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# THE OTTAWA NATURALIST

VOL. XXIV. OTTAWA, SEPTEMBER, 1907

No. 6

## THE SPRING MIGRATION ON THE BRUCE PENINSULA.

BY A. B. KLUGH, KINGSTON, ONT.

It has appeared to me for some years that the Bruce Peninsula, Ontario, should be a migration route for the birds of the country lying north of Lake Huron. This year (1907) I spent from April 27th to June 21st at the base of the peninsula investigating the avifauna of that district. I made my headquarters at the village of Colpoy's Bay, three miles above Wiarton. From here I made frequent trips across the peninsula which is, at its base, some seven miles wide.

The east shore is fringed with limestone bluffs some 160 to 250 feet in height, while the west shore is low and sandy.

The avifauna is very similar all across the peninsula, the only difference being that along the Pike River, near the middle of the peninsula, there are marshes, and at Oliphant on the west side there is a huge sandy bog and in these localities the Maryland yellow-throat, swamp sparrow and alder flycatcher which do not reside on the east coast, breed.

Just below the village of Colpoy's Bay, between the limestone bluffs and the shore, is a bush some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles long by about 100 yards wide in most places, consisting largely of cedar (*T. occidentalis*), balsam (*A. balsamea*), white spruce (*P. alba*), paper birch (*B. papyrifera*) and balsam poplar (*P. balsamifera*). Into this bush all the birds travelling up the east shore seemed to pitch. Above the village, between the bluffs and the shore, the bush consists mostly of paper birch with some poplar (*P. tremuloides*) and balsam poplar, and though this looked to be good "bird-country" birds were comparatively scarce here during migration.

When I arrived on April 27th, only the early migrants had yet arrived, *viz.*—robin, blue-bird, song sparrow, bronzed grackle, purple finch, red-winged blackbird, rusty blackbird, slate-colored junco, flicker, prairie horned lark, hermit thrush, white-throated sparrow, fox sparrow, and vesper sparrow.

On the night of April 29th and the morning of the 30th, a foot of snow fell. This drove a host of birds into our barnyard to seek for food. In the barnyard and in cedars about the house were some 200 juncos, 150 fox sparrows, 100 white-throats, 50 song sparrows, many robins, several bluebirds, tree sparrows and prairie horned larks and a hermit thrush. Many of the juncos were in the barn and some even in the woodshed.

The fox sparrows, white-throats and song sparrows kept up a regular chorus. I had never heard fox sparrows in full song before. Their song is a clear, rich, very sweet warble, usually delivered from a branch some 20 or more feet from the ground. For the first three days of May fox sparrows were abundant, and I saw the last on May 7th. From the large numbers seen it is evident that the Bruce Peninsula is a migration highway for this species.

The weather remained cold up until May 13th, and the birds dropped in very slowly as follows:—

May 2nd: Barn swallow, kingfisher and winter wren.  
May 3rd: Towhee and myrtle warbler. May 7th: Brown thrasher, yellow-bellied sapsucker, chipping sparrow and Savanna sparrow. May 9th: Tree swallow, pine warbler and palm warbler. May 10th: Black-throated green warbler. May 11th: Black- and- white warbler and ruby-crowned kinglet. None of the warblers were seen in any numbers and the myrtles were observed only in small flocks of three or four or as single birds and were usually flying over.

On May 13th it was evident that an immense bird-wave had come in during the night. Birds were everywhere and the bush below the village was full of them. They appeared to pitch into this bush during the night, travel up the bush and a fringe of cedars as far as the village and then back again until, about noon, they reached a stream about the middle of the bush. Here they drank and caught the insects which were apparently more abundant here than elsewhere. The new species which came in with this wave were the Nashville warbler, yellow warbler, Magnolia warbler, Blackburnian warbler, chestnut-sided warbler, ovenbird, Baltimore oriole and red-breasted nuthatch. With these were a host of myrtle, black-throated green and black-and-white warblers.

That night another large wave came in and next day I saw the woodcock, greater yellow-legs, lesser yellow-legs, white-crowned sparrow, kingbird, least flycatcher, bobolink, house wren, red-headed woodpecker, water-thrush, Wilson's thrush, catbird, crested flycatcher American pipit, blue-headed vireo, and ruby-throated humming bird. All these species which came in on these two waves were from one to three weeks late.

On May 15th, I saw the wood thrush, redstart, chimney swift and solitary sandpiper and on the 16th the Parula warbler, Cape May warbler, black-throated blue warbler and the Canadian warbler.

On May 17th the scarlet tanager, and bay-breasted warbler came in, on the 18th, the grey-cheeked thrush, on the 23rd, the

olive-backed thrush, on the 27th, the cedar wax-wing, and on the 29th, the olive-sided flycatcher.

