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NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS, P.Q.*

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My first impressions of the Magdalen Islands were far other than I had expected ; instead of barren rocks and a treeless waste, I found the majority of them to consist of red sandstone cliffs and dome-shaped hills ; the latter green to the very top. Grass grows in abundance, and a good deal of hay is raised. The timber is not large, the woods consisting entirely of spruce and fir, with a few birch trees, but no hard wood. In low places there is a growth of alder and willow ; and this completes the larger vegetation. On June the 15th the alders were only partially leaved out ; potatoes were just planted ; and oats an inch or two above the ground ; but after the 25th, vegetation became quite rapid, and the Islands assumed a brilliant verdure. Now for the birds,—on the 15th, near the Parsonage, I saw the black snow-bird, the blue-jay, crows, robins, and a few others. On the following morning, rising early, I was driven to the north shore of Grindstone Island, and there spent the day on the beach and among the stunted firs that abound near the shore. Among these, for the first time I met with the fox-coloured sparrow. He is a fair songster, and certainly a noteworthy bird with his fulvous plumage and skulking ways. I saw five adults and one young bird just able to fly to-day (June 16th). Though I searched for the nest a long time, I was not successful in finding it, their nests are hard to find. Another common bird was the black poll-warbler. They are everywhere and frequent the same localities as the fox-sparrow. I noticed a female with a

* Being a narrative of a visit, during the past season, to the Magdalen Islands, situated in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, between 47° and 48° North Latitude, and between 61° and 62° West Longitude.—EDITOR.