an opportunity to study the Hermit's song, of his impressions regarding it, and its comparison to the song of the Wood Thrush. Mr. Oldys gave some pleasing imitations of a variety of songs of each of these two species, and concluded by rendering a little song, the words of which he had composed, to the air he had recorded from the most accomplished of the Hermit songsters to whom he had listened.

Mr. Chapman concluded the fore-



NEST AND EGGS OF WILSON'S PLOVER IN SITU.

From Photo by M. T. Cleckley.

After careful examination you will note the three eggs in depression just below the large valve of Fan Shell. They are even harder to see in reality owing to protective coloration.

noon session by "Impressions of English Bird-Life," illustrated by lantern slides. Besides giving a number of views of English birds, the author gave views of the home and town surroundings of Gilbert White, as well as other characteristic English country scenes, and contrasted the conditions of bird life in England and this country, England being described as possessed of fewer species, but many more individuals.

The afternoon meeting opened with Woods, and the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, by Wm. L. Bailey, Ardmore, Pa.

The Pocono Mountain region has been but little worked as ornithological territory, and the author enumerated many species included as normally more northern breeding birds, some of them not having been previously recorded as breeding in Pennsylvania. The paper on "A Lapland

Longspur Tragedy," by Thomas S. an "Exhibition of Lantern Slides," and "Similarity of the Birds of the Maine Roberts, was postponed until the following day. Prof. Wells C. Cook, of the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., followed with a paper on "Discontinuous Breeding Ranges." The author cited instances of birds found breeding in the southern extremity of the southern hemisphere while between the two extended a vast area over which they were not found during the breeding season. He also mentioned other instances of species having restricted breeding ranges, separated by extensive longitudinal gaps. The final speaker of the session was Abbott H. Thayer, Dublin, N.H., who demonstrated his claims regarding protective coloration in animals, which, as he explained and abundantly convinced his audience, are not theories, but facts. First regarding the views hitherto held of the efficacy of coloration harmonizing with surroundings. Mr. Thayer explained that this was dependent on the nature and effect of the light that the creature was seen in.

His contention was that the prevailing light conditions have the tendency to bring the upper parts into strongest relief, blending into least conspicuousness on the under parts. To counteract this tendency, Nature has colored her creatures darkest above, shading to lightest beneath. The speaker gave a demonstration of his contention by exhibiting an imitation of a leopard, ground color shaded as in nature, from darkest above, to lightest beneath, also with spots shown, and with a background painted in the same color as the animal. By alternately lighting from above and below, the creature was made to disappear, when seen in the normal, top light, and to stand out sharply, despite the exact similarity of color to background, when seen in a

bottom light. Secondly the speaker contended that the white upper markings on many creatures, can not be guiding signals for others of the same species, because from the pursuing creature's range of vision, these markings would usually come against the sky-line, and therefore disappear against the sky. They are, therefore, of importance in reducing the creatures' silhouette against the sky, by subtracting the area of the part that thus blends into the sky. Mr. Thayer also gave a number of other demonstrations. The title of his paper was "The Principles of the Disguising Coloration of Animals."

The opening paper of the forenoon session of the final day was "The Collection of Birds in the New York Zoological Park," by C. W. Beebe, New York City. Mr. Beebe gave many interesting experiences in connection with the various experiments that he has such an excellent opportunity of conducting at the Zoological Park, among others mentioning an experiment with two young White-throated Sparrows hatched in the park. These birds were fed in the same manner on the same kind of food, but one was kept in a cage out in the light and air, under fairly normal conditions, while the other was kept indoors, in a rather dark place, and subjected to a moisture-laden atmosphere.

At the first molt the two birds showed no perceptible change, but soon after the second molt, Mr. Beebe found that the bird kept indoors had become an almost uniform dusky color, and with no trace to indicate the identity of the specimen. The skins of the two birds were exhibited. The second paper was "A Contribution to the Natural History of the English Cuckoo, with a Review of the Literature on the Subject," by Dr. Montague R. Levenson, New York City. Dr. Levenson corrected the erroneous

