

these September youngsters; the younger they are the deeper seems to be their shading.

During the season of 1920 we hope to be able to locate some nests of this species both on Tomales Point and Black's Mountain, and the readers of THE CONDOR may rest assured that they will be duly advised through its columns if success crowns our efforts.

San Francisco, February 2, 1920.

A RETURN TO THE DAKOTA LAKE REGION

By FLORENCE MERRIAM BAILEY

(Continued from page 26)

IN THE SHELTER OF ISLAND LAKE

THE GEM of the Sweetwaters, to which the beautiful water fowl have learned to gather from far and near to raise their young, offers a rare opportunity for an ideal State Bird Refuge; but now, at the opening of the hunting season, from being a secure retreat where the birds are sure of peace and plenty, the lake becomes a center of bombardment, its hunting lodge opening on the most protected corner, where families were wont to gather on sunny afternoons to feed and rest. No wonder, then, that the good friend who first took me to the lake, an ardent bird lover who had long been working to protect the birds of the state, should suggest that, unable to prevent the desecration of this natural sanctuary, we should make a trip to the protected shores of Island Lake, near the Turtle Mountains, at the beginning of the open season.

As she told me, a Chicago man who had retained his boyish interest in the birds of the region, had bought fifty feet of shore line on a lake two miles long. Two years after he had completed his purchase, unfortunately, the lake had gone dry, and for five or six years grain and hay had been raised on the bottom; but this year, although seeded to barley, the lake was full of water, large numbers of Ducks were already there, and with the northern flight it was expected that, as in former years, one would see "more birds than water".

Although we could not stay to see the northern flight, the day before the hunting season opened we started on what proved a three day's automobile trip from Sweetwater Lake across the prairies to the Turtle Mountains and then back to Island Lake. After spending the summer on foot on the prairies it was exhilarating and mentally enlarging to go, map in hand, bowling rapidly along over the level miles, telling off town after town—Webster, Garski, Stark-weather, Cando, and Zion (a Dunkard settlement)—their relative importance shown by their grain elevators, some of which were filled from farms of two or three thousand acres; to send the Sparrows flying from the narrow strips of prairie flowers between the road and the harvest fields, strips whose purple asters and wild sunflowers made bands of purple and gold; to look off on small lakes blue as the sky, wavered over by white-breasted Gulls; and to look far

away on either side to the level horizon whose line was interrupted by the smoke of threshing engines and their output, beautifully modelled, delicately tinted straw stacks.

Striking landscape features the straw stacks made, dotting the harvest fields from road to horizon, their varied crater-like outlines suggesting the cinder cones of California and Arizona, with the parallellism of light ejected substances—straw and pumice—deposited in obedience to the vagaries of the wind. What pleasure to study their forms and to enjoy their soft straw colors as we sped by! Perhaps from their western suggestion on this big prairie, it was easy to imagine the hazy cloud lines along the horizon snowy mountain ranges and snow-capped peaks, far, far away.

When we finally turned away from a purple line on the northwest, said to be the Juniata Hills, we turned toward a purple line on the northeast that rapidly developed into round wooded hills of glacial drift known as the Turtle Mountains. Passing through Rolette, where French names on signs corroborated the statement that the section had been settled by French and Indians, we came back to the hunting season with a jolt, being told that seventy dollars worth of ammunition had been sold to hunters the night before! The migrating Bank and Barn Swallows that we encountered were fortunately no desiderata of the hunters, but probably much of the ammunition had already been expended in the mountains; for when, above Dunseith, we wound around among the wooded hills full of the promise of autumnal beauty and came upon lovely blue woodland lakes, their waters and shore were bare of life.

