

General Notes

BIRD-KILLING CATS WILL BE KILLED.

The following interesting clipping has come to our desk:

Cats with a fondness for birds are in danger, for Governor Whitman has signed a bill providing for their destruction. "Any person over the age of twenty-one years," reads the law, "who is a holder of a valid hunting and trapping license, may, and it shall be the duty of a game protector or other peace officer, to humanely destroy a cat at large found hunting or killing any bird protected by law or with a dead bird of any species protected by law in its possession; and no action for damages shall be maintained for such killing."

Cat bills of many varieties have, in the past, been presented to different state legislatures. Some have called for bells on cats, some for collars and licenses, but the present law is the first to be passed in any state. Its promoters have framed it with the idea of attacking, not the well-fed and cared-for house pet, but the wandering, hunting, or homeless cat, which has become so great a menace to our wild-bird life.

Figures gathered by the Conservation Commission indicate that common cats cause more destruction among insectivorous and game birds than any other agency. The present law is intended to encourage all persons, who are sufficiently responsible to carry a gun, to aid in checking the numbers of bird-hunting and bird-killing cats. The new law goes into effect immediately.

NOTES FROM LAKE COUNTY.

OCURRENCE OF NORTHERN PHALAROPE.—While out on the breakwater, September 29, where of late years I have discovered a number of rare species, I found my first Phalarope swimming along close to the stones, and feeding from the algae growing thereon. I kept just above the bird while he swam along and fed until we reached the lighthouse at the end. The bird was in fall plumage, but still had a strong wash of rufous on sides of neck.

ARCTIC THREE-TOED WOODPECKER.—While walking through the cemetery on October 31 (1918) I found a fine male bird of this species working on a live hemlock and not six feet above the ground when first discovered. I had approached within ten feet of the tree, but stopped upon hearing the strong taps of a woodpecker and a rather unfamiliar "chick-chick" as the bird worked on the other side. He finally moved around to my side of the tree, and while trying to place his identity from the first indistinct side view, he suddenly looked square in my direction and I was dumfounded

to see a yellow crown patch glowing like a gold coin. He did not leave the tree nor ascend above fifteen feet during my stay, and in fact must have been there all day, if not longer, for the bark on one side was chipped off and pecked full of holes from the ground to a height of thirty feet, as was also another hemlock and a white pine close by. I certainly never expected to meet with my first Arctic Woodpecker in October, and it is more to be wondered at since the month was very mild, with no heavy storms.

HOLBELL'S AND HORNED GREBES.—I wish to correct a statement made by me in the December, 1916, Bulletin concerning the (apparent) abundance of Holbøll's Grebe for October of that year; and to give the true status of the two species as I have found them to occur *here* along the lake. January 30, 1913, while seated on the end of the pier at Fairport, a Holbøll's Grebe approached until finally it was just below me in the open water that extended a short distance out in the lake. My notes taken on the spot, at such close range, gave an ideal description of the Holbøll's winter plumage and the length was easily computed to be at least twenty inches. The bill was described as being "long, sharp and yellow at the base, at least two inches long." The following January (1914) a bird of this species was shot by a local hunter and I examined the bird, which tallied closely with the one of the winter before. So much for the Holbøll's.

In October, 1916, a number of grebes were seen on the lake, which I reported as Holbøll's; but later I suspected I had been mistaken and that they were the Horned Grebe in fall plumage. However, it was not until this fall (1918) that I was able to measure and examine a number of specimens killed by hunters. I found my suspicions to be correct, they all proved to be the Horned. So the status of the birds stand as follows. The Horned Grebe is a rather common spring and fall migrant. I counted over twenty one day in October of 1917 around the piers at Fairport. The Holbøll's may be designated as rare and occurring on the lake during the winter months when there is open water. It is a much larger bird than the Horned and with a decidedly longer bill, and not so white on the neck; but at a distance on the dancing waves the Horned Grebe looks larger than he really is—probably because of the long neck, which is usually stretched its full length.

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THE OSPREY AT CHICAGO, ILL.

The occasions are rare when one observes the Osprey in the vicinity of Chicago. The writer does not recall having ever observed it a half dozen times in thirty years, although he remem-