statements that the young of the English Cuckoo ejected the eggs and young of the bird in whose nest they were hatched, before the young cuckoo was twenty-four hours old, and that they had, at this period, a depression in the anterior portion of the back to enable them the more easily to effect this ejection. He illustrated his paper by drawings and photos, and apparently abundantly proved his contention. Dr. Dwight gave a paper on "Plumages and Status of the White-winged Gulls of the Genus *Larus*," illustrating his remarks with a considerable series of skins. He contended for the elimination of one recognized form, and for the recognition of another new form. A paper by Arthur T. Wayne, Mount Pleasant, S. C., on "A Contribution to the Ornithology of South Carolina, pertaining chiefly to the Coast Region," in the absence of the author, was read by Mr. Brewster. The list of species covered was quite a lengthy one, and was fully annotated. Mr. T. S. Palmer, in the absence of the author, read a paper by O. Widman, St. Louis, Mo., on "Should Bird Protection Laws be in the Hands of the National Government?" The author contended that inasmuch as the birds were the guests of the nation, rather than of any one state, the National Government should have the supervision of their protection, thereby securing a uniform law, which otherwise could not be secured. Mr. Thomas S. Roberts, of Minneapolis, Minn., then read the paper postponed from the day before, "A Lapland Longspur Tragedy," illustrated by lantern slides. On the night of March 13th, 1904, during a heavy migration flight of these birds in southern Minnesota and northern Idaho, a severe snow storm occurred in this region, during which thousands of these birds struck the buildings, telegraph poles, wires, and the ice

on lakes, many being instantly killed, and others injured, some of the latter being revived in houses, and afterward liberated. Mr. Thomas stated that a conservative computation of the number which was killed was 750,000, but that he fully believed that 1,000,000 would be more nearly a correct estimate.

The afternoon session was held at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. Mr. F. A. Lucas in behalf of the Institute welcomed the Union to the Institute. Mr. Lucas was elected chairman of the meeting. Mr. Geo. K. Cherrie, New York City, spoke on "The Hoatzin and other South American Birds." The exhibition of specimens to illustrate this paper were viewed later. Cherrie spoke of the habits of this interesting bird, which, while young, has claws on the wings, used like the hooks on the wings of bats, to assist in climbing. They are lost before the bird reaches maturity. The species nests where the structure will be over the water when the eggs are laid, and the eggs are not laid until the river rises sufficiently to inundate the lower part of the tree in which the nest is built. The last paper of the congress was "Among the Water Birds of Southern Oregon," by William L. Finley, of Portland, Oregon. This paper was illustrated by a very large series of beautiful slides, showing the bird life in the great rookeries of this still wild region. The congress was then adjourned.

The members were served with refreshments by Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, and the exhibitions of specimens in the museum, were afterward viewed.

On the morning of the 17th, the members visited the New York Aquarium, and then went to the New York Zoological Park, where they were entertained by Mr. Beebe, who served refreshments.

B. S. BOWDISH.

### The First American Martyr to Bird Protection.

The demand for aigrette tips by supposedly thoughtful and cultured women has resulted not only in the extermination of nearly all individuals of a certain species of one of our most beautiful and harmless birds, and the starvation of their young in the nests, but it has now culminated in the assassination of one of the faithful wardens of the National Association of Audobon Societies, who was shot to death while in the performance of his duties protecting the birds he loved. Concerning this deplorable occurrence Dr. William Dutcher, the president of the National Association of Audobon Societies has made the following statement:

"The startling announcement was sent to the National Association on July 14, that Guy M. Bradley was shot and instantly killed while making an arrest at a rookery on Oyster Key, Florida, on July 8. Full particulars of this unfortunate affair have not been received, although it is known that his murderer has been captured and is now confined in the county jail at Key West. L. A. Harris has been retained to represent the National Association at the preliminary hearing of the case. The deceased acted as warden in Monroe county, a wild and thinly settled district, for over three years, having commenced his duties in May, 1902. During all this time he faithfully guarded his wards, the plume birds, traveling thousands of miles in the launch Audubon, in order to watch over them. He was originally recommended to the Association by Mr. Kirk Monroe, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Florida Audubon Society, who said that he was fearless and brave and had an extensive knowledge of the country and the birds that lived there. A number of well-known ornithologists and members of the Association visited Bradley at different times, and always found him on the alert and faithful in the performance of his duty, and willing to undergo any hardship to protect the birds. He took a personal interest in his work and was genuinely proud when he could report an increase in numbers. He told the writer in February last that he felt while he was away from his home,

cruising among the Keys, or patrolling the swamp, that his life was in his hands, for the plume hunters, whose nefarious traffic he so seriously interfered with, had sworn to take his life. Even this knowledge did not deter him, and he proved faithful unto death. Personally he was gentle and somewhat retiring, was pure in thought and deed, deeply interested in and a supporter of the small Union church near his home. A young wife is left to mourn his sudden and terrible death, and his two children, too young to realize their loss, will never know a father's care.

