

different seasons, as at times it is difficult to find a full set of three eggs ; at others three eggs is the rule and four the exception. The eggs are white, sometimes thickly marked with brown ; in others the markings are of a lavender tint ; again eggs are found where the brown or lavender markings almost conceal the ground color, and others where the markings are few, of a reddish-brown color, resembling some eggs of the Meadow Lark. Again some eggs are of a greenish tint, the markings of a slate color and the egg bearing a close resemblance to that of the Nighthawk. It is impossible to describe all the variations. Some of the eggs cannot be differentiated from those of the Texan Cardinal. Average, 1.05x.79 inches.

AMONG THE RAPTORES.

BY DR. W. S. STRODE, BERNADOTTE, ILL.

On the afternoon of March 22nd, 1887, I had a collecting experience, the pleasure of which will not soon fade from my memory. Having a professional call to make to see a family residing three miles west of the village of Bernadotte, I thought it a good time while in this section of the country, to take a look for the eggs of the Raptors, there being here a large tract of woodland, jutting out into the surrounding prairies, that had escaped the woodman's axe.

Strapping on my climbers, and putting a ball of stout string in my pocket, I mounted my horse and started, making my visit. I then turned my attention to looking for nests.

Away across the fields to the south of the highway, a quarter of a mile, in an eighty-acre tract of timber, I could see in the top of a tree, a large, bulky nest of some kind. Leveling a good opera-glass at the structure, it became very plain to me as the nest of a Hawk, and I even fancied I could see the head and tail of the bird above the edge of the nest.

Going through a gate into the field that intervened, I rapidly rode to within a short distance of the tree in which the nest was situated. Tying my horse to a fence, I went over, and throwing a club into the tree, the Hawk left the nest ; but kept sailing around in near proximity to it. The bird, I soon discovered, was not a Red-tail, our most

common nester, but a species that I was not sure of, from the imperfect sight which I was able to obtain, as it circled around at a considerable height.

Ascending the tree to the nest, I found that it contained three eggs, of a greenish-white color, with a few indistinct brown markings. The nest was quite a bulky affair, composed of sticks and large weed-stalks. One dead elm stick I noticed as being over four feet in length and an inch in diameter at its thickest part. The lining was of grape-vine bark and oak leaves.

Both birds now appeared upon the scene, alighting near by on another tree. I drew out my glass and took a close look at them, and soon recognized them by the wide transverse band across neck and breast (ashy-brown in one and light rufous in the other,) as being a pair of the handsome Swainson's Buzzard (*Buteo Swainsoni*) and I felt correspondingly elated over the possession of the three eggs, which I put into a yarn mitten and attaching the ball of string to it, lowered with great care to the ground, which in a very few minutes I also reached.

I now started in to look this piece of woods over carefully for further finds, and had not gone over two hundred yards before in a nest about forty feet up in an elm, I saw the ear tufts of a Great Horned Owl, followed soon by the big yellow eyes and head, staring down at me as if enquiring what business had I intruding there.

At the first click of the climbers against the tree, the bird left the nest and flew to a distant part of the woods; but returned with her mate as I neared the nest, and they gave me a fine serenading with their hoo! hoo! hoo! with many grotesque bowings and swayings of their bodies from side to side.

I found two snow-white eggs in the nest, rather below the average size of eggs of the *Bubo V.* I lowered them as before and soon followed them to the ground. The Owls again flying to a distant part of the timber as soon as I left the nest and commenced to descend.

I found nothing further of interest in these woods, so returned to my horse and to the highway. Carefully secreting my eggs, I now rode two miles further to another large body of timber, and at once set about searching for nests. Soon finding one in the top of a large black-oak; but no Hawk being present I did not climb it, as it is my rule never to climb to a nest unless I know it to be occupied.

Going a few hundred yards further, I discovered another nest in a

large white-oak, and I could plainly see that it was occupied. Shying a club up into the tree, a Red-tail left the nest. Quickly making the ascent, I found the nest occupied by three very handsomely marked eggs of this species. The nest apparently being an old one repaired, and lined with bits of moss and grape-vine bark. These eggs presented a very different appearance from those that I had diagnosed as Swainson's.

I might add that the nest occupied by the *Bubos* was, in my judgment, an old Crow's nest. I found no other nests of particular interest in these woods at this time; but subsequently found another nest of the Red-tail from which I obtained two eggs.

I found many Crows' nests in different stages of completion; but not caring much for their eggs, I did not wish to spend time climbing to them, except in one instance, when my attention was attracted by the peculiar material in one nest, which presented much the appearance of a large ball of tow. Prompted by curiosity, I went up to it and found it constructed almost entirely of the fibres of the Indian hemp, which grew profusely near by at the edge of the prairie. The nest contained four fresh eggs which I took.

I now started to return home, having eggs enough to fill both mittens. I found that I had been absent from town two and one-half hours; distance traveled not less than eight miles; one professional visit made; four trees climbed; sets secured, Swainson's 1-3; Red-tail, 1-3; Great Horned Owl, 1-2, and American Crow, 1-4. How is that for rapid collecting?

[B. S. O.]

A PECULIAR NESTING SITE.

While digging a gas-well in this city, the workmen broke some part of the machinery and had to quit work for a few days. During that time, a pair of Bluebirds built a nest and laid two eggs in the sand pump. After the nest was removed and work commenced again, the birds remained on the derrick for nearly two days.

JAS. S. ZOLLER, Greensburg, Ind.

[B. S. O.]