

FURTHER NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF HATLEY, QUEBEC,
1925-1926.

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IN 'The Auk' for April, 1925, I recorded my experiences with the birds in 1924, i. e., to September 22, the date upon which I left Hatley to spend the winter in Montreal, and perhaps reside there permanently—which has been the case—so that these few notes cover only short visits paid to my happy hunting grounds during the past two years.

My pair of Starlings as already recorded, as last seen on the day I left Hatley September 22, and later, by a lady friend, Mrs. Geo. Hill, on December 1, 1924, when they were flying in and out of the ball on the top of the spire of St. James Church at five o'clock in the evening, after which time, they were not seen again that year. The same lady, however, records their return on February 10, 1925, and I saw the parent birds feeding their young on May 30, and again on June 7, and 11, in the same old nest in the ball on the top of the church spire. Another correspondent, Mr. Henry Haines, reports having seen them on and off all through the winter of 1925-26, and says they nested again in the old spot in 1926. I spent the latter part of May, and early June, 1925, at Hatley, arriving there on May 19, and leaving on June 13, during which time I was able to make another study of the nest building of the Northern Parula Warbler, which will be found fully recorded in 'The Auk' elsewhere.

On May 26, I was able to add the Red-breasted Nuthatch definitely to my list of breeding birds, by finding the parents feeding their young, in a hole in a dead ash tree, some fifty feet above the ground. The exact status of this bird has always been somewhat of a puzzle, its appearance being most erratic, as my previous notes have indicated, and it was therefore a great satisfaction to be able to clear up definitely the fact of its breeding at Hatley. The following day, I found the White-breasted Nuthatch also feeding young, in a hole in a maple tree, 35 to 40 ft. above the ground, not many of this birds' nests having been previously found. On May 30, I came upon a brood of chicks of

the Canadian Ruffed Grouse, just out of the nest. Three days later, or on June 2, I found a Spotted Sandpiper's nest on "the marsh" containing four very small eggs, looking for all the world counterparts of those found in 1912, and 1913—which have been referred to in 'The Auk' for January, 1916, p. 60—the measurements being almost identical 1.20 x 90.

On this same date I found a nest, and four eggs of the Marsh Hawk, also on "the marsh," the first I had ever found there, the birds having always nested in another locality, a mile or more away, which, however, had been cleared of undergrowth in the fall of 1924.

On June 10, I found a nest and eggs of the Canada Warbler on the eastern shore of Lake Massawippi, and five days previously, whilst on my way to this same lake, I noticed a pair of Starlings feeding their young, in the same hole, which they had occupied in 1923 and 1924, in the old poplar tree near Massawippi Village.

On the 10th, and 12th, I came upon two more broods of the Canadian Ruffed Grouse, these birds apparently having done particularly well this year, the same as they did in 1924.

On June 12, I found another nest of the Yellow Warbler containing one egg, in the same garden and cedar hedge, as the one found in the village in 1924, the home life of the birds having been recorded in the April number of 'The Auk' for 1926. The male bird in the present instance, had selected a tall fir as his principal "singing tree," as it was nearer to the new nest than the old dead maple he had favoured the year previous. Unfortunately, I had to leave Hatley on the following day, and did not return again that year, so was unable to make a second study of the home life of the birds. Of the twenty-five species of Warblers so far recorded, I only saw seventeen this year during my short visit, the absent ones, or at least the ones I failed to notice—and which for the most part are uncommon in the district—being the Orange-crowned, Palm, Yellow Palm, Mourning, Black-poll, Pine, Wilson's, and Tennessee Warblers. Other interesting birds noted, were a male and female Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Yellow-bellied, Olive-sided, and Crested Flycatchers.

