

In Manitoba—and it is of that Province I write more particularly—this plover reaches us from the south, on an average, about the first or second of May. It comes up in a leisurely manner, often pausing to utter its quaint song, by which means and its oft-uttered call note, its arrival is easily detected and its departure southward recorded by the same means, minus the song.

To begin with then, sandpipers roam the prairies in pairs, picking up most of the soft-bodied animal creation that is unfortunate enough to attract their attention. Grasshoppers, however, unquestionably form the chief article of diet at that time, as there is no mistaking the rapid runs, first one way and then another. They resemble a human being trying to catch a frog, and such actions can only be caused by an insect that hops. In June, these birds begin to seriously consider the rearing of a family and seek out a suitable tuft of grass or some other object near which to build a nest, so that there will be some sort of shelter affording protection both from the weather and enemies, though I do not think the latter precaution is a very necessary one, as the birds, with their mottled coats are admirably adapted for concealment; in fact they harmonize almost perfectly with the herbage in which they are found, and I cannot remember ever having detected a brooding bird before she left the nest, though often fully in view. The nest is found in various situations from the centre of low open bushes to unbroken prairie or the tops of sand dunes where the vegetation is very scanty. The nest is sunk in the ground and is lightly built of grass with occasionally a feather or two for lining. In this the bird lays from four to five eggs of the usual sandpiper type, large and mottled. The eggs for the size of the bird are remarkably large and one wonders how such a small bird lays such large eggs. On account of the size and the long time they take to hatch, the young when they do appear are so well developed that they can run actively and immediately leave the nest. The actual brooding, so far as I am aware, is done by the female alone, but the male is seldom far away and he takes an active part in caring for the young. At this time the female is bold and wise in defence of her offspring, readily resorting to such artifices as feigning death or injury, and I have known them to fairly fly in my face as I stooped to pick up a little one, uttering weird cries meanwhile. They become very noisy as the young grow and their perpetual callings to attract attention get rather monotonous, especially when one is trying to listen for something else.

In the early eighties these birds were everywhere and their cries and songs could be heard at any time of the day while