

the Terns and large numbers made their home there. I visited this island once during the infancy of the young and the air was full of the older birds, and very savage they were, too. There were also more birds on the mainland than I have ever noticed before.

“In conclusion I will say, I think you would be abundantly satisfied with the Penikese colony of Terns, for in my estimation there has been a decidedly larger number of old birds than for years, as well as a larger number of young, and they seem to have increased in the past few years very materially.”

The old signs of last year were repaired, and repapered with new warning notices, in Portuguese and English, and all made ready before the birds commenced to lay their eggs.

There are other places in Massachusetts waters where Terns breed in small colonies, but they do not call for especial mention here. One of these is located about the eastern head of Nantucket harbor (where the ocean several years ago cut through), where they bred the past season. There is another fairly large colony domiciled within our boundaries which I have intended to visit, but have not done so. It is my intention to investigate it next summer, the results of which, if sufficiently important, will be placed before the readers of ‘The Auk.’

THE SPARROWS OF MISSISSIPPI.

BY ANDREW ALLISON.

THIS brief summary, while embracing, I think, some species not previously reported from the State of Mississippi, is perhaps not a complete synopsis of the species found there, but deals only with those that either I myself have found occurring, or which have been otherwise recently proved to occur. Some species that I have not seen in the State — viz.: the White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), which occurs, though uncommonly, in the vicinity of New Orleans, and the Fox Sparrow

(*Passerella iliaca*), which is a regular winter bird in some parts of Louisiana—should certainly be found; but, probably on account of the very poor opportunities I have had for winter field work in Mississippi, I have not had the good fortune to find them.

The genera known to me to be represented are: *Poœcetes*, *Ammodramus*, *Chondestes*, *Zonotrichia*, *Spizella*, *Junco*, *Peucaea*, and *Melospiza*. Of the first genus, the well-known Vesper Sparrow is necessarily the representative; of the second, seven species and subspecies occur. *Chondestes* is represented by its only species; *Zonotrichia* has, apparently, but one representative; *Spizella* two; *Junco* and *Peucaea* each one, and *Melospiza* two.

Poœcetes gramineus. VESPER SPARROW.—A winter resident, appearing as far south as 31° about the last of October, and becoming common in a week after the first birds arrive. Its favorite haunts are old fields, preferably those grown up near the edge with scrub pines.

Ammodramus sandwichensis savanna. SAVANNA SPARROW.—This seems hardly as abundant in Mississippi as in Louisiana, where it is almost everywhere one of the commonest winter birds; in Amite County, Miss., where I stayed until November 16 in the fall of 1897, I did not see a single specimen, though it arrives at New Orleans early in October. On the Gulf Coast, comprising Hancock, Harrison and Jackson Counties, it is abundant, though apparently not arriving as early as in Louisiana at corresponding latitudes. In these counties it flocks with the preceding Sparrow in the pine clearings, and frequents the dry marshes to some extent.

The bulk of the individuals leave in spring about April 20, but a few linger until the second week in May, and Prof. G. E. Beyer, of Tulane University, New Orleans, has in his collection a skin from Covington, La., labelled June 15.

Ammodramus sandwichensis alaudinus. WESTERN SAVANNA SPARROW.—Accidental, and, so far as I know, only one specimen has been reported from the State. This was seen by my brother, W. B. Allison, and myself, in Amite County, on November 12, 1897, and secured. It was identified by Dr. Merriam.

Ammodramus savannarum passerinus. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW.—Strangely uncommon in all parts of Mississippi to which I have recently had access; it is a regular, though not a common, breeder near New Orleans, but is not resident, and so is probably only a breeder in Mississippi.

Ammodramus henslowii. HENSLOW'S SPARROW.—This beautiful little Sparrow is probably a winter resident in Amite County, and is not

uncommon in the late fall. I have had no opportunities for observation in this county later than November 16, but, as an influx of these Sparrows arrived on the 15th, there is reason to believe that the winter numbers come in about that time.

I first saw it on October 9, 1897, when I secured one specimen; from this time until November 1, when my brother took another, an occasional elusive individual was seen. Until November 15, no more were seen, but on that date a number, some ten or fifteen, came in, in company with some Leconte's Sparrows (*A. leconteii*). Their general dark coloration contrasted well with the broadly white-edged backs of the latter, and made identification of both easy.

Ammodramus leconteii. LECONTE'S SPARROW.—This species has never, I think, been reported from Mississippi before, though Fuertes's specimen from New York makes almost any locality seem probable. In February, 1895, Prof. Beyer, of Tulane University, took a specimen on Avery's Island, off the southwest coast of Louisiana.

On the above mentioned occasion, November 15, my brother and myself found eight or ten Leconte's Sparrows in Amite County, in an old field, overgrown with crab-grass. This they seemed to prefer to the more open and less weedy cotton-fields, and we found them very difficult of capture, shooting only two, one of which we were unable to find. We had no time to explore other similar localities, or we should probably have found them equally common there. Unfortunately we were unable to remain after the next day, and Leconte's Sparrow in Mississippi sank again into oblivion. From the comparative abundance in which we found it on the single occasion, I incline to think it a regular winter resident, or at least a regular visitor.

A. maritimus and *A. caudacutus* are both represented in the marshes of the coast; the Seaside Sparrow is very abundant, but the Sharp-tailed I have not found common. Both are probably resident: the former becomes extremely abundant about the first of October, and, after a silence lasting through the summer, begins to sing in a lispng, wren-like way that is very pleasing.

