The Journal of The Maine Ornithological Society.

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MAINE ORNITHOLOGY.

"Bird protection, bird study, the spread of the knowledge thus gained, these are our objects."

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The Maine Ornithological Society.

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SUBSCRIPTION.

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Editorial.

With this issue, in accordance with a vote at the annual meeting, the Maine Ornithological Society publishes an official organ of its own, which will enable it to print its papers and proceedings in convenient form, free from the proximity of other matter. Members of the Society should regard the success of the paper as a personal matter and are earnestly requested to contribute articles, brief notes and items of news. Many valuable notes are stored away in note books, which would be of interest and which we should be glad to publish.

Original articles will be published in each issue which will, we hope, be of value to everyone interested in bird life in the state and to ornithologists in general.

The specimens exhibited by Prof. Lane at our meeting attracted much attention. One was a Gryfalcon which has never been recorded, I believe. Lacking specimens for comparison it is difficult to distinguish these closely related forms with certainty, but after critical examination it was the consensus of opinion that this was a Gryfalcon, *Falco rusticolus gryfalco*. The exact locality and date of capture of this specimen is uncertain, but it is known to be a Maine bird, and is the second specimen of this variety to be taken in the state.

Another specimen, a Pomarine Jaeger, *Stercorarius pomarinus*, is of especial interest, it being a Kennebec County specimen, having been taken near Waterville and brought to Prof. Lane in the flesh.

There has been an unusual scarcity of winter birds up to the present time. I have seen but one flock of Snowflakes and none of the other winter birds usually here. Other members report a similar scarcity in their locality. Snowflakes are often of infrequent occurrence during periods of little or no snowfall, but they have never before been so

scarce when there was as much snow as has fallen in the past month.

The Horned Larks are coming unusually early this year. A single bird reached Pittsfield on Jan. 4th, about a month earlier than ever before. It was a typical female *Otocoris alpestris praticola*. Members should be watching for them and report if any are seen. They will be found in the roads, and as a rule are not shy. Mr. Knight informed me he saw a small flock of Horned Larks between Fryeburg and Brownfield, Oxford Co., on Jan. 12th. Their identity could not be determined, but it is probable they were Prairie Horned Larks.

The Annual Meeting at Waterville.

The third annual meeting of the United Ornithologists of Maine was held in the rooms of the Coburn Classical Institute at Waterville, Dec. 31, 1898.

The meeting was called to order by President O.W. Knight, of Bangor, with the following officers present: Ora W. Knight, Bangor, Pres.; Wm. L. Powers, Gardiner, Vice-Pres.; L. W. Robbins, Gardiner, Secretary and Treasurer; J. C. Mead, No. Bridgton, Editor; Prof. A. L. Lane, Waterville and Capt. H. L. Spinney, Seguin Is., Councillors. A good delegation of members representing most districts of the state were present.

Records of the last annual meeting were read and approved.

The name of Elmer Baker, of Bingham, was presented for active membership and he was elected.

On motion of Prof. Lee, a committee of three was appointed by the chair to prepare a list of officers for the ensuing year. The Committee consisted of J. C. Mead, W. L. Powers and A. H. Norton.

The report of the Treasurer was read and approved.

The finances of the Society were shown to be in a satisfactory condition.

On motion of Prof. Hitchings it was voted that a committee be appointed to add an additional family of birds to the two adopted for study last year, and that the three be our course of study for the ensuing year.

The nominating committee reported the following list of officers and they were elected: President, Ora W. Knight, Bangor; Vice-Pres., Wm. L. Powers, Gardiner; Secretary and Treasurer, L. W. Robbins, Gardiner: Editor, C. H. Morrell, Pittsfield; Councillors, Prof. A. L. Lane, Waterville and Capt. H. L. Spinney, Seguin Island.

Communications were received and read, and by vote the resignations of Messrs. Guy H. Briggs and L. M. Sanborn and Mrs. J. M. Strout were accepted.

The committee on a name for the Society reported; the majority in favor of "Maine Ornithologists" and the minority in favor of "The Brewer Ornithological Society". The report was accepted. After discussion, on motion of W. L. Powers it was voted to amend the name reported by the majority and that the Society be hereafter known as The Maine Ornithological Society.

A communication from the President of Colby College, inviting the members to visit the College, was read. On motion of Prof. Lee voted that the thanks of the Society be tendered the President for the invitation and that it be accepted.

Voted that a committee consisting of Prof. Powers, Prof. Lee and Prof. Hitchings be appointed to appear before committees of the Maine Legislature to whom bills are given which are of interest to the Society.

The subject of an official organ for the Society was discussed at length. Pres. Knight submitted a proposition for publishing a ten page quarterly journal for the Society. On motion of Prof. Hitchings voted to leave the subject in the hands of the Executive Committee with instructions to report in the afternoon.

Adjourned to 2.30 P. M.

After dinner the members availed themselves of the invitation to visit Colby College, and a very pleasant and profitable hour was spent in the library, museum and other departments of the College.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Called to order by Pres. Knight.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of bird study for the ensuing year reported, advising that the family of Swallows be added to the two already under consideration.

The report was accepted.

Our special course of study for the ensuing year will therefore be the Ducks, Geese and Swans, the Swallows, and the Thrushes and Bluebird.

Members are requested to furnish as complete reports on these species as possible at the next annual meeting.

The executive committee to whom was referred the subject of an official organ, reported in favor of the proposition of Pres. Knight. The report was accepted.

On motion of J. C. Mead it was voted that the paper published for the Society be called "The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society".

The names of Miss Rose Conroy, Fort Kent, Miss Mary P. Howland, Fort Kent, and Miss Emma L. Hacker of Westbrook were presented for active membership and they were elected.

On motion of Prof. Lee voted to appoint a committee on anatomy who shall study the anatomy of such specimens as may come before them and report at the regular meeting.

The committee consists of Prof. L. A. Lee, Brunswick, Arthur H. Norton, Westbrook and Prof. E. F. Hitchings, Waterville. Members having anatomical material which they do not intend to use will confer a favor by forwarding it to some member of the committee.

The attention of the Society was next turned to the papers prepared to be read at this time, which were as follows:

Birds as Botanists. Prof. A. L. Lane, Waterville. Bird-nesting with a Camera. O. W. Knight, Bangor. Notes on the Pileated Woodpecker. C. H. Morrell, Pittsfield. Pres. Knight exhibited artistic photographs of nests and eggs, in situ, to illustrate his paper.

The committee on resolutions reported. It was voted that the report be accepted and that copies of the resolutions be forwarded to the persons mentioned therein.

Notes on the families studied by the Society were given orally, and were of much interest. Notes on the Thrushes were given by Messrs. Knight, Hitchings, Mead, Lee, Swain and Morrell. The Bluebirds, which were so decimated by the severe winter of '94-'95 were reported as increasing in all localities. The Hermit Thrush was reported as becoming less numerous in several localities, its place being taken by Wilson's Thrush which is becoming more abundant. Mr. Knight and Mr. Morrell each

reported a set of Robin's eggs showing distinct spots.

Notes on the Ducks were given by Messrs. Spinney, Norton and Hitchings. All varieties of Ducks were reported as decreasing in numbers. Especially interesting notes were given on the Harlequin Duck, by Mr. Norton and Capt. Spinney.

In the evening the remaining papers were read as follows:

Brief Observations on Some Winter Birds of Aroostook Co., Maine. A. H. Norton, Westbrook.

The Gulls and Terns of Sagadahoc Co., Capt. H. L. Spinney, Seguin Id.

A Wood Duck in Captivity. J. C. Mead, No. Bridgton.

Prof. Lee invited the Society to meet next year at Brunswick. Mr. Norton suggested Portland if Brunswick was not chosen. Adjourned sine die.

L. W. Robbins,
Sec. and Treas.

Since the meeting the executive committee have elected to active membership Dr. Merton W. Bessey of Waterville.

Brief Observations on Some Winter Birds of Aroostook County, Me.

ARTHUR H. NORTON.

Read before the Maine Ornithological Society at Waterville, December 31st, 1898.

The observations recorded in this paper are based on a brief trip from Ashland, Maine, along the stage route to Fort Kent, on the northern boundary of the state; according to Prof. Hitchcock's Geological map, 1861, this last is in North Long. 47° 15'. As this is the point where most of the observations were made, some detail is given to its location and physical features beyond. The time of observations extended only from Dec. 13 to Dec. 19, 1898, with but limited time available for field work. Yet in view of the prevailing interest in county faunae, the small amount of observations recorded from this county, and the bearing of the present observations on certain general principles of distribution in our state, they are here given with certain generalizations on the phenomena involved.

Ashland is situated on the Aroostook River, 48 miles in a southerly course from Ft. Kent. From each bank of the stream the land rises by slow degrees, forming at this point a very broad, even valley cleared and devoted to agriculture.

As the stage moved along near the river bank, a nest of some Warbler, in the shrubbery of the shore, afforded a distraction of the mind from the monotonous winter scene. We reached and passed Portage Lake, its snow clad basin flashing in the sunlight.

After passing this lake the hills appear, extending, too often across the route, to and beyond the St. John River. Though often very steep and with sharp ridges, they are not high, and probably have no great influence in governing the local distribution of the birds in summer, and certainly have little or none in winter.

Fort Kent nestles in the valley formed by the St. John and Fish Rivers, quite at the junction of the two, and as on the northwest the St. John emerges from its hill studded valley, to flow and receive the waters of the Fish, and this replenished, winds away among the eastern hills, the little village, looks from her vale, to find the towering hills, guarding

her on every side. According to Prof. Hitchcock's map the formation is clay slate. (Owing to the deep snow no observations could be made.)

The conspicious and important botanical features, of the region, in order of their abundance, were, Black Spruce, Fir, Yellow and Gray Birch, Cedar, Alder and Mountain Ash.

All were bearing bountiful crops of seed and afforded the birds both abundance and variety of food.

In the soft wood forests there are at all times quantities of dead and decaying trees, filled with the larvæ of insects, affording the Woodpeckers ample reward for their attention, and the landscape throughout the region of the observations was often rendered pitiable by scenes of large tracts of dead and decaying wood, mouldering only to afford an asylum to the humbler forms of animal and vegetable life, and to enrich the soil.

During my sojourn in the region, local thermometers fell to 30° below zero Fahr. and this low temperature prevailed quite throughout the week. And though the feet of the specimens shot froze stiff almost immediately, the birds seemed to suffer no inconvenience, flitting about in search of food and, pausing from this to satisfy their curiosity as liberally as in fall or spring.

The following birds were observed:

Bonasa umbellus togata: Canadian Ruffled Grouse.

During the very cold period of my observations, no fresh tracks of Grouse were seen. On the 15th a pair of these birds was started from beneath the loose snow, to perform a short flight. No more were observed nor any other representative of the family.

Dryobates pubescens medianus: Downy Woodpecker.

Several were seen; they were apparantly as numerous as they are in Cumberland County at the same season.

Ceophlœus pileatus: Pileated Woodpecker.

Two specimens of this bird were seen, one near Ashland, the other at Fort Kent. Both were at a distance of about a couple of hundred yards, flying well above the trees.

In flight they were peculiarly striking objects, the slender head and neck strongly contrasted with the body. The broad white marked wings moved with a powerful though peculiar stroke. The flight was accomplished without the "rolling flight" characteristic of many Woodpeckers.

Cyanocitta cristata: Blue Jay.

A small company of these birds was seen near the stage route as it skirted the shore of Eagle Lake.

Corvus americanus: Am. Crow.

On the thirteenth, one of these birds was seen at Ashland, flying northwardly. At a point on the stage route, a flock of six or eight were seen, coming close to a farm house for the purpose of feeding on mountain ash berries in the yard. The temperature was probably at 20° below zero Fahr. at the time. The birds appeared to be quite ravenous and though disturbed by the near approach of the stage, they flew in narrow circles close by, until it had passed beyond their limit of danger.

Pinicola enucleator: Pine Grosbeak.

This species seemed to be quite numerous about Fort Kent and all along the stage route. They seemed partial to cedar groves.

None of the birds have been found about Westbrook this year, to date.

In their feeding habits observed at Westbrook during winters that they were not abundant, they have been found to pursue quite a definite feeding route, often of considerable magnitude. For example, a small flock, or in some cases a pair only, could be found, at certain times of day, about a clump of cherry trees. Leaving these they returned with much regularity to a clump of young pines (*Pinus strobus*) half a mile distant. On their arrival the ash tree receives especial attention, and a tree that has borne seed will receive the attention regularly of a flock or pair, until all of its seeds are devoured, when it is abandoned.

Many will recall the great flight of these birds which occured in New England during the winter of 1892 and '93. Thanks to the able memoir of Mr. Wm. Brewster, we are able to understand the movements and route of this great horde of birds quite well, and something of the causes governing them near the southern limit of flight. (Cf. Brewst. Auk XII. 245 et seq.)