After my summer on the open prairie, these wooded hills with their olive-skinned cottonwoods, their white-barked aspens, and their homelike elms and box elders showing touches of yellow and brown, their red-fruited mountain ash and thorn-apple, their enriching masses of purple asters and goldenrod, together with their unexpected little lakes, were most grateful and satisfying. As the road wound through the woods, to our surprise, we came upon an attractive little hay slough in an encircling arm of timber, the voices of the hay-makers reaching us as they built up their stack on the flat creek bottom. Just beyond we came to the most charming lake of all that we saw, a beautiful body of quiet water, within the seclusion of the woods; its low tree border reflected in the lake, small clouds standing stationary above it. Would that we might see it when the fall colors were reflected in their full glowing richness! Sequestered bays leading back suggested intimate outlets wandering away into the golden privacy of the autumnal woodland; curving sandpits offered cool unruffled pools for diving water fowl; while in the farther reaches of the lake, black tule marsh afforded safe shelter for tender young. A few Grebes were diving along shore and a string of Ducks rested at a safe distance out in the lake, but the hunters had already been that way and while no shots disturbed the quiet of the beautiful place, few of its startled tenants had returned, and those were sadly watchful.

While a few of the hill birds, such as Chewinks, Juncos, and White-breasted Nuthatches were seen, the most notable bird found in the mountains was a Sandhill Crane, discovered by my friends on the shore of a remote, unnamed lake in the woods. The great pink-capped grayish brown bird, standing about four feet high, held its ground for a few moments, but then, too much alarmed by this invasion of its secret haunts, took flight, going off with long neck outstretched. An old man of the mountains who also saw it, remarked sententious-

ly, "They used to be lots of 'em, but you don't see many like you uster." Splendid great birds! May the gods of the hunted preserve their remnant! Protected though they now are by law, they afford altogether too good a target for those who buy seventy dollars worth of ammunition in one night!

Although the hunters find fox and coyote and even timber wolves here now, it is difficult to realize that in these low-timbered gentle looking hills moose and grizzly bear used to roam at will; but such is the testimony of the old hunters. One of them told me that a half breed actually killed three grizzlies here in one day, and that a farmer going up to the mountains for a load of wood found one asleep and killed it with an axe.

On leaving the mountains for Island Lake, as we came out of the timber on the crest of the hills we had an expanding view down over the wide prairie, so wide that curiously enough its horizon suggested the blue distant line of hills that we had seen when first looking up from the prairie to the mountains. While Island Lake now harbors only game birds, a white-bearded Scotchman at whose house we spent a week, told me that thirty years ago, antelope used to run along the shores of the lake. "There were lots of antelope," he said, "out all over the prairie where nobody was living." Ruminating over the memory, the patriarchal Scot exclaimed, "in the air-ly days this was rightly called the sportsman's paradise. Oh, you could have no idea of the amount of game there was here unless you saw it! I've seen Geese so thick on that forty west of here that they hadn't room to light. There was awful lots of Crane in them days, too," he added. They were indeed so abundant as to be very destructive. The finest barley the old man ever saw, when threshed yielded only twenty-five bushels, for, as he said, "it had all been danced out by the Crane." Summing it all up, he concluded reminiscently, "The Crane and Geese used to come in by the hundreds—till the lake went dry—that put them away."

About twenty years ago, the old Scot told me, he could row a boat from the north end of Island Lake to the south end of Grass Lake, a distance of about nine miles. At that time the long wooded ridge which gave the lake its name and on which we found a Crow roost, made two islands, each a quarter of a mile long; but now the ridge is connected with the mainland on the north, and the water is so shallow that in many places mat-like patches of pale green grass add a beautiful note of contrasting color to the rich ultra-marine water. Straw stacks rising from the middle of the lake suggested seal rocks, the Ducks climbing up on them to sit. Their dotted lines up the side of a stack looked surprisingly uniform until I saw the Ducks file up from the water and stop, each in his own tracks. Some of course perambulated about, but the effect of lines was notable.

Hundreds of Ducks were scattered over the lake, feeding hidden in its marshy borders or resting in flocks of single species on the open water. From the green cover of a strip of marsh in front of us one day, we were astonished to have a great flock of Mallards suddenly rise, and with white outer tail feathers showing, fly off to more distant shelter. They, like most of the Ducks seen, were still in the brown eclipse plumage, but some near the middle of September were already beginning to "color up". Among others, a Mallard brought in from an unprotected lake, showed some green feathers coming in on his head. One of the largest flocks seen on the open water suggested a carpet of Pintails, so solidly were they massed. They sat facing us, looking like a bed of mushrooms, brown on top, lighter below. Being used to seeing people coming for

the cows, they let us creep along the fence near enough to make sure that their flock was almost unmixed. Occasionally one, perhaps a sentinel, would stretch up a long neck to look at us; and finally they all rose and flew. Enormous flocks of Blue-winged Teal also shifted back and forth as we watched, the blue wing patches showing well as they soared down on their spread wings.

