

seeds among the bent grass near the shore. Mr. Chamberlain informs me that its only known breeding place is Sable Island, which is but 80 miles out at sea from our coast; it may therefore breed on some part of our eastern seaboard between Cape Sable and Cape Breton. Not being aware of the rarity of the species, I did not search for more at the time, but I am almost positive that I have seen other specimens since. However, I hope next spring to be able to prove that it is not so rare a bird, at least in this Province, as it is supposed to be.—T. MATTHEW JONES, *Hali-fax, N. S.*

**The Lark Finch in New Jersey.**—On November 26, 1885, while collecting at Schraalinburgh, N. J., within about six miles of the New York State line, I captured a female Lark Finch (*Chondestes grammacus*). It was in excellent condition, the moult just completed. The appearance of this bird, so far from its natural habitat, was without doubt caused by the severe storm of November 21-24, which, arising in Western Kansas and traveling at an average speed of forty miles an hour, in at first a south easterly, and then northeasterly direction, became, November 24, central on the New Jersey coast near Atlantic City.—FRANK M. CHAPMAN, *Englewood, N. J.*

**The Winter Distribution of the Swamp Sparrow and the Yellow-rump.**—On pages 380 and 381 of the last volume of 'The Auk,' Mr. Arthur P. Chadbourne has something further to say with respect to the wintering of Swamp Sparrows in Massachusetts and of Yellow-rumps in Maine, during the season of 1884-85. Mr. Chadbourne intimates that he is willing to have the question made one of evidence, and repeats with some changes of phraseology the information he has previously (Auk, Vol. II, p. 216) brought forward on the subject of the Sparrows, without, however, the addition of any new facts. This information is in brief as follows: Four Swamp Sparrows were seen by a collector in Cambridge on December 29, 1884, and one of them was shot and preserved; *the remains* of another—perhaps one of the original four—were found, not far from the same spot, on January 31, 1885. Upon such ground is based the conclusion that Swamp Sparrows tarried in the vicinity throughout the winter,—a conclusion which is plainly not justified in the light of the facts, that the season was exceptionally severe after the middle of January and exceptionally mild before that date, and that this species has never been shown to remain in Massachusetts throughout any winter season. The claim that in Massachusetts January is a test month for irregular winter residents cannot be made in behalf of the Swamp Sparrow, for the very reason that the bird has as yet no right to a place in that class. To assert that it never will have such a right, is far from my intention. Not much evidence is needed to prove that it can brave the rigors of an entire winter season in Massachusetts; but until the missing links in the chain are produced, no good strict constructionist will admit, I think, that the Swamp Sparrow has been found 'wintering' in that State. Mr. Chadbourne's cita-

tions of instances wherein certain other kinds have passed the winter far to the north of their usual habitats are simply irrelevant, and his references to what may be possible are entirely outside the range of evidence.

But when Mr. Chadbourne comes to speak of Yellow-rumps, he is, to say the least, forgetful of the laws which regulate the geographical distribution of birds. He believes it "almost equally certain that the Yellow-rumped Warblers were wintering at Pine Point, Maine," because "they do regularly at Milton, Mass., only about ninety miles south," and because they winter also at other points in Massachusetts. He gives no other reasons. It is hardly necessary to discuss the cogency of those which he does produce: they are not in the nature of evidence.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine.*

**On the Former Breeding of *Psaltriparus minimus* in South Carolina.**—

In a letter received sometime since from Dr. C. Kollock, mention was made of the former breeding of the Least Bush-tit in the vicinity of Cheraw, South Carolina. Subsequently I wrote to him asking for further particulars concerning this interesting occurrence. His reply is as follows:—"As to the Chestnut-crowned Titmouse—*Parus minimus* of Townsend and Audubon—I never wrote anything on the subject except a short letter to the Rev. Dr. M. A. Curtis, who was then pastor of the Episcopal Church at Society Hill, about fifteen miles below Cheraw. When I first wrote him that I had found specimens of the Chestnut-crowned Titmouse near Cheraw, he wrote me promptly, saying that I must be mistaken, as that bird was never seen east of the Rocky Mountains. I had captured both the male and female, and the nest with six eggs in it. A few days later Dr. Curtis came to Cheraw, and when he saw the birds, nest, and eggs, he gave it up and said, 'You have discovered the first Chestnut-crowned Titmouse ever seen this side of the Rocky Mountains.' I saw perhaps six or eight others in the same locality. I have never seen any since that date, [the spring of] 1857, so it must have been an accident their appearing in this latitude."

This account adds still another instance of that peculiar easterly migration of 'western' species toward the South Atlantic seaboard, which has so recently been revealed in the records of Le Conte's Bunting, Painted Longspur, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Finch, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

It is to be hoped that the constantly increasing band of ornithological workers, scattered over the State, will be able to throw the clearer light of later experience on this and other legacies of the Bachmanian epoch of South Carolinian ornithology.

P. S.—Since writing the foregoing I have received a more detailed account from Dr. Kollock respecting the occurrence noted above, from which I add the following:

"... The nest was suspended from low bushes, from three and a half to five feet from the ground; was in the shape of a long purse, from four to six inches in length, with a round hole at the top. The lower part or bottom of the nest was wider than the upper part. The nest was made