Their first appearance in Westbrook that year corresponds very nearly with their arrival in Massachusetts, (though four days later at Westbrook than at Concord.) The first were recorded at Westbrook, Nov. 25, 1892, numbering four individuals. On the following day twelve were noted. From the fifth of December they increased in numbers, flocking to isolated trees in fields, especially the ash, and when the seeds had been devoured from these, like the smaller Finches congregating among weed patches. After the ninteenth of the month, when all of the available food seemed to have been eaten, there was a sudden departure of the birds, and from the twenty second very few were seen through the remainder of the winter.

It is here interesting to observe, that they did not invade Cambridge. Mass. until the second week in January, indicating that their sudden departure was occasioned by a failure of the food supply and that their movement southward was protracted, owing to pauses made at new fields.

No increase was observed at the time of their return to the north, showing that they returned without visiting that portion of their winter route.

Loxia leucoptera: White-winged Crossbill.

Crossbills were quite common along the stage route and at Fort Kent. The only opportunity afforded for settling their specific identity was improved on the seventeenth, when several specimens of this form were secured from a flock containing about 25 or 30. They were feeding on the seed of a black spruce, a tree to which they seem quite partial and in consequence are known as Spruce Birds in some sections of Maine.

Wherever I had opportunity to observe, I found the snow beneath the trees strewn with the scales of their cones, and the conclusion that birds of this genus were quite abundant seemed most natural. The œsophagus of each specimen was distended with seeds, each cleanly removed from its outer covering and destined to functional annihilation in its passage through the digestive organs of the bird.

The specimens were taken near the sunset hour, yet they were feeding with the avidity of creatures from a recent fast, thus it would seem that their destruction to seeds is immense.

During the winter of 1889-90 this spe-

cies extendeds its wanderings to southwestern Maine, appearing at Westbrook, January 1, 1889, and remaining until March 11, 1890. During this time they fed largely on the seeds of the hemlock, in lack of their favorite spruce. Since that time they have foiled my most careful search, though they have visited portions of Knox Co. where the spruce abounds.

Acanthis linaria: Lesser Redpoll.

I found a good sized flock of Redpolls at Fort Kent and a few scattered birds were occasionally seen at the same place. A shot at them resulted in the capture of a single specimen of this form. None have been observed at Westbrook this winter as yet.

Those birds observed were feeding on yellow and gray birches, which were bearing quantities of seeds. This species is also partial to the alder, and various weeds.

They are particularly erratic in their peregrinations, often appearing in southern Maine in late autumn and after a few weeks disappearing to reappear late in March, or they may fail of appearance in autumn, probably lingering as they now are, in more northern localities where food is abundant, surviving without inconvenience the severest cold of the region.

But with the failure of the food supply they must move farther southward, or to a favored region in mid-winter. This was the case in the winter of 1896, during which birds of this genus, though present through the fall, were scarce until January 26, 1896, when the gray birch groves were invaded by both this form and its larger relative, *Acanthis linaria rostrata*, in large numbers, they remaining to strip the trees of their seed, and pass away, presumably farther south, to return again in late February or early March, and spend much of their time feeding on the ground, made bare of snow by the increased energy of the sun's rays.

Passerina nivalis: Snow-flake.

A large flock of these Finches was seen in the road as we passed through Wallagrass Plantation, on the return trip to Ashland, on Dec. 19.

Sitta canadensis: Red-breasted Nuthatch.

This is a species, irregulary abundant as a winter resident in southern Maine. The present winter they are so rare as to be worthy only of the rank of stragglers at Westbrook. I was therefore a little surprised to find them at Fort Kent in considerable numbers, associating as usual with the Chickadees and Kinglets.

Parus atricapillus: Chickadee.

Common at Fort Kent and seen elsewhere on the stage route. It was much more conspicuous and probably more numerous than the next.

Parus hudsonicus: Hudsonian Chickadee.

Apparently not uncommon at Fort Kent associating with the last two species and the next. It seemed to me much more retiring than the last, but rather more inquisitive and less nervous. At an unusual disturbance they came forth from the brush, and perching at a convenient place, lent their peculiarly wheezy voices to the general protestation without displaying the uneasiness of *atricapillus*.

Regulus satrapa: Golden-crowned Kinglet.

This little bird was found to be quite common at Fort Kent.

Passer domesticus: English Sparrow.

This species was observed at a farm house by the stage road and at Fort Kent, in small numbers.

Of the thirteen native species, observed six, *Dryobates pubescens medianus*, *Ceophlœus pileatus*, *Sitta canadensis*, *Parus hudsonicus*, *P. atricapillus and Regulus satrapa*, are to be classed as birds whose food consists almost entirely of animal matter, insects, their larvæ or their eggs.

Five, *Bonasa umbellus togata*, *Pinicola enucleator*, *Loxia leucoptera*, *Acanthis linaria*, *and Passerina nivalis*, feed almost entirely in winter on vegetable matter, while the remaining two are quite large and feed indiscriminately on animal or vegetable substances.

Of the first six, one, *Parus hudsonicus* is a bird of northern distribution. hardly straying so far as now known beyond the limits of its summer habitat.

Four, *Ceophlœus pileatus*, *Dryobates pubescens medianus*, *Parus atricapillus* and *Regulus satrapa* are quite evenly and regularly distributed throughout this state though of course *Ceophlœus pileatus* is known to be resticted to its wilder portions.

So far as known their food supply is quite regular; thus they are not subject to the necessity of an extended migration.

The remaining species *Sitta canadensis* is with us an irregular winter resident. Indeed it is equally irregular in its winter movements throughout its range, which extends southward along the mountain range into North Carolina. Cf. Loomis Auk. XI, p. 38, also IX 38.

When the exact nature of its food is better known, the reason for its irregular migration may become more apparent.

Of the five vegetable feeders, one, *Bonasa umbellus togata* is resident throughout its range, subject only to an incipient migration or possibly to a wandering movement as the broods disband in the fall. The birds feed largely on the foliage and leaf buds of various plants in winter and find a sufficient supply throughout the season.

Another, *Passerina nivalis*, is quite regular as a winter visitant, being quite evenly distributed throughout the state, as is also an abundance of suitable food, consisting largely of the seeds of grasses.

The remaining three, *Pinicola*, *Loxia* and *Acanthis* are quite remarkable for the irregularity of their winter movements, as well as their abundance or scarcity.

Now as we take observations of the fact that they are to a great extent dependent on the seeds of arboreal plants for food, and also of the fact that most trees are not annual in their production of crops of seed, some light is thrown on the primary cause of the irregular movements of these birds.

Westbrook, Me., Dec. 26, 1898.

Birds as Botanists.

PROF. A. L. LANE.

Read before the Maine Ornithological Society at Waterville, Dec. 31, 1898.

Directly or indirectly at first hand or at second hand, all animal life must take its food at the courtesy of the vegetable. This is the unwritten law never broken, the higher life must depend upon the lower. In fact, the most fundamental distinction between the animal and the vegetable is this, that the vegetable can draw its sustenance directly from the

inorganic world, while the animal can feed only on the product of lower life that dies that the higher may live.

Birds walk in life's procession next above reptiles and next below mammals, and they are no exception to the great law just given, that animal life depends on vegetable. Birds, therefore, are present or absent, abundant or rare, according to the variety of plant life that abounds at any place or at any season.

Not all birds, it is true, live directly on vegetable food. Many are birds of prey, living on other birds, or on the smaller animals of different kinds, or on the flesh of larger animals. A still larger number are insectivorous, living on the multifold forms of insect life; flies, bugs, beetles, grubs, moths, butterflies, that swarm in earth and air.

Many live on forms of life that abound in water, or about the shores of ponds, or in bogs; on reptiles, small fishes, shell fishes, worms and other forms of life. But even these are no exception to the law that the pyramid of life rests on the plant as its basis and that birds abound where the plant conditions are favorable and are wanting where plant conditions are hostile.

The abundance of insect life depends upon the presence of plant life. The migrations of birds have their chief explanation in this fact. Birds are botanists because their very food depends upon plants, and they come or go according to the season, because their food is plentiful or lacking as the season changes.

Birds are constantly subject to the great struggle for existence and when the conditions of living become too hard for them in one place, it is not cowardice but wisdom, the wisdom of necessity, that bids them flee to another.

They take refuge in flight. Many more birds remain with us through the winter than is usually supposed; but these are species that are able to adapt themselves to the botanical conditions.

They are winter botanists. To them the year is a circle, a ring thinner indeed, on its winter side, but still having many forms of life, of seed, or bird, or hidden chrysalis, on which they may make many a dainty meal. One winter's day, when the ground had been covered deep with the newly fallen snow, after one of our blustering snow-storms, I went down to the banks of the Messalonskee and looked across to the fields opposite and saw that the winds had piled the snow up around the shrubs and bushes where it was needed to protect the roots from the cold, and left bare the stalks of golden-rod and other weeds in the more open spaces, and that a flock of winter birds was flying cheerily about and feeding upon the seeds left uncovered by the snow. The very winds of winter had swept the snow away and spread their table for them. "Behold the birds of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

There are whole groups of birds which feed directly upon the seeds of grasses and sedges and other plants, and these are of course botanists in the search and selection of their food. The finches are a good illustration of these birds. With their stout, cone-shaped bills they can crush the capsules of seeds, and secure their food from what would seem most unpromising sources.

The thistle-finch perches daintily upon the swaying thistle and pecks away the ripe seeds for its food, and tears out the down from this and perhaps other composite flowers for its nest. The gros-

beaks use their stout bills for tearing late fruit in pieces to get at the seeds, or possibly to get at the juicy pulp of the fruit itself.

A flock of pine grosbeaks usually spends the winter in this neighborhood feeding upon the apples left here and there upon trees.

Our bobolink so glad and spirituelle with us grows fat upon the rice-swamp of the South, and pays the penalty by coming to the table as the rice-bird. The cedar bird not only crushes the berries of the cedar trees, but is still more fond of cherries, strawberries and red currants, though I think the white currants escape his notice. Two or three years ago, one day in April, several weeks earlier than usual, I saw a large flock of cedar birds tearing in pieces some apples that hung ungathered on the trees. I suppose the abundance of the apple crop was the very reason for their early return.

The robin, though known to us better as a swift runner over the lawn and a hunter, cocking its head one side to listen for the earth worm which it carries to its young in such numbers, is still an epicure in fruit, with a well-developed taste for cultivated strawberries, as every fruit-grower knows. The robin is also a connoisseur in cherries and carefully selects the choicest varieties for its depredations. It distinguishes quickly a black heart or a sweet cherry from the common variety.

The shrubbery along a river bank with its June berries, choke cherries, black cherries, red cherries, raspberries, and blackberries is a favorite haunt of such birds as cat birds, king birds and war blers. Many an old orchard serves its best purpose now as a home for the birds. Its choicest treasure is the blue-bird's nest deep-hidden in a decayed trunk of some tree with a knot hole for its entrance. We have but little conception of the amount of botanical service such birds render by the destruction of insect pests, their eggs and grubs, by destroying thousands of hurtful weeds, and by sowing the seeds of useful shrubs. The pulpy useful fruits, berries, cherries, crab apples, and apples have the seeds scattered by the birds, while the hurtful weeds have the seeds so constructed that the part eaten out by the birds destroys the life of the seed. Longfellow's Birds of Killingworth emphasizes the benefit wrought by birds as insect destroyers, while every clearing growing up spontaneously to useful berries tells how widely their seeds have been scattered, largely by the birds.

If we could learn the secret of a single winter's work done by a blue jay, of every grub and chrysalis torn from its hiding place, of every hurtful seed destroyed, of every apple torn in pieces and its seeds scattered and sown, we should not begrudge the busy worker the grain or the corn stolen from granary or bin.

Even our deep woods have their botanists busy at work in mid-winter, some of them, like the owls, watching for hurtful animals or insects to destroy them, others, like the crossbills busy in tearing cones in pieces for the seed, and so scattering the seed for future growth.

At the widest possible remove from such life is that of the humming bird, the most beautiful and charming of workers among the flowers, doing double service, at least, probably more, in killing insect pests that its long bill takes so deftly from the recesses of the flower, and in carrying pollen from flower to flower to secure cross-fertilization and thus promote greater vigor of plant life.

If "Beauty is its own excuse for be-

ing", then the hummingbird needs make no apology for its life, for who can estimate the æsthetic value of such a visitor to our gardens, sometimes to our very rooms, if some bright flower attract. I have noticed among wild flowers the jewel-weed, touch-me-not, specially frequented by the hummingbirds, and last summer one took possession of a group of tiger lilies in my garden, and vociferously kept all intruders away. It was interesting to watch the resulting conflicts, but in every case I think the intruder withdrew and left the field to the one who could claim it by right of discovery.

