

NOTES ON THE SUMMER RANGE

OF DICKCISSEL (*SPIZA AMERICANA*), GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*AMMODRAMUS SAVANNARUM PASSERINUS*) AND HENSLOW'S SPARROW (*AMMODRAMUS HENSLOWII*),

IN 1894 AND 1895.

BY LYNDS JONES.

In response to a call issued in 1894, by the writer, for notes on the abundance of these three species, reports were received from the following persons: G. N. Upham, Coffeyville, Kan.; S. S. Wilson, St. Joe, Mo.; J. E. Dickinson, Rockford, Ill.; V. H. Chase, Wady Petra, Ill.; J. C. Galloway, Montgomery, O.; W. E. Saunders, London, Ont.; Hubert W. Congdon, Staten Island, N. Y., and Henry R. Buck, Wethersfield, Conn.

From the notes furnished, nothing could be learned of the extreme range of either of these birds, except in the limited region of Ontario, Canada, immediately north of Lake Erie, where Dickcissel was rare, and Grasshopper Sparrow was known by a single individual—the first for the region.

From a considerable number of references kindly furnished by Mr. Henry R. Buck, it appears that Dickcissel is a regular summer resident in New England as far north as Massachusetts, being rare further north, but locally distributed. No unusual occurrences are reported for 1894. These same notes indicate that Grasshopper Sparrow is common near the east coast of Connecticut, but common only locally westward up to the Massachusetts line. Mr. Buck has found the bird to be very rare at New Haven, Conn., but abundant at Stratford, fifteen miles west of New Haven.

Mr. Hubert Wheaton Congdon has furnished me with notes from several persons, only one of whom has found Grasshopper Sparrow in New Jersey—at Bernardstown, where it is common. Another note states that it is rare on Staten Island, N. Y. Mr. Congdon says that the species is common in the Delaware Valley in Pike Co., Penn., but has never been seen across the Delaware River in New Jersey. Its local distribution is well illustrated here.

Henslow's Sparrow is rare and local in New England, judging from notes handed me by Mr. Buck. Mr. J. E. Dickinson writes that it is very

rare at Rockford, Ill. It was previously unknown at Oberlin, Ohio, but was found to be not uncommon during the summer of 1894.

In 1895 reports came from Ontario, Can., announcing the arrival of Dickcissel in considerable numbers. It was also common at Oberlin, and twelve miles north on the south shore of Lake Erie. Mr. J. C. Galloway reports it much less common at Montgomery, Ohio, than in the previous year. Mr. R. M. Strong reports that it is becoming more common each year in the vicinity of Milwaukee, Wis. It was in normal numbers in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri during 1895.

The encroachments of Dickcissel on territory previously unoccupied, seem to be due to an overflow from adjacent regions where it is common, and not a withdrawal from regions where it has been common. The lack of notes relating to the Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows makes any suggestion as to their encroachments on new localities impossible. Their sudden appearance in Lorain Co., Ohio, in 1894, remains unexplained.

The suggestion might be made: "Is it not probable that these species have always occupied the regions where they are now found for the first time, but that they have been entirely overlooked, later and more thorough field work revealing their presence?" To this I would say that in the vicinity of Oberlin, Ohio, the actions of the birds seen the first year were very different from the actions of those seen the second year which had nested in the region the previous year. After mating they were restless, flitting about from place to place, confined to no given locality until after the time when they should have been nesting. They finally selected a place for the nest and settled down to the duties of the season. The next year the birds appeared first near their nesting place of the previous year and remained in that vicinity until after the breeding season.

It may not be generally known that the usual summer range of all three of these species is as far north as Minnesota, northern Ohio, to southern New England. They pass the winter in the southern states. They are birds of eastern North America, ranging west to the plains.

Those who are unacquainted with the Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows will do well to read what Mr. Frank M. Chapman says about them in *Birds of Eastern North America*. A short article by the writer on Grasshopper Sparrow may be found in the *Ornithologist's and Oologist's Semi-Annual*, Vol. 1, No. 2, page 8.