

flocks of Semipalmated Plover and other small waders. Without doubt they breed though we discovered no nests. In 1918 the Piping Plover was present in small but constant numbers continuously from May 15 to Aug. 30, and a single individual noted on Sept. 7.

81. *TURNSTONE, *Arenaria interpres*.

Five seen in 1917, May 25 and 30, and six on June 3; none thereafter. In 1918, the species arrived in large numbers (500) May 28, gradually reducing to 2 on June 12. In the autumn a few individuals were noted on Aug. 7 to 27.

82. *RUFFED GROUSE, *Bonasa umbellus*.

A few Ruffed Grouse still hold out in some of the larger bluffs. Their far carrying drumming was often heard and three specimens taken in 1917. According to Ward brothers, they were once very numerous indeed, but are getting very scarce. They do not seem to have learned the wariness that our eastern birds find necessary to existence, and still allow themselves to be treed by the dogs or shot on the ground in truly primitive manner. This and the unusual number of Goshawks and Horned Owls that invaded the country in the winter of 1916-17 are probably the causes of the great decrease in numbers. Though the Gray Ruffed Grouse, *B. u. umbelloides*, that inhabits the prairies is not a very well marked or stable race these are quite typical of that form. 1918 did not show much improvement in the Ruffed Grouse situation and no increase was apparent. One specimen taken is slightly more red than those of previous years, but we obtained none of the large red phase that Seton mentions as occurring in Manitoba and of which the Wards seem cognizant.

83. PTARMIGAN, *Lagopus (lagopus?)*

The Ward brothers say that they know of five Ptarmigan being killed within a few miles of our camp—always in winter of course. If the Ptarmigan ever occur here they are in all probability Willow Ptarmigan, *L. lagopus*.

84. *PRAIRIE CHICKEN, *Tympanuchus americanus*.

The Ward brothers say that this species appeared commonly in the Shoal Lake country some 13 to 15 years ago, though Arnold records nests in 1894 at the south end of the lake and Seton saw one in 1901. They increased to great numbers, but the last few years have died out together with the other grouse both Sharp-tailed and Ruffed. Of this I have more to say under the following species. Throughout the Canadian west the name of this species has been given to the Sharp-tailed Grouse and wherever the term Prairie Chicken is popularly used it is that species that is meant. However, correctly speaking, this is the true Prairie Chicken and has a prior right to the name. Taking into consideration the con-

fusion that has arisen between these two species it might be advisable to apply "Prairie Chicken" to either species of Prairie Grouse indiscriminately and revive the equally satisfactory name Pinnated Grouse for this species. About Shoal Lake the true Prairie Chicken is called "Square-tail" or simply "Grouse". Unlike most of its family this species is partially migratory and most of them disappear from the northern sections of their habitat in winter. The Wards tell about a tame Prairie Chicken they had for several years that returned regularly each spring and was as much at home about the place as a dog or a cat and quite able to protect itself against these natural enemies. Once, during migration, it was noted in the outskirts of Winnipeg where its tameness attracted interested attention, and a newspaper paragraph, while its identity was substantiated by its lack of a toe.

We saw very few scattered individuals during the spring visit of 1917, though their dull booming while love-making could be heard at all hours of the day. This sound has a peculiar intensity and wonderful carrying power and is as easily heard a mile away as just across a field. The constant recurrence of this sound in our ears, therefore, was not an indication of large numbers of the species, but of the great extent of the country within auditory range. We probably heard the same individuals again and again. The birds were very wild indeed flushing at a great distance from the intruder and flying a mile or more before alighting. In the autumn I found them considerably more common probably owing to the successful raising of a few broods. Contrary to expectations, Young found the species even less common in 1918 than the previous year. Probably the fall shooting was more than their reduced numbers could stand. A close season of some years on this bird seems expedient to bring them back to their normal numbers.

85. *SHARP-TAILED GROUSE, *Pedioecetes phasianellus*.

This is the original prairie grouse of the Canadian plains. It has been gradually displaced in southern Manitoba by the true Prairie Chicken or Pinnated Grouse of further south. Though generally called "Prairie Chicken" it has no title to that name having a perfectly good and distinctive one of its own as above. About Shoal Lake, we found it even scarcer in 1917, than the real Prairie Chicken which seems now to be the most characteristic game bird of the locality. During the spring visit we saw but two birds and inquiry amongst the farmers elicited reports of but a few more individuals. In the autumn none were seen. In 1918, Young found it still scarcer than the previous year only noting it once at Shoal Lake on Sept. 21, though a flock of