Not only in food habits and in guarding differing plant life are birds botanists, they show the knowledge of plant life in the location and construction of their nests, in the selection of the materials out of which the nest is built. Everyone knows that certain trees are frequented by certain birds. The oriole is perhaps the best known example. Its cradle or hammock hung so securely on the drooping limbs of the elm enfolds its eggs and young in utmost safety from any ordinary danger. The tough pliant twigs of the elm, bending, swaying, but not breaking, are exactly suited to the purpose, and the oriole knows this and selects them for his home with intelligent choice.

At the opposite extremity from this take the nest of the oven bird as an example of protection by hiding rather than by strength of position. I have seen two of these nests, one shown me by a friend now dead, Daniel Wing, whose name I am glad to remember as that of an enthusiastic young naturalist, the other nest one that I came upon myself when searching for spring flowers.

Putting my hand down to pick some flowers, from under my very touch almost there flew out that beautiful bird, the golden crowned warbler, and its daintily constructed and cunningly concealed nest was at once revealed. The oven bird is a botanist in its careful study and imitation of surrounding vegetation.

The hummingbird's nest is hidden with a skill equally consummate. The inside is fashioned of the finest and whitest cotton or down—who can tell its source? —while the outside is so fashioned like a knot and so covered with lichens as completely to simulate a part of the tree itself. Other birds study fruits, flowers, trees; the hummingbird studies lichens as well, a department of cryptogamic botany.

One of the most interesting instances of botanical knowledge is the skill with which the yellow warbler gets its supply of dandelion down with which to line its nest.

The dandelion passes through three stages; one of full bloom, a second a sort of chrysalis state in which the flower is tightly closed and the seed ripening while the pappus or down lengthens and sloughs off the flowers in a mass; the third the full globe of pappus. In the last stage to attempt to gather the down would result in securing but small portions and scattering the mass, but by coming in the second stage and tearing open the involucre, a bird fills its bill at once.

These are a few instances of many, but are sufficient to suggest a line of thought and of observation that may be interesting and profitable.

Other associations of birds and flowers may be suggestive: I like to remember, for instance, that my last trip three miles out of town for the fringed gentians gave me a view of a family of bluebirds by the roadside in the same vicinity.

The blue of the flowers and the blue of the birds blended very pleasantly in my thoughts, and one who studies birds and flowers together will find double enjoyment in his excursions.

Incidents in Bird Life.

ARTHUR MERRILL.

In a recent number of the Youth's Companion an incident was related where a family of Jays received into their nest, without molestation, a young Sparrow, although they had previously killed and eaten its nest-mate, which had unfortunately fallen to the ground. The inference was, that with birds, even as savage as Jays, hospitality is instinctive. If among Jays the rites of hospitality are observed, then among our more familiar birds we ought to find it to a greater degree, and aside from the shelter and nourishment given the parasitic Cow-bird, which may be from the obligation of hospitality, we doubtless might find among these, many instances that prove more than a friendly and neighborly feeling, such as is shown in the following incident furnished by a lady at East Auburn. Unfortunately I can not determine the identity of the birds, but even without that I should consider it of unusual interest. Two families of birds nested in some apple-trees under a kitchen window, and maintained very friendly relations, making frequent visits, and exchanging voluble congratulations on their progress in nesting. One family, nesting in a hollow tree, hatched its young and the fact was announced to the interested watchers by a very unusual bustle in the happy neighborhood. Soon after the other family had laid its eggs, the house cat was seen to catch the female as she left the nest to get a drink, and the whole duty of incubation fell upon the male. This he discharged faithfully, refusing to leave the nest, and day by day as he sat there, he was fed by his neighbors across the way, who redoubled their attention when the young hatched. The weather being damp and foggy, he was seen to arrange the leaves overhead, so as to catch the water as it dripped; later he re-arranged them so as to form a canopy over the young, and all the time they were in the nest he attended them devotedly, but not more faithfully than his neighbors had ministered to his wants when he was in trouble.

No trait among our birds appeals to us more strongly than the fearless confidence with which some approach us, and it is not less interesting when it is inspired by curiosity, as it often is. The Chickadee, on this account, is a favorite of nature students, and I think no one who deserves it fails to get his friendship. To the stories that have been told of his friendliness, I might add some from personal experience, but prefer to give an instance that I think equal to anything published, of a young lady, an interested student of woodland dwellers, who, while out with the birds, was received by a Chickadee with very marked attention, though perhaps, with an excess of familiarity. The bird alighted upon her shoulder, plucked at her cloak and pulled her hair, with an exhibition of entire confidence that was as well deserved as it was given.

To be Continued.

The Journal of The Maine Ornithological Society.

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MAINE ORNITHOLOGY.

"Bird protection, bird study, the spread of the knowledge thus gained, these are our objects."

VOL. I. BANGOR, MAINE, APRIL, 1899. No. 2

Editorial.

Most of the articles in THE AUK, Vol. XVI., No. 1, are somewhat technical, though one, "A Chapter in the Life of the Canada Jay," by Oscar B. Warren, gives a glimpse of the home life of these birds whose nesting habits are still so little known as to possess the charm of rarity. Four photographic plates add to the value of the paper. The colored plate figures two of the Seaside Sparrows and illustrates an article on the group by F. M. Chapman.

The report of the 16th Congress of the A. O. U. is given, also the extensive report of the A. O. U. Committee on Bird Protection, a valuable document showing what has been already done and pointing out many things that need to be done for the better protection of our birds. The report will be printed separately and furnished at cost to be distributed as a tract in the interest of bird protection.

The Ninth Supplement to the A. O. U. Check-List appears in this number. A number of new species and subspecies are added to the Check-List and many changes in nomenclature are made, quite a number of which affect Maine birds. Our Pileated Woodpecker and Flicker become subspecies and appear as the Northern Pileated Woodpecker, *Ceophlœus pileatus abieticola* Bangs, and the Northern Flicker, *Colaptes auratus luteus* Bangs.

The Cooper Ornithological Club of California commences the new year by publishing its own official organ, a sixteen page bi-monthly BULLETIN. C. Barlow is Editor-in-Chief and H. R. Taylor and H. Robertson, Associate Editors. The first number contains a half-tone portrait and sketch of the life of Dr. Jas. G. Cooper in whose honor the Club was named, by W. O. Emerson. An article of very general interest is "Nesting of the Fulvous Tree Duck,"

by A. M. Shields. Other interesting articles appear. The BULLETIN is very neatly printed and is a credit to the Club.

BIRD-LORE, a bi-monthly magazine edited by Frank M. Chapman and published by the Macmillan Co. is the latest venture in the field of popular ornithology, the first number appearing in February. Its purpose will be to emphasize the study and protection of birds, also to serve as a medium of communication for the various Audubon Societies of which it is the official organ. The Audubon Department is edited by Mrs. Mabel Osgood Wright. In addition to the general articles there are departments entitled, "For Teachers and Students," "For Young Observers," and "Notes from Field and Study." The first number contains short articles by well known writers, and is illustrated with some excellent bird photographs. Typographically, the magazine leaves little to be desired. There is a wide field for a magazine with the purpose of this and we wish it the success it merits.

The date on which the Prairie Horned Lark reached Pittsfield was Jan. 24th, instead of Jan. 4th as appeared in our last issue. The promise of this early bird has not been fulfilled as no more have been seen to date—Mar. 4th.

Two small flocks of Horned Larks were seen between Orono and Bangor on March 10th. As no specimens were obtained it would be impossible to say which variety they were referable to, though I am strongly inclined to believe they approached *O. a. praticola* in color and markings. O. W. K.

Linnæus's Earlier Name of the Scarlet Ibis.

ARTHUR H. NORTON.

In both editions of the A. O. U. Check-List of North American Birds, GUARA RUBRA (Linn) is cited according to the name applied in the twelfth edition of Syst. Nat., or *Tantalus ruber* Linn. S. N. ed. 12, I. 1766, 241. As a matter of fact it should stand:

GUARA RUBRA (Linn.)

Scolopax rubra Linn. S. N. ed. 10, 1. 1758, 145.

The diagnosis and the references are nearly identical in both instances. It is also a matter of note that the type of Reichenbach's genus *Guara* must now stand *Scolopax rubra* Linn. instead of *Tantalus ruber* Linn. as cited according to Check-Lists.

Unusual Nesting Site of the Chimney Swift.

Before the chimneys of civilized man furnished a safe and convenient nesting site, the Chimney Swift nested in hollow trees and in crevices in cliffs. Now, they have so completely adopted the site which civilization furnished, that it has not only given them their name, but we have become so used to their nesting in chimneys that any other site is regarded as unusual.

Occasionally, however, they depart from the conventional manner of nesting. A number of nests have been reported that were found in barns, attached to the boards or rafters after the manner of nests of the Barn Swallow.

An unusual site I once noted was in an old unused well. The well had been planked over, but from long neglect and exposure the planks had rotted and some had fallen in, leaving the well partly uncovered. The nest was attached to a stone in the side of the well about ten feet below the surface. At the time I visited it the bird was on the nest, but fluttered off, first dropping lower down, then rising from the well. Aside from location, the nest was not peculiar. Though very rare, similarly situated nests have been reported. (Cf. Bendire "Life Histories of No. Am. B'ds," Vol. II. p. 178, and Stone "The Oölogist," XIII. p. 40.) C. H. M.

Winter Notes from Seguin Island.

CAPT. H. L. SPINNEY.

Although we have had a severe winter on the coast it has failed to bring any northern birds to this vicinity. With the exception of the Horned Grebe, birds have been scarcer this winter than ever before within my remembrance. This species used to visit this part of the coast in large numbers every winter until about eight years ago, when they decreased in number very suddenly and from that time not more than two dozen were seen until the present winter, when they again appeared in great abundance, arriving the first of January and at present they are very abundant in the bays and the mouth of the Kennebec River.

Of Passeres, I have seen only a pair of Northern Ravens which frequent the island and one Robin on Feb. 23rd. This is the first winter that I have not seen Song Sparrows, since I came to the island.

March 4th, 1899.

A Belated Nest of the Northern Flicker.

While raspberrying in a cutting in the woods on the 29th of July, 1898, my attention was attracted by the constantly recurring call of a Northern Flicker. The call sounded so like that of a young bird and was so often answered from different points in the adjoining woods, that I investigated and soon found it came from a young bird at the entrance to the nest, high up in an old birch stub. After a time, one of the parent birds came to the nest with food and I had an opportunity to see something of the process of feeding by regurgitation, which has been several times described, but was new to me. The parent alighted just below the entrance where the young was clinging, and inserted its bill in the open mouth of the young where it was closely grasped and the parent pumped in the food with such vigor that the young bird's neck seemed in danger of dislocation, then removed its bill. The young brought its mandibles together and swallowed several times, then opened its mouth for more. After repeating this several times the old bird abruptly left and the young at once recommenced its insistent call.

Though I could see but one young bird, it is probable there were more in the nest, as writers who have watched their feeding habits say but one bird comes to the entrance at a time.

Our Flickers are very regular in their nesting and it is rare to find a nest in which the female has not commenced incubation before June 1st, unless it is a second nest. The date of this seems late for a second set, which is always laid soon after the first is destroyed, and it may be a second brood.

C. H. M.

The Gulls and Terns of Sagadahoc County.

CAPT. HERBERT L. SPINNEY.

Read before the Maine Ornithological Society at Waterville, December 31st, 1898.

The most favorable time for observing individual characteristics of many of the birds which inhabit our sea coast, is during the severe storms which visit it in late fall, winter and early spring. It is then, when man with all the reason and ingenuity at his command is helpless to conquer the storm, that these smaller representatives of the animal kingdom are to be seen forcing their way against the wind, apparently with little exertion, or riding on the crest of the fiercest waves with perfect security.

In the morning as soon as it is light enough to see, we will repair to some promontory which presents its side to the storm. If it divides two large bays we shall get the best results, as the birds flying across the leeward bay with the wind quartering ahead gradually make leeway and to double the headland must fly for a longer or shorter distance parallel with the shore, thus bringing them within range of the collector and allowing him to secure many species, which without these circumstances, it would be almost impossible to do. The wind blowing a gale, interspersed with rain squalls, and the dull crash of the sea as it breaks in all its fury on the rock-bound shore, fills us with awe at the power of these elements. As we peer through the mist from the breakers, our attention is attracted to a bird, which, with slow strokes of the wings, slowly approaches, following the shore, now rising in air and again with motionless wings gliding with rapidity into the hollow of the sea, rising just in time to avoid the crest of the wave which breaks, leaving a track of white foam behind.

We at once recognize this bird to be the Herring Gull (Larus argentatus smithsonianus). How easily it breasts the gale, now with motionless wings, then suddenly swooping down to the crest of a wave to secure some marine object which is brought to the surface. So easily is this done that we think these environments must be necessary for its existence.