On the first of June the migration was still in full swing, and on that date male black-poll warblers were common, on the 3rd I saw the red-eyed vireo and the Philadelphia vireo, and on the 6th, the Tennessee warbler, Wilson's warbler, indigo bunting and nighthawk. The migration came to an end on June 8th.

Species which were more abundant than I have found them elsewhere in spring were the black-poll warbler, bay-breasted warbler, Blackburnian warbler, red-breasted nuthatch, white-crowned sparrow and olive-backed thrush. On five days in May these last-mentioned birds were very common and I took several, while I only secured one grey-checked thrush.

This spring I took three Cape May warblers. This bird, which was regarded some years ago as very rare, is undoubtedly becoming commoner. I saw seven Philadelphia vireos, more than I have ever observed before during a migration.

Other interesting things taken were an adult male American redstart with the base of the tail-feathers pale yellow as in the immature male, instead of orange as they should be in the adult male; a male indigo bunting with the back still mostly brown, and a female purple finch, with some pink feathers on the throat, which was singing when taken.

All warblers were doing far more feeding on the ground and "fly-catching" this year than usual. It is probable that this was caused by the scarcity of insects this spring, the birds having consequently to work far harder than usual for their living.

In previous years I have heard the flight-song of the oven-bird only occasionally, and then usually in the evening. This spring I heard it some eighty times and at all times of the day. Once I saw an oven-bird describe an arc out over the waters of the bay while singing this exquisite song. I saw flocks of pine siskins on May 22nd and 30th and on June 2nd, 5th, 7th and 18th. The flock seen on June 2nd contained about 150 birds. This is unusually late for these birds to be in flocks, as they are as a rule breeding before this.

In the cedars about the house lived a song sparrow which sang once nearly every night between eleven and two o'clock, and a chipping sparrow which sometimes sang about the same time.

Some of the results of my work this spring which will be of use to us in making out the movements and distribution of birds in the Great Lake region are:—

(1) The Bruce Peninsula is a migration route for land birds.

(2) At the base at least, the wave of migration extends clear across the peninsula.

(3) Ducks and other waterfowl cross the peninsula at the base from east to west in the spring.

(4) The base of the Bruce Peninsula has its fauna tinged with Carolinian tendencies as shown by the common breeding of the towhee and wood thrush.

### A NEW MOUSE FOR CANADA.

While spending a few days at Point Pelee at the end of May, 1907, I had some traps out and succeeded in taking a few specimens of *Peromyscus Bairdi*, a mouse which appears to be hitherto unrecorded for Canada. *Peromyscus* is the deer mouse genus and this little fellow bears considerable resemblance to the common deer mouse of the woods, in being brownish red above and white beneath, but the brown is darker and not so reddish, and the greatest differences are in the length of ears, tail and hind feet, all of which are smaller in this species than in the common one (*Peromyscus americanus*).

The measurements of these mice do not accord exactly with those given by Dr. Elliott in "Mammals of North America." In that work *P. Michiganensis* (synonym of *P. Bairdi*) is stated to measure 165 mm.; tail vertebrae, 67; hind foot, 20.5; whereas my three fully adult specimens average, 139; 49; 16.5, and a specimen from Niles, Michigan, measures 136, 55, 18.

The habitat of this mouse, so far as hereto known, is from Michigan to Minnesota and south. Its habitat on Pt. Pelee is peculiar. On the centre and the east side of the point I found nothing but *P. americanus* while Baird's mouse was strictly confined to the sandy beach on the west side, living among the logs and other miscellaneous lumber such as are found on every beach where they have been left by high water.

I took one specimen at the edge of the red cedar thicket, but the others were taken out on open beach beside the logs. The inhabitants spoke of finding them frequently when taking wood from the beach. The common deer mouse is found in the wooded parts of the point and its range overlaps that of Baird's mouse at the edge of the wooded area, but the line of demarcation is drawn with surprising distinctness. One of the specimens taken this year has been sent to the Museum of the Geological Survey.

W. E. SAUNDERS.



NOTES ON SOME SEAL ISLAND (YARMOUTH CO., N.S.)  
BIRDS.

By H. F. TUFTS.

Seal Island, situated some fifteen miles off the southwest coast of Nova Scotia about mid-way between Yarmouth on the north and Cape Sable on the south, is perhaps the most interesting from an ornithologist's viewpoint of the many islands which fringe the coast.