Suddenly a black looking Hawk with a face stripe, apparently a Duck Hawk, flew swiftly in and to our horror darted down and seized a Coot. As he rose to fly off with it, the Coot slipped from his claws, when, swinging around with the swift wing beats of a Falcon, the little Hawk flew down again, bringing up what was probably another Coot, this time successfully flying off with it to a fence bordering the lake. When we followed, he carried his quarry still farther away, and proceeded with his meal. Meanwhile we discovered two fence posts apparently frequented by a Marsh Hawk, as remains of a rabbit's foot and pieces of ground squirrel skin were found, good evidence, as the Duck Hawk feeds almost exclusively on birds, while the Marsh Hawk feeds mainly on mammals.

While the swiftness and dash of the blackish Duck Hawk doubtless explained his surprising the Coot, we wondered if he had been helped by the fact that the waterfowl were used to the presence of dark-bodied Crows which had a roost on the island, and some of which at the moment were drinking on the shore close to the scene of the tragedy. That the Ducks do not discriminate too nicely was suggested when they acted afraid of a Marsh Hawk to whom they generally pay no attention, apparently because the Duck Hawk flying around in the vicinity had upset their nerves.

Shovellers and Canvasbacks were easily recognized among the brown hordes, and from a neighboring lake two beautiful Green-winged Teal were brought in. Pied-bills, Eared, and perhaps Horned Grebes, Bittern, Black-crowned Night Herons, and Killdeer were seen along Island Lake, and what was probably a Sora was heard, late though it was. Killdeer notes were heard over-head, one day, and nine swift travelling birds came in sight, but as we turned to watch their retreating forms, the nine white spots faded out in the sky. Others were heard by my friend on a moonlight night, passing over on their long journey.

Besides the common birds noted at the other lakes during the summer, such as Goldfinches, Vesper Sparrows, Yellow Warblers, Barn Swallows, Cat-birds, House Wrens, Meadowlarks, Crows, Red-winged Blackbirds, Mourning Doves, and Flickers, a Nighthawk, a White-breasted Nuthatch, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler were seen, together with three Turkey Vultures that circled around in the sky low enough for us to note the black and gray pattern of the underside of their wings. Two brown Marsh Hawks, apparently young of the year, frequently came close to us as we sat quietly beside their hunting grounds, and one of them once gave a thin, whistled *pebe, pebe*, as it flew toward its brother. Forever beating the marshes, the appropriateness of their name was felt strongly in this lake region.

The familiars of the lake region, the Franklin Gulls, abounded here as elsewhere. In one place on plowed ground I saw what at a distance I took for a slough filled with white water, but which on approach proved solidly massed Gulls! As at Sweetwater, the Gulls drifted across the country at sunset toward some favorite lake where they could safely spend the night. Hundreds were met with in our pasture flying, or perhaps rather sauntering, back and forth,

some quite near the ground, though at this time they did not appear to be feeding, but merely loitering on their way.

We saw some of the lakes where they might have gone, on our trips over the prairie, in the family Ford. For the intelligent young farmer who, not long from Scotland, read his Burns as only a true Scot can, often took off the edge of the day's work for the capable makers of oat cakes by short jaunts in the car, kindly asking us to go along. Now a can of cream to be carried to the station three miles away, now a bag of grain to be traded out at another town equally distant, was the excuse for the exhilarating drive. Sometimes as we raced past farms and villages, the talk drifted to the local sects, numbering among them Dunkards, Amish, and Mennonites; and we were told that the self-denying Amish wear hooks and eyes instead of decorative buttons; wear untrimmed, if colored dresses—a child in solid happy red we hoped marked escape from the spirit of sadness—build barns without cupolas, and, worst of all, own no automobiles! A most elaborate cupola seen on a barn, we imagined celebrated escape to the sect of the less rigid Mennonites, to whose numbers, we were amused to hear, some of the Amish are withdrawing—that they may buy automobiles! One of the Amish men was going about the neighborhood with a threshing outfit and when our turn came and the cook car with its Sioux cook was established in our front yard—smoke coming out of its stove pipe and a roller towel hanging from its outside wall—rain kept the men from work and I was glad to see the long-bearded puritanical Amish looking on indulgently while his men passed the time by playing quoits. Surely there was no lurking sin in this!