Sometimes it will hover over some submerged ledge, where amid the seething foam, its quick eye detects some fish or crustacean which has become disabled by the sea. At this time perhaps no other gull may be seen, but should the one mentioned meet with success, before we are aware of it the air is full of them, their shrill notes penetrating the din of the storm, and woe to the one that is lucky enough to secure some eatable object, for if it cannot swallow its food at once it is chased by the others until it eludes its pursuers or is compelled to drop it, when some other gull quickly secures it, while the original owner commences searching for more. Should they not find any more food at this particular place, they quickly disperse, only to repeat the same manœuvres when some other fortunate bird attracts their attention, and in this manner they will follow the shore hour after hour, seemingly tireless.

Again, our attention is attracted to the Black-backed Gull. This species is much larger than the preceding, and while the Herring Gull may be seen every day in large numbers, the Black-back

is seldom seen near the shore, except during the most severe storms, and then I do not think the ratio would exceed one to three hundred of the former. The reason for this is that it is more pelagic than the Herring Gull and unless it is driven in by storms, few are seen.

How gracefully it moves along, as with slow and steady strokes of the wings it moves against the wind, gradually rising in air until a certain height is gained, when with motionless wings it glides off, quartering from the wind, on a downward angle with the speed of an arrow, until when about to strike the crest of a wave, it suddenly mounts upward with great rapidity, bringing itself head to the wind and forging ahead and upwards until the desired height is reached, when it again repeats the same undulating movement. Should it see any food floating on the water, with a few graceful motions of its wings it at once stops its speed and returning, alights near the object, stops for a moment, then resumes its flight. Sometimes when the storm is abating and the sun for a moment shines out through the hurrying masses of dark clouds, then is the Black-back seen at its best; the light shining on the pure white under parts in contrast with the dark slate of the back and upper parts of wings, making it appear the most beautiful of our pelagic species.

During severe storms large bivalves such as *Cyprina islandica* and the Beach Clam (*Spisula solidirsirna*) are washed upon the beaches. Then these species, especially the Herring Gull, resort to such feeding grounds. As the valves of the clams are too thick and strong to be broken by their bills, they will take one and rising some fifty or more yards in the air, drop it so it will strike on the hard sand, repeating this manœuvre until the shell is broken, when they will alight on the beach and extract the contents to their own satisfaction. Again, one or more of the Herring Gulls may be seen associating with a flock of ducks, sometimes sitting on the water with them, at others, hovering in air over them, waiting for one to appear at the surface with some choice morsel it has procured at the bottom. As soon as the duck reaches the surface and before it has time to swallow its food, the gull will snatch it and fly a few yards, alight on the water and eat what it has stolen, returning for more as soon as it has disposed of what it already had. Sometimes the duck will elude the gull by quickly diving, reappearing a few yards away, and succeed in swallowing its food before the gull can get it. Although it has the appearance of an overbearing thief, yet it recompenses the ducks by its alertness for any danger, it being almost impossible for any object to get near without it giving an alarm. It would seem that the ducks realized the protection of the gull, since they permit it to rob them without opposition and allow it to still associate with them.

I remember an incident of the watchfulness of a Herring Gull which was very distasteful to me. At the time it happened I lived a mile from a small river which was a great resort of river ducks. Being at leisure that winter, I visited this river nearly every day for three months, after birds. During severe cold the river would freeze over, except one place about half an acre in extent, where the current was very swift. This opening at a certain time of tide, was a favorite resort of some forty or fifty ducks (*Merganser americanus*) to fish for smelts. Every day for two

weeks I tried to shoot some of them, but owing to the alertness of a Herring Gull which invariably accompanied them, I did not succeed in getting any, as the gull would always see me and give the alarm, when the Mergansers would fly away. Had it not been for the gull, I could have got near to them without any trouble, and although this gull was a very beautiful specimen of the species, I never could appreciate it.

In the same environment of which I have read, we notice another species. There may be three individuals or perhaps fifty, flying in a straggling flock with rapid strokes of the wings, just high enough to avoid the crest of the waves. This is Bonaparte's Gull, one of the smallest of our species. As it flies along, there is no regularity to its movements. It darts here and there as some floating object attracts it attention, and if it be anything it wants, it hovers over it in mid-air and daintily touching its feet on the water picks up the food and at once commences looking for more, returning to interview some other gull, which lags behind, all the time acting as if it enjoyed the storm as a huge joke. This gull enters our estuaries about the 20th of November and may be seen in such places until the middle of December, when they quickly disappear, one seldom being seen during mid-winter.

The Kittiwake Gull, larger than the preceding, has much the same habits except that it rarely enters the rivers. While the Herring and Black-backed Gulls may be shot from blinds on the shore, Bonaparte's or the Kittiwake will seldom come within range, unless decoyed. This is easily done, especially from a boat, by waving a white cloth or tossing some small object on the water which will splash. As soon as one is killed or wounded, the others will hover over it until nearly if not all of them have been killed, and this is also characteristic of the terns. The collector hunting them for millinery purposes was not long in realizing this fact, and many colonies of these beautiful birds were nearly exterminated to satisfy the barbarism of modern fashion.

To observe the terns we must repair to the locality of some rocky islet where they resort to breed during June, July and August. Twenty years ago a colony of Common and Arctic Terns, which perhaps numbered three hundred birds, bred on the Heron Islands off Popham Beach, also some fifty on the Black Rocks in Sheepscot Bay. Owing to the persecution of the summer sportsman and the fisherman, these colonies have gradually grown less each succeeding year, and I am sorry to say, for the past two years, not a bird to my knowledge has bred at either place. Although seventy years ago they bred in abundance on the coast of Sagadahoc County, I think I can positively state that not one individual has been hatched in this county for the past two years. As we row along the beaches the last of June, the warm sunshine gleaming on the water, with occasionally a warm wave of air from off the land, impregnated with the perfume of summer foliage, we are aroused from our languor by the sharp cry of one or more birds. Looking up we at once recognize the Common and Arctic Terns. We also notice that instead of the bill being carried horizontally with the body, as it is with the gulls, it is nearly perpendicular, and also that the wings are longer and more pointed in proportion to the body, than with the gulls. Moving along a hundred or more feet in air with quick strokes of the

wings, it detects a small fish near the surface. Poising itself with a quick fluttering of its wings, it darts down like an arrow and disappears beneath the surface, reappearing in a moment, if successful holding the fish with the tip of its bill, it rises quickly in air, and giving itself a quick, vigorous shake, moves off swallowing its food as it flys. Sometimes it carries the fish to its young on some small islet in the vicinity, at others it is chased by other terns until it either eludes them or surrenders its food. They are very solicitous for their young and in their rage will often strike one's head when on their breeding grounds.

They can be readily tamed if taken when young and will not leave when given liberty, but will follow around like a tame crow. They are always dependent on their captor for food, never seeming to learn to capture it for themselves as they do when reared by the parent bird, nor do they learn to oil their feathers, but will stay in the water and drown like a shore bird, if not taken out. This is my own experience.

Of the Caspian Tern I can say but little. It seems to be more pelagic than the others as I have seen it a long distance from land. I have seen it but twice since 1884. The last of August of that year I was walking across Sagadahoc Bay in Georgetown, Me., when my attention was attracted to five birds sitting on the sand near the middle of the bay, it being low tide. I thought them gulls and paid but little attention to them. I had a small dog with me which was running along some distance in advance. All at once I heard a squawking and my dog came running toward me, the five birds pursuing and uttering their harsh cries. Before they were aware to whom they were being introduced, I had three of them lying dead on the sand. Two of these were in full adult plumage, the third a young of the year. In the adult plumage, this beautiful tern is at once recognized by its large size, stout orange red bill and black crown and back of neck. Also by its harsh voice which gives it the name of "Squawker" by the fishermen.

In Aug. 1893, I saw this species last, three specimens passing Seguin Island. I would say in closing, that although I have not yet seen the Glaucous Gull to recognize it, I anticipate adding it to the gulls and terns of Sagadahoc County in the near future.

The Birds of Old English Literature. —By Charles Huntington Whitman, F. E. Y. U. Reprinted from the Journal of Germanic Philology, 1898.

This is a carefully prepared list of the bird-names which occur in Old English Literature, and the author states that he has brought to light some one hundred and forty bird-names, several of which are synonyms. He has been able to identify some sixty-seven species which were, and most of which still are, residents of Great Britain. Included in the discussion of each species are their modern scientific and common names with derivations, their Old English name or names, and a long list of references to old literature. The work is of value to students of bird-nomenclature and a great credit to its author.

O. W. K.

The executive committee have elected Evelyn M. Buck of Bucksport, to active membership in the Society.

Incidents in Bird Life.

ARTHUR MERRILL.

(CONCLUDED.)

I have seen the strongest curiosity, though less of this confidence, displayed by the Broad-winged Hawk, which is perhaps. the least shy of the Hawks. In August, 1891. while in the woods on the east shore of Alamoosook Lake, Orland, not far from the U. S. Fish Commission Station, I heard a pair of these Hawks crying, and turned aside to enter a small glade hoping that I might see them. In the glade stood a spreading beech tree, with the top dead, but a few of the lower limbs still verdant. As I stepped under this tree. the birds appeared, and stooped with the evident intention of alighting; one, however, seeing me soared up and away, but the other alighted quite low down, just over my head, and looked around intently for his mate. Suddenly looking downward he saw me, a sight that quite naturally aroused his curiosity, and strangely enough did not cause any emotion of fear. Dropping down still lower, almost within reach of my hand, he scrutinized me closely, with every indication of absorbing interest. In a few moments he flew away, calling loudly to his mate, who soon returned with him, he to his old position, she, evincing quite as much interest, but less confidence, peered from the shelter of the tree trunk. or some convenient limb, assuming very grotesque attitudes in her endeavors to see me, while keeping herself concealed. While watching, they uttered low cries as if they were having an interchange of opinion, then the female joined her mate on the lower limbs, and they sat together gazing alternately at me and at each other, sometimes changing their position to get a different view, or with a start of affright at something they deemed suspicious, but maintaining their position with a fearlessness that I never before witnessed in bird life, and so long that I felt fatigue in maintaining my position. They left with evident reluctance, returning to the tree several times before they finally soared away. The picture they made, sitting so near on that low limb, with their bright, eager eyes, alert, graceful bodies, and trim plumage, will be long remembered.

Wilkinsonville, Mass.

[The above interesting paper well illustrates the familiarity of birds when their curiosity is aroused. To the instances given I can add another, which may be of interest. The first of October, 1898, was a bright day and the late flocks of migrating Warblers were actively at work in the bushes. Yellow Palm and Myrtle Warblers were especially numerous. In a small opening amidst the bushes, I lay full length upon the grass and watched the passing birds. Soon a Myrtle Warbler noticed me and flying to the ground moved back and forth, pick-up a bit of food occasionally, all the while drawing nearer to me. I remained quiet and soon the bird hopped upon my shoe, ran up my leg and perched upon my arm. There, a few inches from my face, it surveyed me deliberately, once pecking at my coat sleeve. Then, its curiosity satisfied, it flew to a neighboring bush and resumed its place in the passing throng.—Ed.]

ERRATA.—In the last line in the first column, page 4 of our last issue read, North Lat. 47° 15', instead of North Long. 47° 15'.

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VOL. I. BANGOR, MAINE, JULY, 1899. No. 3

Entered as second class matter at the post-office at Bangor, Maine.

Editorial.

Owing to the scarcity of material, this number is eight pages instead of twelve, as intended. The editor is much in need of articles and short notes for the next issue which will be twelve pages. Articles by new writers would be especially welcome. Each member should do his part toward making our JOURNAL valuable and interesting, and it is only by combined effort that much can be accomplished in the study of the distribution and habits of our Maine birds. Let each member send in some note however short, to help the work along.

The Loon in Inland Waters.

J. C. MEAD.

Read at the annual meeting at Portland, January 1st, 1898.

Although one of the earliest wild sounds that I can remember, is the loud, weird cry of the Loon, I am forced to admit that in the treatment of my subject I shall be able to advance no new scientific facts or theories. I shall attempt nothing more than a superficial life history of this bird during its summer sojourn amid the inland waters—a stale subject, and yet one always possessing a certain interest to those whose lives are passed within sight and sound of the big ponds of Maine. We listen for its earliest cry in the spring as we do for the peeping of the first frog or for the opening of the mayflower.

Gradually the ice has become worn and melted away from the shores and water-soaked and blackened under the rays of the April sun. The brooks have cut their channels well into the solid body, making small fields of open water, when, some morning, before the sparkle of frost is fairly out of the atmosphere, we are gladdened by the sight and

sound of our returned friend: and his departure is to a degree governed by the closing of the lakes late in the fall, and more than once to my knowledge, some young bird has remained in one of our small ponds until Jack Frost caught him in his crystal snare and exacted the penalty, death.

Though strong and rapid on the wing they experience great difficulty in rising from the water unless it be in the face of a strong wind. Upon a calm day I have seen them beat the lake with their wings for more than a mile before they could lift themselves above the surface, and then turning in their course, a flight of another mile and return would ensue before they had reached a sufficient height to clear the tree-tops.

