

adult plumage, and proved on dissection to be a female, and from the condition of the ovaries laying would have begun, I think, in from four to five weeks.

The next day two more adult female birds were secured by members of the party, but though we tried afterward, and always saw the birds, they had become so wary that our efforts were futile. The ovaries of these two females were in about the same condition as in the one already described.

From information gathered from a man who has known of this flock of birds for several years. I am led to believe that they breed somewhere in this vicinity. He tells me that from July to January Flamingoes are to be found on the outlying islands and reefs of Barnes Sound and Biscayne Bay, but that in January they begin to congregate at the point I have indicated, where there are always at least a hundred of the birds the year round. From these facts and the approach to the breeding season indicated by the females we obtained, it seems altogether probable that this large flock of Flamingoes breeds at some point not far from where I found it.

My thanks are due to Capt. Cook and to Mr. W. E. Treat of my party for aid in securing and observing these remarkable birds.

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## CAPE COD BIRD NOTES.

BY G. S. MILLER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING notes were made during the years 1888 and 1889 in the vicinity of Highland Light, North Truro, Mass.

At this point Cape Cod is but little more than two miles wide. On the ocean side banks of clay and sand rise to a height of about one hundred and fifty feet above the water. From here the land slopes gradually westward, the general level broken only by an occasional valley or 'sink hole,' to the Bay where the sand 'cliffs,' as the natives call them, although much less high and commanding than those on the ocean side, are nevertheless quite

abrupt. The soil is almost entirely sandy, supporting a scant vegetation among which such species as *Ammophila arundinacea*, *Andropogon virginicus*, *Arctostephalos uva-ursi*, *Corema conradii* and *Hudsonia ercoides* are noticeable. The only abundant trees are the scrub oaks and pines. The former seldom attain a greater height than ten feet; while the pines are but little taller, excepting where, as in some deep 'sink hole' or valley, they are sheltered from the force of the wind. Here they sometimes grow to a height of nearly thirty feet. These pines for the most part have been planted within the past twenty years, and seem to have about completed their growth, as most of the larger ones already show signs of decay. The 'sink holes' form a characteristic feature of the place. They occur in great abundance, varying from slight depressions in the ground to deep, irregularly circular basins several acres in extent and probably seventy-five to one hundred feet deep. At the bottom of them there is apt to be a richer soil than that of the surrounding country, and it is also very common to find a pool of water.

Most of the captures here recorded were made near the little group of farmhouses known as the 'High Land' settlement, which stands about half a mile back from the ocean, and almost due west of Highland Light.

**Xema sabinii.**—I secured a fine adult female of this species in fresh autumnal plumage on August 21, 1889. The bird was shot from a fishing boat about three miles west of North Truro, in Cape Cod Bay. When first seen it was feeding among a flock of *Larus* and *Stercorarius* upon the dog-fish livers which had been thrown overboard to attract the sea-birds.

The only other Massachusetts records of this species are, so far as I am aware, a young bird taken in Boston Harbor on September 27, 1874 (see "Brewster, Am. Sportsman, V, 1875, 370," Allen, Bull. N. O. C., III, 1878, 195, which see also for other New England records) and another specimen killed on "Cape Cod" during 1888 (Ornithologist and Oölogist, XIV, June, 1889, p. 95).

**Ereunetes occidentalis.**—Although I searched carefully for this species during the autumn of 1888 and summer of 1889, I failed to detect it until September 2, 1889, when I obtained a fine adult male from a gunner who had killed the bird on the beach, about two miles north of Highland Light, on the ocean side of the Cape. This is the only specimen that I have met with on Cape Cod, and the species must be rare, or at least irregular, at North Truro, as I have examined large numbers of *Ereunetes* in search of the western bird.