"A home broken up, children left fatherless, a woman widowed and sorrowing, a faithful and devoted warden, who was a young and sturdy man, cut off in a moment, for what? That a few more plume birds might be secured to adorn heartless women's bonnets. Heretofore the price has been the life of the birds, now is added human blood. Every great movement must have its martyrs, and Guy M. Bradley is the first martyr in the cause of bird protection."

Warden Bradley was as much of a martyr to a good cause and a laborer in the interests of his fellowmen and showed as much bravery as has been shown by those who have met death at the mouth of the cannon. However, there is no means of obtaining a national pension for the bereaved widow and little orphans. These should receive the support of all persons interested in the preservation of bird life, and it is only by the voluntary actions of such persons that it will be possible to obtain financial means to rear and educate these children. Therefore, a movement is on foot to establish a pension for Mrs. Bradley by inviting voluntary contributions from all persons who are willing to express their sympathy in a material manner. Large amounts are not asked, and if each interested person would contribute only a dollar, it would amount to enough to insure the proper care of the family and the education of the children. Contributions can be sent to Dr. William Dutcher, 525 Manhattan Ave., New York City, or to the office of the Economic Zoologist, Harrisburg, when it will be forwarded to him.

During the past years the sight of an aigrette tip has called to our minds

the picture of old birds bleeding and dying with the feathers stripped from their backs during the breeding season and young birds left starving in their nests. This has told a story so plainly that the wearer has invariably been considered, either ignorant, thoughtless or cruel. In the future the aigrette tip on a hat will stand not only for the death of beautiful and innocent birds and the starvation of their young, but will also speak of the assassination of a human being at his post of duty trying to suppress the illegal traffic through which the supposed adornment has been made possible. In regard to imitation tips, it would seem that thoughtful persons would not be willing to imitate any custom or article that tells a story so cruel.

We take this from the Bull. Div. of Zool.—Penn. Dept. of Agri., Vol. 3, No. 5: We attempted to secure further information but nothing is yet at hand.

Whatever may be the difference of opinion in regard to some of the Bird Protection Laws, there can be no question in this case.—Ed.

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#### EDITORIAL.

**A Spotted Egg of Miss. Kite, Set 329 K-5-05, collected by Geo. W. Stevens, June 10, 1905, near Alva, Okla., is unique.**

As often happens with this species, one egg is much larger than the other. Measurements give 1.62 x 1.34 and 1.48 x 1.26 inches.

The larger egg in this set exhibits a scattered wreath of light brown specks and short scrawls about one-third down from large end of egg. I have tested these spots carefully and they are unquestionably natural spots deposited by the bird. They show plainly but would have escaped my notice but for their being in a well defined wide wreath entirely around the egg, as these eggs are almost always stained by the green nest lining.

This is the first spotted egg of this Kite I have seen or heard of in nearly twenty years experience.

Has anyone else a record?

#### About That Skunk Editorial.

It excited considerable comment, both favorable and otherwise. The

most pronounced unfavorable comment we print herewith.

Carthage, Missouri,  
Sept. 30, 1905.

Mr. E. H. Short,  
Chili, New York,

My Dear Sir:—I note with interest and regret your editorial in the September "Oologist," in regard to skunks. There is only one way to determine the economical value of any animal, and that is by careful examination of stomachs of the animal in question. Further, it will not suffice to examine animals from a single locality; we must consider them throughout their entire geographical range.

That the skunk occasionally is guilty of misdemeanors I could not dispute, but that his beneficial habits far out-balance his detrimental ones must be conceded. If the editor has ever examined skunks from the plains, or from the southern states, he would readily admit the value of the animal as an insect destroyer. It is the skunk's chief delight to hunt grasshoppers and locusts. Not only does he hunt them for food, but seemingly for the sole delight of killing them. Scarcely a skunk can be found during the months from May till November which has not feasted on locusts. It is their natural food at this time of the year.

