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THE BIRDS OF SHOAL LAKE, MANITOBA.*

By P. A. TAVERNER.

Shoal Lake, Manitoba, lies some thirty-five miles a little east of north from the city of Winnipeg and approximately midway between the lower lobes of the two great lakes, Winnipeg and Manitoba. Though brought to the attention of ornithologists at an early date and later repeatedly visited by collectors, very little information has found its way into print regarding the details of its bird life.

Donald Gunn visited the lake in 1867, and his account¹ is extensively quoted by Ernest E. T. Seton (Ernest E. Thompson or Ernest Seton Thompson) in his *Birds of Western Manitoba*.² The same notes with additions appear in *The Birds of Manitoba*³ by the same author and briefly summarized again in the bird part of his *Fauna of Manitoba*⁴ in which the nomenclature is brought up to date.

In 1891, Fred Dippie was in the adjoining locality of Raeburn. In 1893 and the following year Edward Arnold⁵ and Walter Raine visited the lake itself. The latter casually mentions Shoal Lake in his *Birds Nesting in Canada*⁶ but gives no details, and his only published account appears in the *Oologist*.⁷ Frank Chapman and E. T. Seton were on the lake in July, 1901. The former has a popular generalized account of his trip in his *Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist*,⁸ and I am indebted to Mr. Seton for a copy of his original field notes which I have quoted freely in the following. By him I am informed that Mr. Miller Christy, of

Broomfield, Essex, England, visited the vicinity in May, 1887, and a collection of birds he made there is now in Seton's museum. June 27 to 29, 1912, Mr. Herbert K. Job and his son visited the south and west end of the lake looking for headquarters at which to obtain water bird's eggs for propagating purposes, but found the locality unsuited to their work. Mr. Job has kindly furnished me with a copy of his notes. I have heard of several other observers having collected about the lake at various times, but reports from them are not available at the present writing. From the context most of these trips have been made to the southern extremity of the lake, or in the case of Gunn, 1867, along the west side as far north as the Narrows.

Prompted by these accounts—and desiring a representative collection of Manitoban material, the Biological Division of the Geological Survey, Canada, made an expedition to Shoal Lake the spring of 1917. The party consisted of Mr. C. H. Young and the writer. We arrived at the C.N.R. station at Erinview, some four miles from the east side and about opposite the middle of the lower section of the lake, on May 16. Here we were fortunate in meeting Mr. Frank Ward, who with his father and brother, lives on the lake shore. He transported us and our baggage to his farmstead and allowed us camping privileges in the immediate vicinity. The Ward brothers proved to be unusually well informed sportsmen naturalists and we are indebted to them for many interesting notes and much valuable assistance during the course of our work. I heartily recommend them to all visiting naturalists.

On the map, Shoal Lake is indicated as being about thirty miles long north and south and ten miles in extreme width at the southern end. It is very irregularly shaped, with a constriction called the Narrows somewhat below the middle, forming practically two lakes divided by wide marshes through which winds a narrow creek-like channel. Both Chapman and Gunn describe the shores as composed of broad marshes with tall reeds in which

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¹Notes on an Egging Expedition to Shoal Lake, west of Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba. Twenty-second Annual Report, Smithsonian Institution, for 1867, pp. 427-432, by Donald Gunn.

²*Birds of Western Manitoba*, by Ernest E. T. Seton, Auk III, 1886, pp. 142-156 and 320-325.

³*The Birds of Manitoba*, by Ernest E. Thompson, Proc. U.S. Nat'l. Museum, XIII, 1891, pp. 457-653.

⁴*Fauna of Manitoba*, by Ernest Thompson Seton, as it appeared in British Association Handbook, Winnipeg, 1909 (reprinted) pp. 3-47, part on birds, pp. 11-47.

⁵A Few Notes from Shoal Lake, Manitoba, *Oologist*, XII, 1895, pp. 22-24, by Edward Arnold.

⁶*Birds Nesting in Northwest Canada*, by Walter Raine, 1892.

⁷A Rough Time Collecting at Shoal Lake, Manitoba, *Oologist*, XII, 1895, pp. 3-6, one plate, by Walter Raine.

⁸*Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist*, by Frank Chapman, Appleton Co., New York, 1908.