

tunity, and in the winter a systematic attempt is made to kill them by traps, poison and the gun. Their numbers are now very much reduced, and the good work still proceeds, so that there is quite a possibility of their utter extermination within a few years.

After the terns and sparrows, the most abundant bird is the semi-palmated plover, well known through most parts of the country in the migration, but which is absent in the breeding season, except in the more remote regions of the north. Sable Island is perhaps its most southerly breeding ground, and this probability made the study of this bird very interesting. Along the edges of the large inland lake there is cast up in the spring a fringe of eel grass, varying from one to four feet in width. In this eel grass the plover chooses to place its nest, and it seemed to be of no use whatever to look anywhere else. Each pair excavates three or more nests as a rule, and sometimes lines them as well, using the same material among which it is built. When a person following the shore comes to a pair of these plovers, all he has to do is to follow along this fringe of eel grass and search carefully for a depression, where the nest may be; and my experience was that where one hollow was found, close by would be several others. But I was too early for the main nesting season, and saw but two nests with eggs. The male bird has a curious two-syllabled call, which it gives in rapid succession while on the wing. Its flight at this time, as well noted by Dr. Dwight, closely resembles that of the night hawk, and may extend over two or three minutes at a time with constant calling.

THE BELTED PIPING PLOVER.

The only other plover breeding upon the island is the belted piping plover. This is the western variety of the piping plover, and Dr. Dwight noted as one of the surprises of Sable Island that this bird, whose main breeding ground is on the western plains, should be found so far to the east, while the eastern part of the continent is almost entirely inhabited by the other variety. These birds excavate their nest-hollow in the bare, open sand, which makes them exceedingly difficult to find, as the bird leaves the nest at sight of an intruder. One such that I found was on a bare patch of sand in the mouth of a gully, which the wind had cut