

June 15, but never more than two or three blooms at a time.

CALYPSO, *Calypso bulbosa* (Linnæus) Oakes. Never shall I forget the day when I first discovered this exquisite and very local little orchid rightly named after an immortal. It was on the morning of May 15, 1918, whilst following up an equally rare warbler, the Cape May (*Dendroica tigrina*) to the edge of a deep cedar swamp, that I had not previously explored, and which curiosity now prompted me to enter, that I came upon two blooms on the moss-covered stump of a fallen tree. Needless to say I spent a long time searching in a wide radius round this spot, but I only succeeded in finding five more blooms. This success, however, was sufficient to make me ignore the birds for the rest of that day and the one following, in an endeavour to define the extent of the area and the abundance or otherwise of the plant. I only succeeded, however, in locating three more blooms (thus making a total of ten in all) and each of these three were by themselves, one at a distance of perhaps three-quarters of a mile, another at about one-quarter of a mile, and the last

only a few hundred yards from the original spot. These three localities with the original one were all within the long belt of woods lying to the north-west of the village.

It seems strange that in *The Canadian Naturalist*, Gosse, 1840, a book of much local interest (as it gives a general account of the Flora and Fauna of the district in those times) the word *Orchis* occurs only once, and that on page 299, where the author (who lived at Compton, a village some seven miles to the north-east of Hatley) on September 10, 1838, or thereabouts, says: "I found an *Orchis*, consisting of two very large oval leaves, deeply plaited, but it had no flower". Considering that Gosse spent three years at Compton it would appear as if orchids must have been very scarce here in those days, or surely he could hardly have failed to notice some of the more showy ones. Probably the one he found was *C. acaule*.

In conclusion, I hope this preliminary list may be the means of inducing others to try and add to it, as I feel sure the possibilities of the place have only been touched upon so far.

BIRD LIFE IN THE ALBERTA WILDS.

BY J. DEWEY SOPER.

When visiting western Alberta during the months of October, November and December, in 1913, I had an opportunity of studying, each day, many species of winter birds which were then new to me. The birds of that region, I believe, have had few admirers at that date. In briefly sketching these I am denied perhaps the satisfaction of viewing the list as a complete exposition of the winter birds of the region, but it seems, except in special instances, that a great deal of our interesting contributions in this direction is necessarily fragmentary, through lack of adequate opportunity.

We camped the entire period in the valley of the Hay river, some thirty or thirty-five miles north of the entrance to the Yellowhead Pass. This country is reached by pack-horse from either Hinton or Dyke. The Grande Prairie trail intersects this region, and running roughly parallel to the first majestic ranges of the Rockies, affords splendid opportunities for viewing their grandeur. All of those exceptionally fine mountains, Broule Roche, Roche a Perdrix, and Roche Mutte, may be seen from this trail.

The country is rugged, with a mixed forest of pine, spruce, poplar, and birch. Much of it has been burnt over by forest fires. The entire region is interspersed with numberless small lakes.

Large game and fur-bearers were not plentiful in

the exact country we visited, due to persistent hunting by the Crees which inhabit it.

The list may prove interesting, following as it does, at an advanced season of the year, Riley's bird list for practically the same region, also Taverner's recent addendum to the same.

(1) During the early part of October, the WESTERN GREBE (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) was tolerably common about the small lakes adjacent to the Hay river valley. They occurred with greater frequency, it seemed to me, on the lakes that had no visible outlet. These perhaps possess more food peculiar to their wants. Sometimes they were solitary, but more often were observed in pairs. As the days went by and the nights became colder they became fewer in number and the last individuals observed before the freeze-up was on October 28th.

Later while travelling over the ice during the first week in November, I found two of these birds frozen down on the surface, both in a frail and starved condition. It would be interesting to know the exact circumstances which prevented these birds from migrating earlier. Both individuals were found on the same lake and only about a mile distant from the open waters of the Hay river.

(2) THE HUDSONIAN SPRUCE GROUSE (*Canachites canadensis*) was a very common bird in the big woods and usually seen in flocks. When first