

## THE LARGE BILLED OR LOUISIANA WATER THRUSH.

*Sieurus Motacilla.*

BY C. C. MAXFIELD, WILLARD, N. Y.

Among the small birds of which very little is written is the subject of this sketch, *Sieurus motacilla*. Only one short article has come to my notice during the past few years; *i. e.* an article of the nesting of this species in North Carolina, by Mr. R. B. McLaughlin, Statesville, N. C.

It is small, about 6 inches in length; wing, carpal joint to tip, about 3 1-2 inches; bill 1-2 and tarsus 7-8 inches. The adult male is an olive, slightly greenish, brown above, with wings and tail slightly less green: a white streak passes from the base of the bill to the back of the head through the eyes; under parts white, tinged with yellowish and marked with spots of brown from under part of bill to legs; back of legs, a pure yellowish-white with no streaks or spots. Adult female: upper parts duller than in the male, under parts a yellowish-white with no markings on throat or breast. Male and female usually seen together after arrival.

The first to arrive this year reached central New York the 28th of April; were common in course of two weeks. They are to be seen at nearly all times of day in the near vicinity of the small creeks, running through the deep ravines that are numerous along the shore of Seneca Lake. In the early morning they are to be found in the top-most branches of the small trees that line the ravines, giving voice to five or six notes that somewhat resemble those of the common Wood Thrush, although found to differ greatly when brought into direct contrast. Usually during the forenoon, they are found feeding on the narrow, gravelly beaches that line the creeks. When disturbed on their feeding grounds they give utterance to a loud "chip" and fly

into the shrubbery. It is at this time that they show a peculiarity that is usually identified with the Snipe family, that of tipping up and down like our common Sand Snipe. This peculiarity is not indulged in so freely while feeding as when they are in the trees, and it is much more noticeable when they are disturbed. This habit has given them the name of "wagtails" in some localities, and it was under this name that the writer was first made acquainted with them.

The streams along which they usually breed are entirely dry in the summer season. They breed early, usually in early May. Eggs usually 6; measure about .74x.60; white with a sprinkling of fine lavender colored specks, and at the larger end with blotches of dark umber. Nest usually placed over running water or very near to it, usually on the banks of streams, but occasionally in the upturned roots of fallen trees.

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## THE WILSON'S PHALAROPE.

*Phalaropus Lobatus.*

BY WM. G. SMITH, LOVELAND, COLORADA.

One of the handsomest of our western waders is Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, and for activity while swimming it surpasses all others, and on land it has but few peers. Its beautiful shades of chestnut and red are so blended and artistic that one cannot but admire it if they possess the least admiration for the beautiful.

One peculiarity, differing from all migratory birds that I am acquainted with, is that the female arrives here several days in advance of the male, which is about the first week in May. She is by far the brightest hued and seems to shun the company of the more sober colored males; but as soon as *they* arrive they begin to talk business to their proud mistresses and after considerable persuasion coax them to lead a more retired life. They mutually select a place to start