I think Loons are mated before they leave salt water and they are usually seen in pairs throughout the season unless there be a storm brewing when they often become gregarious. Under such conditions, late in August. I have counted twenty-two in one flock. Here in western Maine, the Loons end their courtships early in June and select their nesting sites, usually choosing a grassy tussock in some marshy cove or on an island shore, where they can easily plunge from the nest into the water, for masters of the situation as these birds are when once on the wing or in the water, nothing can be more awkward on the land. The tussock, often being slightly hollowed and sometimes lined with a very few reed stalks and grasses is ready for the large, thick-shelled, olive-brown eggs, usually two in number, though sometimes one egg constitutes the set. I have never found a nest that contained three eggs although some authors report that number. I believe, though I cannot present the proof, that when either sudden high water or the hand of a collector robs the bird of her eggs, that she sometimes deposits another set later, for I have found nests containing freshly laid eggs, from early June until late July. Having once chosen a nesting site the Loons are loath to abandon it. I recall a little islet near the head of Long Lake, that is, perhaps, a rod in length by three feet in width at the widest place, and so near the shore that one can almost jump the channel. Here, on a mound constructed on the water-washed root of a small maple, a pair of Loons to my certain knowledge, deposited their eggs for six consecutive years, although each year the nest was despoiled by the ruthless hand of some collector. It is doubtful if they would have become discouraged even then, had not high water flooded the nest one year just before the building season, forcing them to seek a new location. During the breeding season the birds spend much of their time in the vicinity of their nest and one at all acquainted with their habits can usually locate it without difficulty. I am quite certain that both sexes share the duty of keeping the thick-shelled eggs warm and if you approach their habitation while either is so engaged, it will plunge silently beneath the water and swimming out of gunshot range, will reappear, to watch you with solicitous eye. If you are content to watch proceedings through your field glasses from a distance, you will be interested in the manœuvres of the bird in her endeavor to keep an eye on the eggs and yet to appear perfectly unconcerned. No matter in how circuitous a course she may swim, she always contrives to have

one turn each time bring her close by the nest, and more than once I have discovered her secret by marking the point that she so frequently approached and yet seemed to avoid. However, if you draw near enough to the nest so that the bird knows you have found it, the conditions change. She is no longer wary, but is bold and almost aggressive; she swims up within a few rods of you and dives and splashes as if to distract your attention. Failing in this, she raises her head and utters a long quavering call which is quickly answered by the mate, perhaps more than a mile away. She swims to meet him and together, from a safe distance, they stoically watch further developments.

A peculiarity in the habits of the Loon that I have remarked, is that sometimes in waters least visited by human beings, they will conceal their nests with greater care than under reverse conditions. For instance, one season I knew of a nest built within gunshot of a bridge over which was almost constant travel, and from which the sitting bird could be easily watched. On the other hand, while fishing one July day on a little pond in Sweden, Oxford County, so little frequented that we had been obliged to haul our own boat to it or go without, I found, on a small island, back from the shore a good ten feet among the button bushes, a Loon's nest containing two eggs. A curious little well beaten path led up to the tussock, which the birds had constructed of leaves, twigs and fine drift stuff.

The young birds take to the water as soon as they are hatched and it is a pretty sight to see the little, down-covered, sooty things sporting with the parent birds and learning from them the arts for which the species is noted. At such times, if the mother bird sees cause for greater speed than can be attained by the unfledged offspring, she perches them on her back and swims away at almost incredible speed.

Who hasn't tried to capture a young Loon! I well remember one of my first adventures of this sort. A friend and myself had happened upon the family near the twilight hour, and after pursuing them for some time, had nearly given up, defeated, for whenever we were about to overtake one he would plunge beneath the surface, and it was too dark to see him when he was under water. "That last one went under right here," said my friend, running his hand into the water to emphasize his remark. To his surprise and mine, his hand touched the little fellow that had stopped just under the surface, and profiting by this experience we quickly captured its companion, but I am happy to add that we left them in the care of the parent birds when we started homeward.

If perchance, you take a young Loon away with you the old birds will often follow your boat for miles, uttering the most pitiful cries, and lay siege to the vicinity of your landing-place until you will gladly return to them your uninteresting pet in exchange for quiet. A few years ago Mrs. Mead and I prevailed upon some young neighbors to allow us to return a young Loon they had brought home. We could hear the lamentations of the parents from two miles down the lake, and laid our course for that locality. We were unable to get as near the old birds as we wished. Evidently they had learned a sad lesson that day, so at last we put the fledgling overboard near the locality from which it was taken,

knowing that sooner or later there would be a family reunion. Instead of paying attention to the calls of the mother bird, the little fellow persisted in hovering under the quarter of our boat as if he there found the protection he sought, and we felt almost guilty when we had increased our speed beyond his ability and left him behind struggling pitifully and sturdily to overtake us.

An entire paper could be prepared on the notes of the Loon. What a variety there are of them! A new one for each phase of the weather or change of the season. Its long, quavering call to its mate, its quickly uttered alarm when it finds you have stolen upon it unawares and its long-drawn-out, ringing cry which presages a storm, either of wind or rain. But when I enjoy them most is on some moonlight August night, when they have met in joint convention, each in rollicking good humor, and strive to outlaugh, outcry each other until the echoes catch the madness of the hour and send the uproar back and forth from hill to hill. Then silence ensues, to be broken perhaps, by some female bird, who, delayed at home by protracted family cares, voices her applause. Then the concert recommences and barring brief intermissions, closes only when the stars fading in the East, herald the approach of day.

THE LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE NEAR PORTLAND.

While out driving on June 10th, I came upon a Loggerhead Shrike with brood of young, within the limits of Portland. Their breeding in this locality is unusual.

A. H. NORTON.

A Wood Duck in Captivity.

J. C. MEAD.

Read before the Maine Ornithological Society at Waterville, December 31st, 1898.

Some fifteen years ago I used portions of the paper I am to read you this evening, in a newspaper article, but I have no proof that it was ever read by any one. That is an advantage that a newspaper reader has—he can skip the uninteresting portions at will, but an audience can only "grin an' bear it."

Our Wood Duck came to us in October when she was probably four or five months old. A small boy found her wounded and bewildered on the lake shore and readily parted with her for a consideration. When a person, especially if he is very young, has a smattering of scientific lore, he usually strives to call his pets by some part of their Latin names. We had that smattering (but it has proved to have been only of the lingering type, it has never developed into anything acute or serious) so we named our duckling "Sponsa." We should have preferred to have appeared more familiar with her and have addressed her by her front name, but we never could pronounce A-I-X in any way that is not suggestive of pains and kindred afflictions.

Sponsa's first home, after she became my property, was just a cage as young America always devises for his pet, be they bird or beast,—a slatted box with a dark compartment in one end and a door hung with leather hinges and fastened with a wooden button. In this we placed a basin of water and a few ears of green corn, and to both she took kindly; corn bread also was a favorite

article of food with her in these first days of captivity, and a shelled acorn now and then served well for dessert. It was months before she would attempt any of the hard, smooth varieties of corn.

Much of my spare time was devoted to making her acquaintance. At first when I approached the cage she would plunge into her water basin as if she expected to find it affording some degree of safety, but gradually she began to recognize me and before a week was gone she would reach out between the slats to pick kernels of sweet corn from between my lips. About this time I must have carelessly left the cage door unbuttoned, for one day when I went to visit her, I was surprised to find the door open and my bird missing. The food I was carrying I laid down on the bench by the cage and immediately began a search that ended only after I had carefully hunted through the yard, the garden, the pasture between our house and the lake, and had even cruised up and down the shore in my boat, but not a single duck's feather did I find.

Sponsa's cage had been placed in the carriage room of our stable, and the big sliding door was always wide open. When my pet had been missing two days and I had abandoned all hope of ever seeing her again. I thought I would improve a spare moment by putting away the cage, but upon going to it what was my surprise to notice that the food I had left beside it had disappeared and around it were unmistakable signs that Sponsa or some other duck had been there within a few minutes. My father had been drying a lot of bean vines in the carriage-house, and thinking she might be concealed among them, I closed the door and began pitching them over. I had worked but a few minutes when out she fluttered. After this she was transferred to the hen house, a change much to her liking. Her relations with the hens were always friendly but between her and a pair of Canada Jays, which that winter shared the same quarters, it was not so. They were inclined to domineer over her and I am sorry to say, she was afraid of them. However, one day she turned the tables on them much to my amusement, and ever after commanded their respect and mine. It happened in this way: Sponsa had approached to the drinking dish when one of the Jays flew plump into her face causing her, as usual, to beat a hasty retreat, but she did not accept such treatment with her wonted meekness this time, for when the intruder, balancing himself on the edge of the pan, dipped his bill into the water, she seized the opportunity and his tail at the same time, snapping her flat bill like a pair of pincers on to the long feathers and bracing herself, hung on like grim death, while the astonished Jay fluttered and scolded and only got away at last by sacrificing a good part of his caudal appendage.

In February Sponsa began to show the first changes in plumage; a little crest had started on her head; a whitish line was becoming discernible extending from the eye back under the crest, and the tips of the primaries which she was so fond of elevating an inch or two when startled, had taken on the silvery white of the adult bird. At first the only sounds I ever heard her make was a serpent-like "hiss" which she uttered whenever frightened or provoked, but now she could greet me with quite a distinguishable "quack." Sponsa was very susceptable to cold and frequently

on zero mornings I would find her fairly benumbed. At such times I would carry her into the house and warm her by the fire and it was amusing to see her stretch her neck to keep her head near the warmth when her body was being slowly drawn away. As much as she seemed to enjoy these warmings, she always resented the necessary handling that accompanied them. Although she became so tame that she would of her own accord, perch on my shoulder and pick corn from between my lips, let me so much as place my hand on her and it would be a week or more before I could again get near her.

The fall after Sponsa was a year old, a magnificent male Wood Duck was brought me to mount. When it was finished I placed it in the room with her and concealed myself where I could watch without being seen, and a laughable as well as pathetic sight it was. She evidently thought that at last she had a beau. She plumed and preened herself, then advancing with wings dragging on the earth she circled his lordship. Evidently she was somewhat disconcerted and surprised when he paid no attention to her attempts to entertain him, but nothing daunted she repeated the performance with emphasis. Then, taking a closer view of the drake she seemed suddenly to discover that he was only a stuffed bird with a glass eye, for she left him with a look as foolish as it is possible for a bird to assume.

Sponsa died after having been in my possession about two years and a half. Upon dissection I found her death due to a cancerous condition of the intestines. Her skin is mounted and occupies a prominent place in the Bridgton Academy Museum—a frequent reminder of the most interesting pet I ever had.

A Ramble where Catesby Wrought.

Executed in May, 1898.

ARTHUR H. NORTON.

Those having access to the Systema Naturæ of Linnæus, and working under his *Classis II, Aves*, may observe that most of his North American species are based upon Catesby's work, "The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and Bahama Islands." This work, which was published in two folio volumes and an appendix, appeared under the dates 1731, 1743, and 1748.

It is not our purpose to attempt to sketch the career of this pioneer naturalist, nor his travels in this then new field. It is known that a good part of his time spent in Carolina was passed about Fort Moore, which, according to a thoroughly authoritative resident of the neighborhood, was located on a sandy bluff on the South Carolina bank of the Savannah River, in the place now known as Beech Island. The site is about four miles from Augusta, Georgia, from which the public highway leads to "Sandbar Ferry." The ferry "flat" (flat-boat) lands on the Carolina side at the foot of this bluff should be renowned in ornithological history.

Local tradition recounts a tale of an Indian warrior and captive at the fort who, cautiously slipping a gun barrel into the open fire until a red heat was reached, brandished the weapon while retreating to the edge of the bluff, from which he leaped to the Savannah River sixty or a hundred feet below, thus escaping. Other entertaining facts or fancies have clustered about the place.

At the present day no vestige of the fort remains except traces of a trench, and the spot has been profaned by the planter. The bluff or high bank of the Savannah is composed of a deep stratum of brown sand, resting in turn on a quicksand and mass of marine pebbles mixed with chalk.

The highway, resumed at the ferry landing, winds along parallel with the river, finally rising and mounting the bluff-like terrace and attaining the level country which is dry and destitute of the "Spanish moss." As the ferry landed us at the place of the ancient fortress, the birds were not ignored although very different thoughts prevailed.

One of the most noticeable birds was the Cardinal whose rich voice blended most harmoniously with the scene of abundant and luxuriant life, everywhere visible, though frequently he was outmastered by the outpouring of the more elaborate and richer song of the Wood Thrush, for that shy body found a snug retreat in the thicket between the river and the highway.

The Carolina Wren vied with these larger neighbors, surpassing both in the height and vigor of his musical efforts.

