

BACHMAN SPARROW.—*Peucaea aestivalis bachmani*.

(Selected from Dawson's "Birds of Ohio.")

It is very gratifying to be able to report the recent invasion of the state by this delightful vocalist from the south. To Rev. W. F. Henninger, then of Scioto county, belongs the honor of first discovery. A specimen was secured by him near South Webster, April 23, 1897, but it was, unfortunately, not preserved. On April 23, 1903, the author in company with Miss Laura Gano and a party of scientists, took a singing male on Rose Hill, Cincinnati, and the specimen is preserved in the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. On the following day three others in full song were found upon another of those beautiful wooded hills for which the Queen City is justly famous. These last, I rejoice to say, were not sacrificed even in the name of science. Miss Gano first noted the species at Cincinnati, April 25, 1901, and had seen it on at least two occasions since.

Later in the same season, June 10 and 11, I came upon the Bachman Sparrow upon one of the hills near Sugar Grove, in Fairfield county. A nest was found in a clover field, which, although deserted at the time, belonged upon the strongest presumptive evidence to this bird. One of the young birds was easily caught and its picture taken both in the hand and in the nest, as shown in the accompanying illustrations. A few days later Ralph and Will Bumgardner took a set of four eggs from the ground in the same meadow. The eggs were pure white and could hardly have belonged to any other than this species.

The song of the Bachman Sparrow is a thing of surprising beauty. In delivering it the bird chooses a prominent station at the top of weed-stalk, fence-post, or sapling, or stands well out on a bare limb of a tree. Here he throws his head back and draws, as it appears, a full breath in a note of ravishing sweetness; then sends it forth again in a tinkling trill of uniform or varied notes. Nothing can excel the fine poetic rapture of the inspired note. It sets the veins a-tingle and makes one wish to put his shoes from off his feet. The characteristic opening note is given with constantly varying

pitch and intensity. Sometimes it sounds like a dream voice floating gently from the summer land of youth, and again it vibrates with startling distinctness like a present call to duty. Occasionally a dainty trill is substituted for this inspired and inspiring opening, while the remainder of the song may consist of a half-dozen notes precisely alike, or of a succession of groups three or four in number. There is a soulful quality, an ethereal purity, and a caressing sweetness about the whole performance which makes one sure the door is opened into the third heaven of bird music.

Once as I sat entranced before this new-found Orpheus a Lark Sparrow broke into song at half the distance. In pained astonishment and wrath I turned upon him—him even! “Oh, please not now! Mon enfant! Please not now!”

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#### A DECEMBER HERMIT THRUSH.

LYNDS JONES.

Readers of the BULLETIN will be familiar with the sandstone knob features of the northwestern parts of Lorain county, Ohio, from previous descriptions of mine. One of these knobs lies a half mile south of Brownhelm Station on the L. S. & M. S. R. R.. It marks the site of former extensive operations and activities in the industry of sandstone quarrying, but the place has since been abandoned for more profitable and extensive fields to the east and south, leaving the sheer, smooth rock walls where the drill last left its mark, heaps of stone rubbish on the other side of the excavated area, just beyond the deep pool which never freezes, and hard by the old stone buildings now used for barns. On December 4, in company with three other bird lovers, I tramped the twenty-one miles to Lake Erie, with this abandoned quarry as one of the objective points in the line of march. In the tangle on the east side of this old quarry, with barn refuse within easy reach, we found a solitary Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata pallasi*). I