

stub and in two cases with only a tiny jutting piece of bark for support or a slight depression caused by a wound in the tree.

To this there was one exception. One pair, whose nest against the side of a large pine I had watched from the date of its beginning to the day the female laid her last egg in it, climbing almost daily up to inspect it, sometimes touching her with my finger ere she would leave it, decided that such a location was too convenient for me, and built their next nest where I had to bring into requisition a 100-foot rope in order to look into it, where it was located far out on the limb of a large fir.

The reason for the uniformly different nesting sites in the two localities is doubtless one of expediency, and may be owing to the fact that in the lower locality where they are all built out on the branches, lizards are plentiful, while in the upper mountain, where they all select the tree trunks, there are no lizards to be seen, and the jays are much more plentiful than below; and the little nests of the hue of the tree bark, and in fifty per cent of the cases close in below a protecting stub, were not noticeable from above, nor easily from anywhere. One nest that I saw building was made almost exactly the shade of the bark of the dead pine against which it was built, by using plentifully of the weather-beaten remains of an old robin's nest in a tree close by. Of all the sets of eggs of this species recorded to date, as nearly as I can remember those of Messrs. Howard and Willard, taken in the Huachuca Mts., about 50 per cent have consisted of three eggs each, 30 per cent of four eggs, and 20 per cent of two eggs.



We note with pleasure that our interesting contemporary, *The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society*, will be published as a bi-monthly commencing with its third volume, instead of a quarterly as heretofore. J. Merton Swain is announced as editor for 1901.

Note on the Name of the Black-headed Grosbeak.

The Pacific Coast grosbeak described in the November number of this magazine was previously named *Hedymeles capitalis* with the following description, probably overlooked by Grinnell.

If the characterization given by Baird be considered sufficient by those versed in questions of synonymy, then the western subspecies should be known as *Zamelodia melanocephala capitalis* (Baird) as *Z. microrhyncha* and *H. capitalis* evidently refer to the same bird.

"Taking the series from eastern Mexico (Orizaba and Mirador) and northward along the Rocky Mountains of the United States, we find the black of the head continuous, sharply defined by a gently curved outline behind, and without a trace of either the vertex or post-ocular stripes. This is the true *melanocephalus* as restricted and may be regarded as the Rocky Mountain form. The most western specimen is 11,241, from Fort Bridger; the most northern 19,355, from Stinking River, Northern Wyoming. All specimens from the Pacific Coast eastward to the Western base of the Rocky Mountains, including Cape St. Lucas and Western Mexico south to Colima differ from the Rocky Mountain series in having the posterior outline of the black hood ragged, and irregularly indented by the rufous of the nape, which always extends in a quite broad stripe toward the eye, along the side of the occiput, and quite frequently forms a conspicuous median vertex stripe, though the latter feature is sometimes not distinct. These differences are observable only in the males, and although slight, are yet sufficiently constant to justify distinguishing them as races. The Rocky Mountain form being the true *melanocephalus*, the name *capitalis* is proposed for the western one." (*Hist. N. A. Bds., Ld. Bds., II, 74.*)

RICHARD C. MCGREGOR,
San Francisco.