The following year (1926), my proposed annual visit did not take place until August 13, when in passing Lake Massawippi in

the train, I saw three Herring Gulls—this beating my “fall” record of last year, by a fortnight—and one other on the 29th, when returning to Montreal. On the 17th, at Hillhurst, a small village some seven miles to the east of Hatley, I saw a flock of 25-30 Starlings. Solitary Sandpipers returned to “the marsh” on the 20th, somewhat later than usual. Goldfinches and Purple Finches were unusually numerous, and Bobolinks were still about on the 29th, the day I left. On September 7, however, I paid a flying visit, for one night only—after orchids—the only bird item recorded, being the whistled love note of the Chickadee, “phe-bé,” which note, with exception of the month of May, is more often heard in September, than in any other month of the year. From a record kept during the years 1915-1924, I find I have recorded hearing it on seventy-six different occasions, in May, and sixty-one, in September, the two months next in order, being April and June, when the note was heard on forty-seven occasions in the first named, and forty-two in the second named month.

In conclusion, possibly the year 1926 will go down as a very bad one indeed for the Ruffed Grouse, the cold, wet, and late spring—combined no doubt with other causes—having had a disastrous effect on the hatching of the eggs, as well as on the young birds.

I cannot call to mind having found a single nest or brood of young birds—so very different from the years 1924, and 1925, when many of both were found—and very few adults have been seen. There has been a discussion I understand of placing a closed season throughout the year on these birds, but nothing has come of it so far.

Appended will be found the annotated notes on the six new species added to my list since 1923, the numbering being carried on consecutively.

188. *Phasianus torquatus*. RING-NECKED PHEASANT.—Already recorded 'Auk,' vol. XLI, 1924, p. 589.

189. *Larus philadelphia*. BONAPARTE'S GULL.—Rare transient. An example of this bird was obtained in the Magog river below the large factory on August 13, 1921.

190. *Harelda hyemalis*. OLD SQUAW.—Rare transient. Two examples of this Duck have been obtained in the district, one on August 15,

1921, on the Cherry river at Magog, and the other on Lake Massawippi, on October 28, 1925, which, latter bird, was mounted for its owner Mr. F. Mitchell of Sherbrooke.

191. *Gallinula galeata*. FLORIDA GALLINULE.—Rare transient. There are two records of this species having been obtained in the district, one, on the Cherry river near Magog, on June 6, 1922, and the other, near Little Magog Lake, on October 28, 1921. This latter bird was observed by the driver of a train, attempting to cross the railway track—running alongside the above lake—but not noticing it emerge on the other side of the train, he examined his engine at the next station, and found the bird dead, and entangled in the cowcatcher. It was mounted for its owner, Mr. F. J. Peck of Sherbrooke.

192. *Fulica americana*. AMERICAN COOT.—Rare transient. An example of this bird was obtained on the Cherry river near Magog, on November 1, 1920, and was mounted for its owner, Mr. F. N. Lewis. Unfortunately, a cat got hold of it with several other mounted birds, and tore them to pieces.

193. *Spizella pusilla pusilla*. FIELD SPARROW.—Rare summer visitant; April 29 to October. This species must certainly be very locally distributed, as I have never had the pleasure of seeing it, the above record of its arrival being taken from Mr. R. G. Price's list of spring arrivals at Sherbrooke, in 1909, 'The Ottawa Naturalist,' vol. XXIV, 1910, No. 3, pp. 55-57. Writing to me on December 29, 1925, Mr. Price in speaking of the Field Sparrow says "Have observed several every year since I can remember anything about birds, and that is almost fifty years ago. Have never found a nest, but suspect they nest much like the Song Sparrow. Their plaintive little song is usually delivered from the top of a fence post or some low object, and which I have interpreted in my clumsy way as "sit-sit-sit and s-i-n-g f-r-e-e, the last two notes being drawn out about three times as long as the first three, and the last note somewhat lower than the fourth." Unfortunately, the fact of this Sparrow having been recorded at Sherbrooke escaped my notice, until too late for me to make its acquaintance, before leaving Hatley in 1924. However, I hope to do so someday with the help of Mr. Price, to whom I am indebted for being able to add the species to my list.

194. *Falco peregrinus anatum*. DUCK HAWK.—Rare summer resident. On August 6, 1927, whilst on a short visit to Ayer's Cliff, I had the pleasure of seeing a fine mounted example of this species, which had been shot in the immediate neighborhood during the last week in April of the above year. There were two birds—presumably a pair—which probably nest on Mt. Oxford, or on the western shore of Lake Massawippi at the northern end, at both of which places, nests are said to have been seen in inaccessible places.

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