

this species apparently thoroughly at home on Great Bird Rock. A more unsuitable place for a bird fond of the deep woods cannot be imagined.

66. *Merula migratoria*. AMERICAN ROBIN.—Very abundant, breeding everywhere. Most of the nests contained fresh eggs at the time of our arrival.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SUPPOSED NEST AND EGGS OF *ZONOTRICHIA QUERULA*, HARRIS'S SPARROW.

BY CAPT. CHARLES E. BENDIRE.

FOR the purpose of drawing the attention of ornithologists located along the northern border of Montana and Dakota, and throughout southern British North America, to the fact that the nest and eggs of this interesting species remain still unknown, and to the probability of its breeding in these regions, instead of further north, I will state that none of the large collections of birds, nests and eggs made by the following gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company, Robert McFarlane, Strachan Jones, T. McDougall, Donald Gunn, C. P. Gaudet, and J. Lockhart, and which were donated to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D. C., contained specimens of this species, although representing nearly every other bird to be found breeding throughout the vast interior of the former Hudson's Bay Territory. The explorations made by these gentlemen were thorough and continued through several seasons, and, chiefly through the good efforts of Mr. Robert Kennicott, all their valuable field notes and an immense amount of material were brought together.

From the fact that no specimens of *Zonotrichia querula* were obtained throughout the explorations, which extended well into the Arctic Circle, and began about the 54th parallel, I necessarily believe that the summer home of Harris's Sparrow, if properly looked for, will be found along the foothills of the Bearpaw and Chief Mountains in Montana, along the Turtle Mountains in Dakota, and their centre of abundance probably near Duck Mountain, Manitoba, as well as in suitable localities in the Territories of Alberta and Assiniboia, south of Lat. 54°.

During the summer of 1885, while I was stationed at Fort Custer, Montana, one of my men, who was well posted about the birds of that region, and helped me to collect a good many, while out hunting one day found a nest and four eggs of some Sparrow, without, unfortunately, securing the parent, and brought them in for me. I saw at a glance that these eggs were new to me, and visited the place where the nest was found next day, in the hope of possibly still finding the owners about the locality, but failed in this. The eggs in question differ materially in coloration from those of the other species of *Zonotrichia*, as well as from those of the genera *Passerella*, *Melospiza*, and *Pipilo*, all of which are represented by good series in the National Museum collection.

The nest was found June 24, 1885, in a dense willow thicket close to the banks of Little Horn River, about one and a half miles above the post. It was placed between several young willow twigs, about eight or ten inches from the ground, compactly built of strips of decayed willow bark, coarse grasses, etc., and lined with finer materials of the same kind. Outwardly the nest was about four and a half inches wide by three deep; the inner cavity was two and a half inches wide by two in depth. In its general make-up it resembled the average nest of a *Passerella*. The eggs contained small embryos. They resemble certain types of Cardinal's eggs (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) more than anything else, but are considerably smaller. There is no trace of green whatever noticeable in their ground color. This green tint is always found to a greater or less extent in all the eggs of the genera *Zonotrichia* and *Passerella*, and with rare exceptions in *Melospiza* as well, while here, it is a creamy or buffy white, and the shell is also more lustrous. The eggs are thickly spotted and blotched with dark brown and burnt umber, and more or less mixed with pale heliotrope purple and purplish gray. They are ovate in shape, and measure $.89 \times .70$, $.88 \times .69$, $.86 \times .69$ and $.85 \times .65$ inch.

I am certain that these eggs are not those of the Cardinal, which is not found as far north as Fort Custer and would surely have been noticed by me, if it occurred there, and unless they should be abnormally colored eggs of *Pipilo maculatus arcticus*, which is barely possible, although also rather small for this species, they will certainly prove to be those of Harris's Sparrow. While I do not believe that it is a constant and common summer

resident in the vicinity of Fort Custer, it probably breeds there as a straggler; I failed to meet with this species during the summer, but found it not at all uncommon during its fall migration. Specimens shot by me in the early part of October are now in the National Museum collection. I found them associated with White-crowned Sparrows and Arctic Towhees principally, scattered in small flocks through the undergrowth along the Big and Little Horn River bottoms, and it seems to confine itself to the shrubbery found along the streams. Specimens were shot by me as late as October 21, 1885.

A SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS ON THE BIRDS OF THE GULF COAST OF FLORIDA.

BY W. E. D. SCOTT.

(Continued from p. 18.)

Grus mexicana. SANDHILL CRANE. — This species is resident in the vicinity of the Gulf Coast of Florida at least as far north as Cedar Keys, and south of that place in suitable localities.

What is known locally as 'flat woods' is the particular kind of environment that the birds seem to like best. The characteristics of such regions are very low, level, barren lands, sparsely grown up with stunted pines and interspersed with open areas covered with coarse grass. The open areas are frequently covered by shallow ponds of water of greater or less extent. In the rainy seasons these ponds become of vast size, in fact the whole surface of the ground in the 'flat woods' is at such seasons flooded with water in depth varying from an inch or more to a foot. In such regions the Sandhill Cranes are to be found in small parties and in pairs the year round, and the drier portions are chosen for nesting and breeding. About Tarpon Springs the birds mate in January, build the last of that month or early in February, and the young are hatched about March 1. There are generally two young in a brood. Downy birds before me taken near Tarpon Springs, March 15, 1887, are from ten days to two weeks old.

Aramus giganteus. LIMPkin. — This species, like the last, though an abundant bird in some localities, is almost unknown in others. So far as I am aware it ranges as far north as Palatka and south into the Everglades. In Hillsboro' County I have never met with it, but in Pasco, Hernando,