The grand cypresses, which charmed their beholder in the beauty and refreshing softness of their foliage, and filled the mind with a sense of their solemn grandeur, afforded also a resort for Parula Warblers which were abundant. A glimpse was to be had now and then of a Redstart, and as the season of migration was not passed, Blackpoll Warblers loitered here, as they bent their courses northward. At no great distance, voices of Yellow-breasted Chats and Indigo Buntings, bore witness of the abundance of their authors.

Hooded Warblers and Acadian Flycatchers (*Empidonax virescens*), both overlooked by Catesby were at hand. Carolina Woodpeckers and Chickadees made themselves conspicuous by their busy voices, while two species supposed in South Carolina to be restricted nearly to the coast, were present, though not very numerous. One, the Fish Crow, was very likely confined to the Savannah valley in this region; the other was the beautiful and graceful Mississippi Kite, of which I secured three specimens and saw three more. A pair of adults had evidently begun breeding and deposited eggs. It was a surprise to find this species and not the Fork-tailed.

Near the ferry landing, a clump of sycamores proved most attractive to the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, which moved, after the manner of our Chickadee, in wide circles for food, ever giving utterance to its peevish notes. The northern observer was ever reminded of Maine's woods by the familiar notes of the Red-eyed Vireo, but possible reflections were suppressed by the louder and more vigorous cries of the tiny White-eyed species.

Stepping now into the tangle after observing a number of other species, a true reward was in store. Now pausing to watch with admiring interest a pair of Prothonotary Warblers as they go about their domestic duties in silent gracefulness, then crossing a belt of spongy ground, a dark-mantled, stupid-acting warbler started from the ground where its color is so well harmonized, and thus another Swainson's Warbler offered itself in the cause of science, by perching on a conspicuous twig. Soon another was taken. Though this species is not uncommon here, its history would

place it among the rarest of North American species. Cf. Brewst. Auk II. 65. Faxon Auk XIII 207. Both of these authors have given full accounts of the bird's history.

Westbrook, Me., June 15, 1899.

General Notes.

A Few Winter Notes from Calais.

A few Horned Larks were seen in March, and our taxidermist had one. It was *O. a. praticola*.

A Meadowlark was brought to me in January. It was found upon a fence, frozen, with its head under its wing.

There has been a small flock of Rusty Blackbirds about town nearly all winter, the first I have ever known to be here in winter. Geo. A. Boardman.

The Screech Owl in Cumberland County.

A Harrison gentleman brought a Screech Owl, gray type, to Mr. Spratt, the 23rd of March. This bird is rare enough in this locality to be deserving of mention. I have handled but two specimens in twenty-seven years, and have not known of half a dozen taken within a radius of twenty miles.

J. C. Mead.

Caterpillars Disturbing the Birds.

The unusual abundance of caterpillars this year seems to cause the birds some inconvenience. They so cover the trunk and limbs of the trees that the birds will not remain on the nests. I know of two Redstarts' nests which have been deserted after eggs had been laid, because the caterpillars took possession and it seems probable that many other birds which build in deciduous trees will be driven from their nests.

C. H. Morrell.

The Black-throated Loon in Kennebec County.

Mr. Homer R. Dill, the well-known Gardiner taxidermist, writes: "The most remarkable bird I have received this spring is a very large Black-throated Loon which was taken near China, on April 19th, 1899, by Wm. S. Hunnewell of China. It weighed fourteen pounds and measured thirty-two inches around its body and thirty-eight inches from the tip of its bill to the tip of its toes."

A Nest of the Olive-backed Thrush.

The Olive-backed Thrush seems rare here and consequently I was somewhat surprised to find a nest of this species, on June 11th, containing four young nearly ready to leave the nest. The nest was placed close to the trunk of a small hemlock bush, about two feet from the ground. The locality was a rather open mixed growth near the river. The nest was built of coarse grass and twigs outwardly—not in great quantity—then a mass of dirt and moss, largely dirt, such as one always finds present in a Crow's nest, and on this was the lining of moss and a few roots. The nest contrasted strongly with that of a Wilson's Thrush which I found but a few rods distant, placed in a ground hemlock about eighteen inches from the ground. This nest was of the usual type—a small quantity of grass and twigs, no dirt, and a main structure of dead leaves. This nest contained four eggs and the bird was quite fearless, while the Olive-backed was rather wild. This is the first instance of the nesting of this species in this locality in recent years that has come to my notice.

C. H. Morrell.

The Journal of The Maine Ornithological Society.

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"Bird protection, bird study, the spread of the knowledge thus gained, these are our objects."

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Editorial.

The month of August was of especial importance to some prominent members of our Society.

On the fifth, at Westbrook, occurred the marriage of Mr. A. H. Norton and Miss Emma L. Hacker, both members of the Society.

In Bangor, on the 14th. Mr. O. W. Knight and Miss Minnie G. McDonald were united in marriage.

To both couples we extend congratulations and best wishes.

THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING.

The next annual meeting of the Maine Ornithological Society will be held in the Searles Biological Laboratory, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 26 and 27, 1899. The railroads will doubtless grant a special rate to those wishing to attend the meeting. Arrangement for this will be made later and members will receive due notice.

Prof. Lee, in behalf of Bowdoin College, extends a cordial welcome to all, and it is hoped every member will endeavor to be present, and all are invited to prepare a paper to be read at that time.

Reports on the Anatidæ, Hirundinidæ and Turdidæ, the families selected for special study, will be read.

These are common species and each member should have some note to contribute to the common fund. Every note, however small, is of value, and lack of extensive notes should not prevent members from contributing what they have. These notes should be written so that they can be brought together and arranged for publication. Especial attention might be profitably given to the Wilson's and Hermit Thrushes. The former is rapidly displacing the latter in many places without apparent reason.

A Day at Cumberland Centre.

It was my privilege to spend Friday, July 28th, with Mr. Walter E. Blanchard in exploring some interesting localities near the village of Cumberland Centre, in company also with Mr. Sweetser, an enthusiastic botanist.

Two or three objects of great interest to us may be worthy of notice in our bulletin.

Mr. Blanchard showed us at his home two nests that were very wonderfully constructed for concealment and then took us to the very places from which he had taken them. The first was a humming-bird's nest which had been placed far out on the spreading limb of a maple tree, where the limb divided in a V-shaped branch, and was so cunningly shaped into a lichen-covered knot that only the most careful watching of the bird revealed its position. The branch was scarcely more than an inch in diameter, and the nest, a little larger than an English walnut, was lined with a tawny cottony down taken apparently from the stems of ferns, but the outside was so covered with lichens, like those near it on the branch, as to make it appear like a veritable piece of the tree itself. We were taken to the unfrequented ravine-like valley where the tree was and shown, twenty-five feet or more from the ground, the very branch from which the part holding the nest had been taken.

Another nest, one of the northern parula warbler, was if possible, still more marvelously constructed and concealed. It was on a dead fir tree, placed in a little hammock or loop of the long moss with which the tree was draped, in such a way that there was absolutely no outward, visible indication in which particular part of the mossy shroud the nest was placed. The nest was completely hidden in the moss, a hanging cradle with precious freight of life and hopes, and was discovered, as the other, only by patient watching of the movements of the bird in its approaches to the tree.

Two other nests seen were perhaps as interesting as these but for a different reason. It is well known that the phœbe bird or bridge pewee builds its nest on the timbers of bridges over running water, though I have known at least one case in which the nest was placed in a shed near a dwelling. Where did they build before bridges were constructed for their convenience? The chimney swift made its little bracket-like homes in hollow trees, but who can tell where the bridge pewee reared its young? The position of two nests which we visited may help to answer this question. In a rocky ravine, a part of the bed of a disused mill-pond, the cliff overhung the narrow stream at an angle of 45 degrees, and here in the retired valley, on little brackets or shelves of rock, over the running water, in an ideal position for comfort and safety, the two nests were placed. The rocks were gneiss-like in structure; the semi-cavern had doubtless been cut into them by the elements, water, heat, cold, and thus was fashioned the home from which these two families had safely taken their flight. The nests, now empty, were five or six feet above the water and ten or twelve feet apart. It was doubtless in similar positions that the nests of these birds were placed before civilized men had built for them the more commonly used bridges. If so,

this forms a most instructive case of reversion to earlier habits.

These are a part of the fruits of our morning walk; the afternoon was given to swamps and woods for botanical purposes, ending with a nine miles spin on a wheel home again with the feeling that the day had been very profitably spent.

A. L. Lane.

Waite's Landing, Portland Harbor.

Crossbills in Gardiner.

I saw a flock of Red Crossbills near Gardiner, June 26th, 1899, with which were several White-winged Crossbills. I got quite near the flock and could easily distinguish them by both their size and markings. H. R. Dill.

Short notes from Northern Cumberland County.

My daughter found a Hermit Thrush's nest July 14th, containing three eggs. The nest was placed in the side of an excavation within the right of way of the B. & S. R. R. R. and less than ten feet from one of the rails. Despite the fact that no less than seven trains daily passed the nesting site, the eggs all hatched and the young flourished.

Bro. A. H. Norton called on me recently with his bride. He identified one of the birds in the Bridgton Academy collection as a Lincoln's Sparrow. It is a specimen that I collected here in North Bridgton in the fall of 1879.

August 12th, Bro. Powers and I found a Wood Pewee's nest containing young, in a pine tree near the shore of Long Lake, North Bridgton. Finding this nest was a great pleasure to me, for I had searched for them unsuccessfully for twenty-five years, although the birds are common with us.

J. C. Mead.

The Black-Throated Green Warbler.

J. Merton Swain.

At our last annual meeting, as I was introduced to our editor, Mr. Morrell, he remarked, "You are the fellow who can find the nest of the Black-throated Green Warbler." And so, later in the day, I promised him I would write an article on this Warbler, at some future time, giving the modus operandi of finding its nest.

I remember well this most interesting Warbler, as I used to watch it, busily feeding about the foliage of the trees, in the woods near my old home, when but a child. And oft did I wonder what was the name of this bright, beautiful bird, with the patch of black on its throat, always so busy, and ever and anon giving utterance to its pleasing song, which once heard is not to be forgotten, and is not like that of any other Warbler. As a child I tried to English it, and it said to me, Nee-nee-nee-du-dee. This leisurely, the first three syllables on the same pitch, the fourth one tone lower, and the fifth one tone lower than the fourth. Then at times, it would quicken its tones to ne-ne-ne-ne-ne-du-dee. The first five at the same pitch of voice, then lowering the last two as before.

Then at times, when leisurely feeding, it would say in a drawly tone, and pitched several tones lower than the above two songs, de-de-de-du-dee. The first two syllables slowly and at a low pitch, the second slightly lower than the first, the last three slightly quicker, raising the tone on the fourth note and dropping back to the same pitch on the

last. It is a very pleasing song to me, and one that has brought a deep sense of pleasure, on very many early morning, woodland strolls, that I have taken in the woods, note-book in hand, in search of bird-life. But the note-book can but poorly record its beautiful song that it pours forth to its Maker, and that blends, so delightfully, with the chorus of voices, and helps to make all Nature so beautiful, on a bright Spring morn, that one forgets the cares and perplexities of the day, and soars into a realm of ecstasy and delight, that brings to the mind, more vividly than in any other way, the goodness of the Maker of all that is beautiful. Nor can it record its many delicate movements and pretty ways, as it searches hungrily for the insect life on which it feeds.

I did not succeed in finding its nest until June 12, 1892, and I remember the day as though it was but yesterday. I was up with the sun in the morning and down in its haunts, fully determined to find the nest of Dendroica virens, as I knew it must breed there. It was on a slight side-hill where the heavy timber, mostly hemlock, beech, birch and maple had been cut off and had grown up to bushes of maple, beech and blackberry about as tall as my head, and very thickly scattered with clumps of hemlock bushes from five to twenty feet tall. (A very much favored breeding resort of the Chestnut-sided Warbler, Redstart and Indigo Bunting). I located a pair of my birds and watched them intently, as they fed leisurely from one clump of trees to another, all the while trying to give the appearance that they had no thoughts of a nest anywhere around. But as they hung around one large clump of hemlocks, I decided the nest was in that clump or near by. The trees were too thick to see the nest, so I "hung around" that clump too. The birds seemed rather nervous at my staying so near it, and their usual drawly notes were uttered in a nervous, rapid way, that I have learned since, is conclusive evidence that the nest is near. After some time patiently waiting, (with a swarm of mosquitoes making life miserable for me) they grew less concerned at my close proximity and their song was uttered at much longer intervals, when suddenly the female flitted to the top of the tallest hemlock in the clump, and about one foot from the top was the nest, neatly concealed among the thick foliage and quite unnoticeable from below.