Then, again in the spring, just after the snow has left, the skunk gets in his work on the Microti, or meadow mice; they form his principle food after he awakens from his winter's nap. Skunks are responsible for the destruction of thousands of these animals, whose detrimental habits are well known. Every Microtus he kills fully balances the destruction of a toad, and stomach examination has proven that where Mephitis eats one toad, he eats eight field mice.

I believe in "giving honor to whom honor is due." Because I observe in a certain locality the Orchard Oriole are feeding upon cherries, should I say, "I can't find where the Oriole earns enough credits to balance his debit account and I advise everyone to compass their destruction where possible, etc." We all believe in giving the benefit of the doubt to the accused. It is an injustice to accuse through the witness of only one person.

It is extremely doubtful if we can advise the destruction of any native animal. All animals in the state of nature are sustained by a natural equilibrium; destroy that equilibrium by artificial causes and turmoil is created. There are in existence at any one time just so many foxes, skunks, or weasels; just so many rabbits, grasshoppers, or mice; destroy the enemy and the host increases; destroy the host and the enemy migrates, or, more generally, takes new habits of living and remains in the original locality. Wherever man has tampered with nature he has caused confusion.

The skunk is an animal which would be easily exterminated. True, it has large families, but it is a stupid animal, with many enemies, and easily destroyed. It is one of the easiest animals to trap. Would it not be well to remember that law of evolution, "once a type becomes extinct, it never reappears again?"

Very respectfully,

HARTLEY H. T. JACKSON.

Now, the Editor never stated, or intended to give the impression that there was only one side to this question and if in some localities the different natural conditions alter the skunk's habits to such an extent that the balance of account is in his favor, well and good—then leave them alone.

But here in the East I am sure of my ground.

They do destroy young mice, very young mice, before they can leave the nests, at all times of the year by digging up the nests and devouring them, but the y are most actively engaged in this pastime in this locality during the late winter and early spring, when there are few young in the nests. I have noted 30 nests uprooted in one night in March by one lone skunk, (snow on the ground made absolute verification of this fact possible), but in no case did he make any attempt to follow up the runaway and secure the old mice. The fact that he traveled a mile and went back to the same burrow shows what luck he had in getting young.

In the East we have few locusts before late July. August is the grasshopper month, while in September the skunk unquestionably destroys a host of crickets, though I have failed to

note that crickets are very harmful.

I found remains (fragments of legs, etc.) of seven toads devoured in one night in October, 1904.

In August, this year, a skunk rifled 3 nests of Vesper Sparrows in a potato field. The birds had been repeatedly disturbed by the tilling of the field, and after the crop was finally hilled up and left, they had succeeded in laying sets and began incubation. As far as I could judge, this was their last effort of the year.

I noted where skunks had torn out several nests of Oven-bird, a few years since and a Connecticut party was complaining of their persecuting the common Towhee in the same way.

Dr. Fisher of the Department of Agriculture, wrote me in regard to the matter and I tried to secure one of a family of skunks that I knew to be feeding on toads, that he might have stomach analysis made for direct evidence. Severe freezing weather drove all toads into permanent winter quarters unusually early this year, before I could get time to catch any skunks.

I append herewith the report of the Department on one I did secure:.

Name, *Mephitis putida*; locality, Chili, N. Y.; date, Nov. 25, 1905; collector, E. H. Short; condition of stomach, full; percentage of animal matter, 100 per cent contents, remains of a well-grown domestic fowl, 100 per cent. Examination made by W. L. McAttee; date, Dec. 2, 1905.

If some doubt his agricultural value they are excusable.

Now, I do not think there are at any one time just so many of any insect or animal. Nor do I think this was ever the case.

Natural causes, some of them hard to specify, vary the increase of animal forms. Undoubtedly nature attempts an equilibrium, but often too slowly to avoid undesirable disturbances of the balance.

Man, in his advance, has changed the natural condition of our land to such an extent that animal and insect life is unavoidably affected and it seems to me this may alone necessitate and excuse man's interfering in many cases.

I must plead ignorance as to what the many enemies of skunk are except man.

The Gt. Horned Owl has almost a

monopoly of that here in the East and for other reasons, man finds it advisable to place *Bubo* under a ban.

—Editor.

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