When an errand about the threshing gave us a moonlight drive to the beautiful blue Twin Lakes, we heard the welcome news that a flock of Geese had already gone over—"I heerd them holler", the neighbor said in testimony—and added that the lake had been visited by seven white Pelicans for a week before the opening of the hunting season.

Before leaving we had the good fortune to have a visit from the Pelicans at our own lake. When out walking just before sunset I happened to glance up and discovered a flock of about forty of the superb white birds in the sky. To my joy they flew down to the lake, lighting out in the middle of the clear open water opposite the Crow roost on the wooded island beyond. Walking across to a screen of trees on the edge of the lake I watched them quite unobserved, as long as I could stay. The setting sun lit up their file, a line of great white birds with orange pouches, while the dark forms of Ducks spotted the surface of the lake and two inquiring ones swam up near the white procession to satisfy their curiosity. The procession faced, now north, now south, now west, and as it filed by in dignified silence one of the great birds would occasionally lean forward and plunge in his bill up to the hilt. But the last low rays of the sun were touching up the green bases of the tules below the Crow roost, the Crows were restlessly flying around trying to get settled for the night, and I reluctantly started home, facing the sky of red and gold, and the soft clouds of its afterglow.

Early the next morning my friend and I hurried down to the lake, and to our great satisfaction were able to watch the Pelicans for an hour or so before they left. They were evidently getting ready to start on their morning flight high through the sky to some distant feeding ground, for they spent their time sunning themselves, stretching their wings, and drilling (swimming) in

close procession, back and forth in well practiced unison, as if for better team work in the sky. Back and forth they swam over a beat only a few rods long, running from opposite the Crow roost on the island to a point opposite a fox-tail bank on the shore below. At the end of the line they would break ranks and ride *at ease*, doubtless to avoid the difficult maneuver of wheeling. When at ease they opened their close ranks, each doing what he pleased for the moment, some with heads erect and bills drawn in, some preening head down and bill extended horizontally; two or three, perhaps, at the end of the line fishing in a desultory manner, the sun lighting up their orange throat patches; while, most picturesque sight of all, one occasionally stretched out his black-bordered wings to the full extent of their ten feet, canopying the heads of a long row of his brothers.

After being at ease for a few moments, those at the north front would start and the line straighten, the birds "falling in", as nearly as I could see, in ranks of two; after which they would start off, swimming slowly, silently, like the white swan of Lohengrin. Once the flock split, the two parts swimming in opposite directions, by two's. But their one idea seemed to be good team work, and back the two divisions swam till they faced each other, on which one division made a right-about-face and the restored file again swam ahead as a unit. Another time when opposite the foxtail bank, one at the end started to fish; but when the middle ranks broke and started back toward the Crow roost, the fisherman turned and followed, quickly acquiescing in the will of the majority. An individualistic brother at one time mounted a rock and stood for a few moments looking like a giant as the others swam below. But then, as if compelled by the socialistic law that governed them all, raising his wide wings he flapped back down the line, a striking figure, his bright orange feet showing, his immense black-bordered wings flapping over the white ranks till he again took his place in the procession.

At one time the great birds shook out and ruffled up the feathers of their wings till they suggested Swans with plumes high on their backs—possibly to let the sun in—and nearly the whole line rode for some time in this unusually beautiful pose. For an hour or two the great birds kept up their maneuvers—attention, dress, forward-march, by two's, at ease. At times the whole file would face us, then all face the island opposite; then all north, then all south, swimming back and forth—swimming slowly, silently, in a close, white procession, sometimes mirrored in the lake.