I well remember the joy that filled my breast, as I gazed at the nest and realized that, at last, I knew where Dendroica virens made its summer home. I had to exercise great care in climbing up to the nest, as the small hemlocks were so slim and brittle, that I had to gather several of them together to hold my weight. A very pretty nest met my gaze which the female reluctantly left as I neared it. She did not scold as some birds do, but left in silence, tho' both birds stayed near by, flitting nervously and giving vent to their call note, that is much like the call note of several other Warblers. The dainty cup-shaped nest as it lays before me—(Yes, I took the nest and five eggs that it contained, but with great reluctance. Many people say, "How could you take the poor little birds' nest?" This is a difficult question to answer those sympathetic people satisfactorily. They ask this and similar questions as though they thought that the student of birds takes

them with as little feeling as does the small school-boy, who takes them because Charlie and the other boys are getting a c'lection. But the true friend and lover of the birds, does have a great deal of feeling and pity for the birds, as he watches them go repeatedly to the site of their nest and seem to wonder what has become of the nest so dear to them. He has a much deeper feeling of pity for them, than does the one who asks these questions with so much seeming pity, but forgets it so soon, perhaps changing their thoughts as to what sort of a bird they shall wear on their hat. (Here let me say that these birds sought a new site in a clump not far away from the old one and reared their four little ones unmolested, and as I watched them building the new nest, I promised them not to interfere with their family cares and they seemed as happy as before and had, no doubt, quite forgotten the unpleasant experience.) To resume, the nest was twelve feet from the ground and composed of fine spruce and hemlock twigs, neatly woven with fine strips of white birch bark and a few fine strips of the inner bark of the basswood, mixed here and there with fine bits of some woolly cocoon, and a few cobwebs. Then layers of fine grasses, interwoven with quite a quantity of thistledown for a lining, and a few long hairs for an inner lining.

The eggs, five in number, were fresh, with a white ground quite thickly sprinkled with brown and lilac spots, with here and there a few black specks, forming a wreath about the large end. They somewhat resemble the eggs of Dendroica pensylvanica, tho' there is considerable variation in color and markings of D. virens, as well as in D. pensylvanica. Generally when one finds the Magnolia Warbler (Dendroica maculosa) nesting, you will find D. virens breeding in the near vicinity. I have examined quite a number of nests in Franklin County, and in Cumberland Co , (Cape Elizabeth being a favorite resort). They are quite deeply cup-shaped, and are placed from three feet to thirty-five feet from the ground, always in an evergreen, and often contain feathers. and in shape and appearance, resemble the nest of Dendroica pensylvanica, or Setophaga ruticilla, most of any of our Warblers, though the nest is quite distinctive when one becomes familiar with it. The eggs are generally four in number. I know of but one instance of the Cowbird (Molothrus ater) imposing its egg on this Warbler. In this case, one egg had been laid when the intruder dropped its egg in the nest. They left it and built another not many rods away, and laid four eggs, unmolested by the Cowbirds, but May 30th the nest and set was collected and is now in the collection of O. W. Knight.

The nests are very hard to locate in the taller trees, but are much easier found in a more open clearing with patches of spruce, fir, and hemlock, where one can follow the birds more easily. It is generally placed in a fork of a limb near the trunk, but sometimes is placed out on the branches, so well concealed among the branches, that one has to part them to see the nest. I believe it is a more common breeder throughout our State than is sometimes supposed, but by reason of its nests being so well concealed. and the time it usually takes to locate it, it is easily overlooked.

Portland, Me., July 8th, 1899.

Some Birds of Sunshine and Vicinity.

ORA W. KNIGHT.

Having spent parts of several seasons during the past eight years in observing the birds of East Penobscot Bay, and as many of the species which were formerly common here are now nearly extinct during the breeding season, the author has deemed it wise to publish notes on some birds of this vicinity with as full as possible accounts of their breeding or having bred here.

Sunshine is a little fishing hamlet situated on Stinson's Neck, on the eastern side of Deer Isle.

This paper includes the consideration of such species of seabirds as have been found breeding on Little Duck, Green, Ship, Barge, Trumpet, Sister, John's, Heron, Lower Mark, Big Spoon, Little Spoon and Seal Islands, and on Mason's, Black, Spirit, Saddleback, Way, Halibut, Black Horse and White Horse Ledges.

Although there are many other islands scattered between these, many of which are inhabited by the smaller land birds, those enumerated include all which are the breeding places of seabirds between Little Duck on the east and Seal Island to the westward of this irregular broken chain. Many other islands which are seemingly equally good sites for rookeries are not frequented by any of the seabirds, and have not been of recent years.

Perhaps it is well that we should have a clear understanding of the location, approximate size and chief characteristics of the islands named above. About eighteen miles to the southeast by east from Sunshine and well out to sea is Little Duck Island. It is little less than half a mile across, and is covered with a growth of living and dead spruces and firs, numerous bushes and fallen logs, and a very few birches, while along the shore heaps of boulders of various sizes form a sea-wall extending around the island, except in a few places where the shores rise abruptly as an unbroken mass of rock.

For some years this was the home of a crazy negro hermit who eked out a scanty existence on the eggs and young of seabirds in summer, and mussels and other marine animals in winter. The island is at present uninhabited.

Some three and one-half miles north of due west from Little Duck are the two Green Islands. They are both grassy ledges and together cover four or five acres, being separated from each other by a narrow channel. Like all the other islands of this region (which have any soil at all) they are covered with a very dark, friable, loamy soil.

Some two miles further westward are the two Sister Islands, both of which are covered with a growth of spruces, firs, a few birches and bushes of different kinds. The largest is about a quarter, and the smallest about an eighth of a mile long.

About two and one-half miles to the southwest of the Sisters is John's Island. This is very similar to the Sisters in its botanical features and is slightly larger than the largest of these. Its rocky shores rise abruptly from the waters.

Seven miles north of the Sisters and about the same distance eastward from Sunshine are four small grassy islands, situated well in shore from the open sea

and near the mouth of Bluehill Bay. These are Ship, Eastern Barge, Western Barge and Trumpet Islands. The Barges are the outer islands of the chain, and are mere ledges covered with grass and cow-parsnips, while Ship Island is a large grassy island about three-quarters of a mile in circumference with a barn on its southern end. Trumpet is the northern island of this chain and is perhaps one-half mile long and one-quarter mile broad. It is high and grassy on the half towards Ship Island, while at the other end it is low and covered with coarse marsh grass. Its borders are covered with a tall growth of cow-parsnips, beach-peas and grasses.

Heron Island is about seven miles to the east of south from Sunshine, and is covered with spruces. Like all the following it is one of the outer chain of islands.

Mason's, Black, Spirit and Way Ledges are small rocky ledges, covered with boulders and on which the only vegetation is a very few clumps of cow-parsnip and tall grass. The length of the longest of these is not over three hundred and fifty feet. Saddleback and Halibut Ledges are larger grassy ledges. Lower Mark Island is a small island which was formerly wooded but all the trees save one were cut away by a government surveying party, whence its name. It is now covered with grass. These are all in a general southerly direction and at a distance of from seven to ten miles from Sunshine.

Big Spoon and Little Spoon are two grassy islands on which grow a few scattered spruces. They are about twelve miles to the west of south from Sunshine, and about three miles to the east of the far-famed Isle au Haut. Just to their northward two small, steep, rocky ledges rise abruptly from mid-ocean. These are Black Horse and White Horse Ledges.

Seal Island is large and grassy, and is in mid ocean about twenty-three miles southwest of Sunshine. In a few places its shores are covered with piled up boulders, while elsewhere rocky cliffs and ledges predominate. It has a small shanty on it which is inhabited by a few fishermen.

Having a correct idea of the location, size and aspect of these islands, readers of this article may be better able to picture to themselves why certain of the seabirds described hereafter have chosen to breed on only a few particular islands.

Puffin. *Fratercula arctica* (Linn.).

Our "Little brother of the north," the Sea Parrot, is, alas, no longer a breeding bird within our limits nor has it been since I have visited these islands. Fishermen whose veracity is undoubted have assured me that the Parrots used to nest on Seal Island as recently as 1886, but at present they occur there only in late fall, winter and spring. I am informed that three or four pair nested on Matinicus Rock, to the westward of Seal Island, as recently as 1897, and being protected by the lighthouse keeper they may still continue to breed there. Their nests were said to be placed far under the rocky boulders composing the sea-wall.

Black Guillemot. *Cepphus grylle* (Linn.).

This is one of our few seabirds which is not much subjected to the persecutions of man, and consequently the Sea Pigeons are likely to continue breeding in their rookeries on the most inaccessible of our islands for many years to come. Although a resident species, it is most common in fall and spring.

The largest breeding colony in this vicinity is one of some three hundred or four hundred pair of birds which nest along the sea-wall of Little Duck Island. About a dozen pair frequent the Larger Green Island and probably breed, though I have never taken eggs there. Forty or fifty breed on Mason's, eight or ten on Black, and thirty odd pair on Spirit Ledges. Seal Island is rather near their western breeding limit, and I have never found over eight or ten pair there. A few stray individuals are occasionally seen around the Spoon Islands but it is doubtful if they nest there.

Being a very social species, the Pigeons are often seen in flocks of a dozen to a hundred or more, perched on the rocks under which are their nests, or riding lightly through the surf and over the bounding waves which dash madly against their sea-girt homes.

As far as I have been able to ascertain by examination of numerous stomachs, their food consists very largely of small mussels, swallowed shell and all, while other species of small mollusks and surface swimming crustaceans are also devoured.

Being excellent divers, the Pigeons can easily reach the bottom, and often have I watched them dipping in the surf or just beyond and coming to the surface with their honestly earned meal. They usually feed in flocks, during the breeding season at least.

They rise from the water with a great flapping of wings, and after spattering along the surface for some distance they get up into the air and fly with quick wing strokes for a greater or lesser distance, usually in a somewhat circular course, and finally fall into the water with a splash.

When shot at they seem to prefer to seek refuge by diving, usually coming up at some unexpected place to rise quickly as possible into the air or again seek the bosom of Neptune.

About the first week in June they begin to think of reproduction. Nest building does not occupy a great deal of their time. The eggs are always well hidden, either being deposited on the bare ledge under some huge boulder, or in a slight hollow in the gravel under a pile of smaller rocks near the shore of the island. Quite often the nests are lined with mussel shells which are always as far as I have observed placed with the inner pearly surface upward.

A few sets must be complete by the first week in June, as I have found newly hatched young by June twentieth, but the larger part of the eggs are unincubated on June fifteenth. Two eggs is a normal set, but occasionally only one is laid. Their color is either a faint bluish white or buffy white, spotted and blotched with black, brown and lilac brown, the blotches being largest at the larger end of the egg where they are often confluent. The eggs are the handsomest laid by any of our sea fowl. A set of one taken on Little Duck Island, June 20, 1896, measures 2.27 x 1.54 and incubation was one-half complete. Another set of two measures 2.25 x 1.54, 2.25 x 1.55.

The parents take turns in incubating and the one on the nest usually suffers itself to be caught and handled without showing fight. Birds which have been incubating some time usually have two bare spots, one on each side of the breast, where the feathers seem to have been intentionally removed so as to

allow the eggs to fit tightly into the thick water proof down, and be warmed against the bare skin.

Many, if not all of the down covered young remain in the nest or among the rocks until more than half grown before taking to the water for good. In the fall when they are in the mixed white and grey immature plumage, they may be found well inshore, while at the same time the adults are seen only around the outer islands.

In spite of the nests being so well concealed, the Crows manage to find and destroy a number of eggs, and on one occasion I caught one of these robbers in the very act, both seeing it pecking at something, and after landing finding that the object of its attention was a partly devoured Pigeon's egg.

Herring Gull. *Larus argentatus* Brünn.

This is the American Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus smithsonianus*, of the A. O. U. List, but, in spite of this excellent authority, many ornithologists (among which are prominent Americans and Europeans) now refuse to recognize the validity of this eagerly created and carefully cherished subspecies.

One who has made a careful study of these birds and noted the great variations in their size and in the markings of their primaries, in specimens taken in the same locality, cannot help seeing the folly of recognizing the alleged distinctions from the trans Atlantic specimens. Good examples of *L. argentatus* have been taken near here, but unfortunately not in the breeding season. The eagerness of certain American ornithologists to create subspecies is fast becoming a crying evil, though a *good* subspecies is always worthy of recognition.

The Herring Gull is resident here, but breeding birds probably pass to the southward in the fall, and are replaced during the winter by northern born individuals.

The following islands, all of which are along the outermost chain, are frequented during the breeding season, and the number of breeding birds is about as follows :—Little Duck, about 200 to 300 pair of birds; Larger Sister, about 40 pair; John's, 100 pair; Heron, 100 pair; Big Spoon 200 to 300 pair; Way Ledge, 10 pair; Black Ledge, 6 pair; Spirit Ledge, 20 pair, none nested here in 1899; Black Horse, 50 pair; White Horse, 60 pair; these estimates being of course only approximate averages for the period of years during which they have been observed.