Chondestes grammacus. LARK SPARROW.— This species rarely wanders as far east as Mississippi, and the only specimen I know of from that State was taken on September 4, 1897, at Beauvoir, Harrison County, by Mr. H. H. Kopman. The specimen is in Prof. Beyer's collection.

Zonotrichia albicollis. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.— This, with the exception of the Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*), is our commonest winter bird, in suitable localities; the first individuals reach a latitude of 31° a few days before the middle of October, and a gradual increase follows until about the first of November, when the bulk arrives, and every hedge and brush-pile is alive and vocal with Sparrows. They are very common from about the 20th of October, but from November 1 to March 1 is their particular season of abundance.

The White-throated sparrow is the most faithful of our southern winter

songsters, and in the early morning both thicket and orchard ring with their clear, sweet notes. They are extremely fond of mingling with other species, and I have seen an immense flock composed of White-throated, Chipping, Field, Song and Swamp Sparrows, and Slate-colored Juncos, all feeding together on the best of terms.

Spizella socialis. CHIPPING SPARROWS.—In the pine regions of Mississippi it is about equally abundant with the Field Sparrow (*S. pusilla*) in winter, though on the coast it is commoner than the latter. As a breeder it does not occur on the coast, but breeds abundantly, though rather irregularly, in Amite County. In 1897 I saw not a single individual until the winter numbers began to arrive, whereas in 1894 and 1895 it bred abundantly. Madison County, though farther north than Amite, has very little pine forest, and I have never found the species there at all.

The influx of winter birds begins, in Amite County, in October, and shortly after they become so numerous that it is hard to determine when the migration ceases: about the 25th of October the flocks become very large, and are seen feeding impartially on the ground in the pine groves with Pine Warblers (*Dendroica vigorsii*), or in the thickets with White-throated Sparrows. In the 'deadenings,' or tracts of open land, where the pines have been girdled, they fly in small scattered flocks restlessly from tree to tree, and flocks are continually descending to feed with the main body on the ground, where perhaps two or three hundred may be gathered at a time.

Spizella pusilla. FIELD SPARROW.—This species breeds sparingly in Amite County, abundantly in Madison County and thence northward. Early in October the winter numbers begin to arrive in the former county, and are then much associated with the preceding species.

Junco hyemalis. SLATE-COLORED JUNCO.—Arrives from the middle of October until about the same time in November, and winters abundantly, though apparently only reaching the coast in very severe winters.

Peucaea aestivalis bachmanii. BACHMAN'S SPARROW.—It hardly seems to deserve its name of 'Pinewood Sparrow' except in the extreme south of the State; in Madison County it breeds abundantly in the grass-fields, but seems to confine its attention largely to that county, as in Amite County I have seen but three specimens, a male, and two young of the year. These were found in an open grassy field on Sept. 26, 27, and 30, and all were taken.

On the coast, however, it is a common bird in the pine woods, and enjoys the distinction of being the only Sparrow breeding there. Its habits here remind one sometimes of the Savanna, sometimes of the Chipping Sparrow, while farther north it suggests the Field Sparrow strongly.

Melospiza fasciata. SONG SPARROW.—This is generally a rare breeder in Mississippi, though probably more common in that capacity in the most northern parts. The only instance of its nesting in central Mississippi, that has come to my notice, was in Madison County, in 1893;

on this occasion my brother and I found a single pair, in worn and blackish midsummer plumage, about the middle of June.

The winter residents begin to arrive in early November, and by the middle of that month they are fairly common; in midwinter they are doubtless much more abundant.

Melospiza georgiana. SWAMP SPARROW.—This is without doubt the commonest winter bird in Louisiana and Mississippi; the first birds arrive a little after the first of October, and the species is abundant within a week after that time. The full bulk arrives early in November, and contributes so many individuals to the already crowded thickets, that it is hard to see how so many can find sustenance. About the first week in March they begin to thin out, and in a month nearly all are gone, though near New Orleans I have seen a single one as late as May 3.

GENERAL NOTES.

Record of a Fifth Specimen of the European Widgeon (*Anas penelope*) in Indiana.—A specimen of this Duck was killed by a local gunner on the marshes at English Lake, Indiana, on the 15th April, 1899. The gunner was not acquainted with the species, never having seen one before, but called the attention of Mr. John Taylor, Supt. of the English Lake Shooting and Fishing Club, to a red-headed Widgeon which he had just killed. Mr. Taylor examined the Duck and gave me the information. This makes the ninth record for the interior.—RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

The Scarlet Ibis (*Guara rubra*) in Arizona.—When crossing the Rillito about a mile north of old Fort Lowell, with a party of friends, September 17, 1890, en route to Sabina Cañon, I saw a small flock of Scarlet Ibis. There were seven or eight of them. They were standing in the running water and were pluming themselves. The day was hot and fearing if I killed any they would spoil before I could get home with them, I decided not to interfere with them till my return a few hours later. To my great disappointment they were then gone.—HERBERT BROWN, *Yuma, Arizona.*

Notes on the Breeding of the Wilson's Snipe (*Galinago delicata*) in Illinois and Indiana.—With occasional exceptions, northern Indiana is undoubtedly the southern breeding range of the 'Jack Snipe,' yet I do not think it is generally known that many remain, even in this latitude, to rear their young, and the majority of sportsmen, at least, think that