Finally, however, the leader rose at an angle, and after a little hesitation, as if surprised by the action, one and then another rose along the line to follow his behest; and, wholly unconscious of our presence, circled around almost over our heads with a *swish, swish*, of their enormous wings, the sun on the underside of their bodies making them look almost saffron, and their bills and feet orange. Swinging, circling, and mulling, they shifted their lines so rapidly it was difficult to count them, gradually rising higher and higher, going on through the sky beyond our field of vision. That night we again went down to the lake hoping that the Pelicans might return, hiding ourselves in the yellowing willows lit up warmly by the setting sun. A lovely golden light lay over the marsh, turning the green mats a vivid green, the bases of the stalks a golden yellow, warming up the trees on the island, especially the cottonwoods of the Crow roost, and beyond lighting up the straw-colored stubble fields;

above, turning the edges of the rolls of clouds to buff. A passing Marsh Hawk tilted up catching the light so that his breast glowed a warm rufous. Coots grated, Mallards quacked, and Eared Grebes gave their soft *hoy-up, hoy-up*. The buffy clouds turned to a soft veiled salmon. Squad after squad of Crows flew over the lake till several hundred had gone to the roost. High in the sky a small band of Gulls straggled over. Then the bright sunset colors faded in the east to the dull soft pinks and blues presaging night. Our Pelicans would return no more; they had passed on to seek other waters.

(*To be continued*)

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Trumpeter Swan Breeding in Yellowstone Park.—During the past summer I found a nest of the Trumpeter Swan (*Olor buccinator*) on a low island in a lagoon northeast of Lewis Lake, Yellowstone National Park, containing five whitish eggs. Other signs of the swans were seen at various times during the summer. On September 6, 1919, I again visited this section and found five Trumpeter Swans (the two parents and three nearly grown young that were then large enough to fly well) in the lagoon and later flying and uttering their far-reaching calls.

In previous years I have seen Trumpeter Swans here and acting in such a way that I believed they were breeding, but I believe that this is the first authentic record for the Park.

Mr. H. M. Smith, Fish Commissioner, reports that on July 16, 1919, he visited a small, unnamed lake lying south of Delusion Lake, Yellowstone National Park, and found therein a pair of swans with six young about the size of teal and swimming actively. This was probably another family, as the two localities are eight miles apart in a direct line.—M. P. SKINNER, *Yellowstone Park, Wyoming, January 28, 1920.*

Bohemian Waxwing in Southeastern California.—On December 21, 1919, Mrs. Swarth and I were travelling between the Grand Canyon and Pasadena. At the little desert station of Danby, California, some fifty miles west of Needles, on the Santa Fe railroad, two Bohemian Waxwings (*Bombycilla garrula*) were seen. Although this is a slight identification, and from a train, I have no hesitancy in placing it on record, with certainty that the birds seen were Bohemian Waxwings and not the smaller Cedar Bird. The train stopped a few minutes at that point, and the birds were seen at quite close range from the observation platform. They were first noted flying past, and they lit in a cottonwood some twenty or thirty yards from the track. They were in plain sight, and their call notes were heard also. As I had but recently seen the species under most favorable conditions for observation (see p. 80), the bird's appearance in life was sufficiently fresh in my memory to enable me to feel certain regarding the minor differences distinguishing the Bohemian Waxwing from the Cedar Bird.—H. S. SWARTH, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, February 7, 1920.*

Golden Eagle at Porterville, California.—On January 7, 1920, a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) flew down between two houses in the thickly settled part of Porterville, in an apparently exhausted condition. Two men happened along, and, taking hold of each wing, led it away for four blocks. It was placed in a large shed and then given to the writer. After several days it began to eat, and it now seems to be out of the stupor it was in at first. The only explanation I could make to account for its condition was that it might have been eating poisoned squirrels. It might, perhaps, have come in contact with an electric line, but the former explanation seems more apt to be correct.—L. W. HUDSON, *Porterville, California, January 16, 1920.*

Southerly Nesting Records of the Arctic Tern in Southeastern Alaska.—During the summer of 1915 numerous Arctic Terns (*Sterna paradisaea* Brünnich) were observed