On such of these islands as are wooded, the first four of the foregoing list, a majority of the nests are placed on the thick limbs of the evergreen trees, only a smaller number being on the ground.

Many of the nests on the ground are well hidden amidst the shrubbery of the interior of the islands, while others are in exposed situations along the shore.

Way, Black, and Spirit Ledges are flat and rocky and the nests are perforce placed between and on top of the rocks in exposed localities. On Black and White Horse Ledges the only available sites are shelves of rock and here the nests are placed, and a large proportion of them are slightly built structures composed almost entirely of partly dried seaweed, a little dry grass and a few feathers. On the other islands and ledges most of the nests are well constructed, composed largely of dry grass well pressed into shape and mixed with a little seaweed and feathers. Those nests

which are built on the branches of the trees are far better constructed and more compact than those on the ground.

Nest building begins the last of May and fresh eggs may be found as early as the first of June. By the fifteenth, most of the nests would contain well-incubated eggs if they were not almost daily robbed by the fishermen, who (and perhaps with good taste) consider Gulls' eggs a great delicacy.

These constant robberies keep the birds laying most of the summer, and I have found fresh eggs as late as the 18th of August. These depredations are doubtless the cause of the Gulls nesting in trees and hiding their nests 'midst the shrubbery of the wooded islands. They are however greatly attached to favorite breeding places and will continue to frequent them until driven away by the advent of man.

The normal number of eggs to a set is three, but in cases where the birds have been robbed of their first laying the second set laid often contains two eggs. Having examined over 800 nests on these islands during various seasons, and only found ten which contained four eggs each, I can safely assert that the Gulls rarely lay more than three eggs.

In about half of the cases where the nests contained four eggs, those in each nest resembled each other so very closely in size, shape and markings as to leave no grounds for doubting that they were the product of one female in each case. Four of the remaining sets contained eggs, one of which differed from the other three in each case, and still another nest contained eggs, all four of which were entirely different from each other in size, shape, markings and ground color.

After a good deal of experience and study I have been forced to conclude that while usually the eggs belonging to a set (by this I mean the full complement of eggs found in a nest and which are the product of one female) resemble each other very closely in size, shape and coloration, as well in this as in other species, yet it is not rare to find very different eggs in a nest in cases where they must have been true sets. In nests containing two and three eggs of this species the eggs are often very different from one another, the variation in eggs in one nest being as extreme in many cases as could be found by the comparison of a large series of eggs from different nests.

Four single eggs which show the extremes of normal variation in size measure as follows:— 3.01 x 2.01, 2.67 x 1.81, 2.71 x 2.07. A set of three measure:— 2.70 x 1.90, 2.75 x 1.88, 2.81 x 1.90. Runt eggs are sometimes laid, especially toward the close of the breeding season, and I have seen one not much, if any, larger than an egg of the Domestic Pigeon.

The ground color of the eggs varies from a light bluish-white to a yellowish-brown or in rare cases a dark greenish-drab. They are spotted, dotted and blotched with various shades of umber, brown, lilac, drab and black, and the markings are often inclined to be larger and more numerous towards the larger end.

Although accurate data regarding the period of incubation is at present unobtainable, I have heard of fishermen putting Gulls eggs under hens and been informed that they hatched in about four weeks. The young are able to run about very soon after hatching and are

covered with a profuse coating of down. They are probably able to fly in about five or six weeks from the time when hatched.

As one approaches their breeding place the Gulls may be seen like so many marble images, perched on rocky eminences and trees or cuddled down on their nests. As the intruder nears them they rise almost simultaneously and circle overhead, rising higher and higher and uttering long drawn cries of "cua, cua, cua" and varying them by "ha, ha, ha" and "ca, ca, ca" which sounds like croaking laughter.

The Indians from Bar Harbor formerly used to visit the breeding places in order to shoot these birds to obtain their breasts, but of late years they are so wary that it is hard to get within gun shot of them and the visits of "Lo" have ceased.

If the breeding places could be protected and the egg robbing stopped, there would be no great danger of the extermination of the Gulls along our coast.

Their food consists largely of small fish, though sea-urchins, mussels and other marine animals, and the slops thrown overboard from passing vessels are also devoured. The Gulls share with the Crows the trick of taking sea-urchins or mussels in their bills and dropping them on rocks so as to crack the shells and enable them to reach the inmates thereof.

They are very good swimmers and I have often seen individuals floating on the water with their heads turned backwards and tucked into the wing coverts, seemingly asleep in the sunshine and literally "rocked in the cradle of the deep."

Their breeding places are at present the most outer and inaccessible of our islands coastwise, though a few colonies nest on the larger lakes of the interior.

Common Tern. *Sterna hirundo* Linn.

This is by far the commonest of the Medricks in this section. Ship, Barge and Trumpet Islands are by all means the great breeding places of these birds in East Penobscot waters. The Terns always breed on low grassy islands, and here they have exactly the home that suits them. Seemingly there must be at least five hundred pair of these birds nesting on these four islands.

Three hundred pair of these call Trumpet Island their home, and about one hundred and fifty breed on Ship Island, and about twenty-five pair on each of the Barges. Some ten or twelve pair breed on the Green Islands; some thirty pair on Saddleback Ledge, and an equal number on Halibut Ledge. Eight or ten pair sometimes breed on Little Spoon Island, and one or two pair on Lower Mark Island, but they are not always to be found there.

Their nests are mere hollows in the dirt, wholly unlined or sometimes lined with a few spears of dry grass, and I have found one quite elaborate structure of dry grass which would hold together and bear transportation. This was found on Saddleback Ledge, August 19th, 1896, and contained two eggs. The Terns were still laying at this late date, owing to the constant robberies perpetrated on them by the fishermen. These eggs measured 1.61 x 1.18 and 1.62 x 1.17. Eggs on the point of hatching, newly hatched young, and young in all stages up to full fledged were observed on various islands at this late date.

Normally the birds have eggs by the last week in May, and I have seen newly hatched young as early as the fifteenth

of June, so the period of incubation must be between two and a half and three weeks. The first young are usually on the wing by the last of July.

The normal number of eggs in a set is usually three, and nine-tenths of the sets belonging to the first laying contain this number. When the nests have been robbed the second set laid commonly contains only two eggs, and while the eggs of a set are usually very similar in size, color and markings, yet in many cases they are very different. I have seen about fourteen sets of four eggs each, eight sets of five each, four four of six each and one set of seven eggs, during my visits to these islands.

Most of the sets of four eggs had the eggs of each set very similar to one another, and many of the sets of five also seemed to be the product of one bird in each case. One set of six eggs seemingly must have been laid by one bird as the eggs were almost exactly alike in size, color and markings, while the remaining sets of six contained eggs of two different types, three eggs of each type. The set of seven contained four of one type and three of another. A set of six eggs measure as follows:— 1.65 x 1.20, 1.65 x 1.22, 1.65 x 1.21, 1.53 x 1.20, 1.64 x 1.21, 1.58 x 1.20. This set was taken on Trumpet Island, June 23rd, 1897.

The ground color of the eggs varies quite as much as in the case of the Herring Gull of whose eggs those of the Terns are almost exact miniatures. The prevailing ground color seems to be a cinnamon or greenish brown, though in some eggs it is of a light bluish-white color. The markings, which are somewhat more abundant about the larger end, are brown, black, umber, lilac, slate, etc.

The Terns live almost entirely on small fish which they catch with great dexterity, and a vast concourse of these birds may often be seen hovering and shrieking over a school of fish, and constantly plunging down and emerging from the water with their prey. The fishermen call them Mackerel Gulls.

These birds make noises most of which are variations of their favorite cry, a harsh, grating "chir-r-r." When their breeding grounds are approached they rise and circle high overhead uttering this note. They usually keep well out of gunshot, but if one of their number is killed or wounded the remainder will descend and hover for some time over the body giving the hunter a chance to secure many more victims.

They seem to arrive early in May, and many depart southward by the last of August though some remain well into September. Their numbers are decreasing gradually, but as now they are fully protected by law, their ultimate extinction will not take place for some time to come. All Terns are good swimmers.

Arctic Tern. *Sterna paradisæa* Brünn.

The only place where I have met this species is in the vicinity of Ship, Barge and Trumpet Islands, closely associated with the foregoing species, and do not think that over fifty pair of these birds nest on all these islands. Although I have looked for them on other islands where the Terns nest I have failed to find them.

The eggs are not distinguishable from those of the preceding and the habits of the birds are identical. The Arctic Terns seem to prefer to place their eggs in a hollow in the sand at the edge of the grass, and I think this is a characteristic of the species.

(To be continued.)

The Maine Ornithological Society.

CIRCULAR No. 1.

The Maine Ornithological Society was organized January 1, 1895, under the name of "The United Ornithologists of Maine, and was the natural outgrowth of the correspondence carried on previously by a few bird lovers in our State who were endeavoring to make a list of the birds of Maine. In view of the fact that "Nature Study" was just beginning to receive in our schools the attention it deserved, this was a timely act. Men who had been working in isolated localities now received the uplift of a broader view, and were placed in position not only to profit by the communion of ideas but also to extend to others the advantages of organized effort. With commendable zeal the society at once assumed the more important phases of activity with which the members individually had been engaged. Notable among these were bird migration, bird protection and a check list of Maine birds.

The last of these was most successfully conducted by Ora W. Knight of Bangor, whose compilation was published in 1897 under the title of "Birds of Maine". By an act of Legislature in 1901, for which our Society was directly responsible, protection has been extended to many birds not previously specified. Bird migration is still occupying the attention of the Society and articles on this subject will appear from time to time in our Journal.

As a means of communication among the members the Maine Sportsman, a monthly magazine printed in Bangor, was accepted as our official organ, and in the March number of 1896 our first articles appeared. These continued until January 1899, when the society adopted its present name, and began the publication of its proceedings and papers in a quarterly Journal of its own entitled "Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society."

This Journal, now in its fourth volume, has improved from year to year in size and appearance until now it enjoys a well deserved popularity among the Ornithologists of North America.

The matter published is of permanent value to all interested in the subject, but to the student of Maine birds it is an invaluable source of the records or rare occurrences, new observations, and reviews of species. It should be in the library of every Teacher, Taxidermist and Bird lover in our State.

New phases of activity have been adopted from time to time. In 1900 Prof. L. A. Lee of Brunswick began the formation of a collection of lantern slides illustrating the life histories of Maine birds, made from pictures and negatives of the living birds by members and their friends. This labor of

Prof. Lee in behalf of our society is destined to become one of its most important functions. The interest and increased knowledge of the homes, haunts and habits of our feathered friends induced by that patience and tact necessary to successfully photograph the living specimens is doing much to teach us that kindness to dumb animals is a God given privilege to be enjoyed by all.

These slides are available to every member who wishes to use them for illustrated lectures, and their exhibition forms one of the most attractive features of our annual meetings.

At the present time the Society has in hand, under the able direction of Ora W. Knight, a **"Revised Check List of Maine Birds,"** which with annotations is now ready for the printer. As soon as the requisite number of subscriptions have been received the list will be printed for distribution.

Thus, with necessary brevity, the more important labors of the Society have been passed in review. It now remains for us to show a few of the many advantages to be derived by membership in the organization.

Chief among these is the pleasure of knowing that you allied yourself with a body of people that is striving in every honorable way to encourage a love for and extend protection to our rapidly decreasing bird population. Although the Society has done much, it ever stands ready to consider and welcome proposed improvements in this direction, whether they be for the purpose of stopping the ruthless slaughter of our shore birds for millinery purposes, or that most pernicious form of persecution known as egg collecting by boys who can not appreciate the destruction their mania causes.

The Society stands today as an available medium through which the individual and working bodies of the State and Nation can exert an influence for good in this direction. And all persons having an interest in bird protection, however slight may be their interest in classification or other scientific considerations, can by union with us render available their efforts in their chosen work.

Too much can not be said of the advantages gained by the members through the social element that characterizes our annual meetings, nor of the inspiration that comes from personal contact with those actively engaged in the study of birds. But perhaps the people who would be benefited most by active membership in the Society are the teachers and students of Maine. The Annual and Summer Meetings would be to them a source of inspiration while the Journal and Bulletins would furnish throughout the year the very information so much needed by beginners. In this connection it is fitting to state that the present President, Prof. Wm. L. Powers of Gardiner, is particularly interested in this department. His experience as a lecturer on Ornithology in the Maine Summer Schools has fitted him to carry on successfully this branch of the work.

But notwithstanding the fact that the Society has accomplished great results in the past, still greater attainments are hoped for in the future.

To bring this about an increase in the membership and active working force is necessary. Greater financial support would extend the field of usefulness and bring a knowledge of our aims to those in sympathy with the purposes of the Society.

The nominal sum of one dollar admits to active membership and entitles each member to receive the Journal for a year. Application may be made at any time to any active member or to the Secretary of the Society.

Will you not join us?