**Sayornis saya.**—On September 30, 1889, I killed an adult male of this western species, near one of the High Land farmhouses. It was after sunset when the bird was first seen, and several times during the rather long chase that he gave me I nearly lost him in the darkness. Late though it was, he was busily engaged in catching insects, which he invariably did by flying directly upward. The only way in which I can explain this peculiar action is by supposing that in the fast failing light, insects were most easily seen when outlined against the sky. His flight, and in fact all of his motions, seemed strong and active, and did not in the least suggest fatigue. So far as I could tell he was perfectly silent; but as there was a high south wind blowing at the time, some slight note might easily have passed unnoticed. Upon dissection the bird proved to be in good condition, fat, and apparently uninjured in any way, excepting that the right scapula had, at some previous time, been fractured near its distal end. This injury was, however, so perfectly recovered from, that it could have caused the bird no inconvenience whatever. The testes were as well, if not better, developed than is usual in autumnal birds. The stomach was well filled, chiefly with *Diptera*, but the heads of a few ants were noticed among the other contents.

It is unnecessary to say that this is the first record of the capture of this species in New England.

**Loxia curvirostra minor.**—On April 24, 1889, while hunting in a deep sink hole known locally as Hell's Bottom, about a mile and a half north of Highland Light, in the midst of a tract of pines covering about one hundred acres, I secured four specimens of this species. Two days later another was taken at the same place. Besides the specimens taken, perhaps half a dozen others were seen. The birds were all found among the pines which in this sheltering 'sink hole' had attained a height of from twenty to thirty feet. For Crossbills they seemed remarkably quiet, and showed none of that restlessness which generally seems so characteristic of these birds. They were quietly flying about among the pines and now and then alighting by the pool at the bottom of the sink hole to drink and bathe. They all seemed to be perfectly silent.

Of the five taken three were females, and upon dissection all showed unmistakable evidence that they were breeding. The testes of the two males were much enlarged. Of the females, the one taken on April 26 had just deposited her set of eggs. The oviduct of this specimen showed that it had very recently been active; while in the ovary were three ruptured capsules. Of the two females taken on April 24, one had several much enlarged ova in the ovary, and in the oviduct an egg upon which the shell had not yet begun to form; while the ovary of the other contained several much enlarged ova.

Unfortunately, after skinning the birds, I was unable to visit Hell's Bottom again in search of nests; but there is little room for doubt that the birds were breeding very near to the place where they were found.

*Spiza americana*.—A single immature male shot from a mixed flock of small Sparrows feeding in an asparagus bed, on September 30, 1889, is my only Cape Cod record of this species.

Thoreau in speaking of this part of the Cape ('Cape Cod,' p. 120) says: "Of birds not found in the interior of the State—at least in my neighborhood—I heard, in Summer, the Black-throated Bunting (*Fringilla Americana*) amid the shrubbery." This was in 1855 (l. c., p. 1) and it is very possible that the bird was more common there then than now. If the species breeds at all near Highland Light at present, it must be a very rare occurrence, as I utterly failed to detect it during the breeding season, although, having read Thoreau's note, I was constantly on the lookout for it.

*Dendroica palmarum*.—Two specimens taken on September 23, 1889, and another on the 24th of the same month, are the only specimens of the Western form of the Palm Warbler that I have met with at Highland Light. *Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea* was quite common from October 2 to 12 in 1888, and in 1889 arrived on October 6 and remained fairly common until the time of my departure from High Land on October 15. These individuals of *palmarum* were much less shy than the average *hypochrysea*, but otherwise I noticed nothing peculiar in their habits.

*Polioptila cærulea*.—An adult female was secured on October 9, 1889. The bird was feeding among some small pines not over four feet high, in company with a small flock of *Dendroica coronata*, *Sitta canadensis* and *Spinus tristis*, and is the only one that I have met with on Cape Cod.

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF ONEIDA COUNTY, NEW YORK.

BY WILLIAM L. RALPH AND EGBERT BAGG.

SINCE the publication of our local list\* in 1886, we have devoted a much larger portion of our attention to the western part of the County, the eastern end of Oneida Lake. We have also had during the past four years the benefit of the observations of Mr. W. P. Shepard of Utica and Mr. R. J. Hughes of Remsen, both students at Hamilton College at Clinton. The results of the time since 1886 will be found in the following notes.

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\*Transactions of the Oneida Historical Society, Vol. III, 1886, pp. 101-147.