While some four miles long and from one half to one mile wide, the island is mostly low, in no place exceeding 30 or 40 feet above the sea. A sand beach on the east side near its middle, extends with the sweep of the storms nearly across the island, forming a lagoon and marsh, where it backs against the ridge of granite boulders and beach stones, which forms its western wall. From this low area the land gradually rises toward the north and south to the extreme ends. These portions are covered with a peaty, reddish-colored soil, supporting a dense growth of dwarf spruces and firs, in places so closely grown together as to be almost impenetrable. Under foot is a fine carpet of velvety green moss. On the south end is situated the government light station and fog-horn, in charge of Mr. John Crowell, who is also owner of the island.

This is one of the very few islands about Nova Scotia upon which various sea birds still attempt to nest and rear their young. From other islands the birds have been driven by the relentless persecution of the fishermen, who systematically rob them of their eggs or shoot without regard to season.

On Seal Island, however, thanks to the untiring efforts of Mr. Crowell and his family, the birds are in a measure protected from wanton destruction.

The most numerous and conspicuous of the birds are the herring gulls. Here we find them by thousands, perched about on the spruce tree tops, scattered about the rocky shores or winging their way over the surrounding waters in quest of food—always drawing attention by their beautiful forms and plumage and noisy voices. Their nests are scattered about the ground, both in the woods and amid the stumps of the recent clearings, or on the beach—a slight hollow into which grass and moss is scraped and the two or three eggs deposited therein. Many nests are built in the flat tops of the dense stunted spruces, bulky affairs of sticks, sea-weed and moss—crow style. These gulls prove helpful allies to the fishermen, indicating the whereabouts of shoals of fish, about which they gather in excited, eager swarms.

Some few guillemots and puffins also lay their eggs among the stones and rocks above high water on the beach. The two eggs in the case of the guillemots are well hidden at the bottom of some passage between the rounded boulders. In scrambling over these rocky portions, we startle the sitting birds from their eggs. They flutter forth and perch upon a nearby boulder, or flop into the waves, watching with outstretched necks and anxious gaze the movements of the intruder.

The peat-like turf of the elevated parts of the island was completely honeycombed with the burrows of the Leach's petrels—the air about being pervaded with the strong musky odor of the birds. The petrels themselves, however, are not to be seen at all during the day, unless you thrust your arm full length into one of the burrows and bring forth the hiding bird, probably the sitting female, whose mate is far out to sea searching its food. But it is at night the petrels make merry. With darkness the foragers return and the sitting ones sally forth. Now the air becomes resonant with their soft twitterings and cluckings, while shadowy forms flit about in every direction. The nest burrow is usually about two feet in length, just large enough to admit the birds and most often following the side of some tree root, or underground boulder. But one egg is laid, that upon the bare turf at the tunnel's end.

The half-wild cats with which the island is infested, play sad havoc with the poor petrels. Lying in wait at the entrance to the burrows at nightfall they seize upon their unhappy victims as they venture forth. Scattered feathers, wings and tails, everywhere through the woods, attest the murderous work of the cats.

Some fifteen or twenty eider ducks were spending the summer about the shore, and suspecting some were breeding, search was made among the brush for the nests. With the aid of an aged Newfoundland retriever, who picked up the trail of a duck, and led us into a tangle of bushes and weeds, we discovered one nest, thickly lined with down and containing six large, olive green eggs. Formerly these ducks nested in great abundance on Seal Island, but of late years only an occasional pair or so.

Of the shore birds, only three species were noted at that season. These were the spotted sandpiper, piping plover and semi-palmated plover; all of which Mr. Crowell has found nesting. A few terns, both the common and arctic, were nesting about the big sand flat, mere remnants of the swarms that used to nest there.

Among the small land birds of which there were many, most interesting were the Bicknell's thrushes and black-poll warblers, both fairly common and breeding. These birds, especially the thrushes, are very local in their distribution, and here good opportunities were afforded to note their habits. Like their cousins the hermit thrushes, the Bicknell's thrush sings most frequently in the early morning and late evening. Their song resembles that of the hermit in a general way, but is not nearly so clear and liquid. The nests are built at varying elevations among the dense spruces and are exceedingly difficult to find. The nests of former years, however, are much more in evidence. The moisture-laden atmosphere seems to cause them to swell and starts a growth of moss, which persisting from year to year preserves and renders them quite conspicuous.

Other small birds found breeding there were golden crown kinglets, winter wrens, Hudsonian chickadees, brown creepers, red-breast nuthatches, crossbills and several others.

During the migrations many birds make this a resting place, as also do storm-driven birds of a more southern range. Thus Mr. Crowell has taken examples of the Florida gullinule, turkey vulture, scarlet tanager and Baltimore oriole. Many birds perish during the migrations by coming in contact with the great light one hundred feet up. Over eight hundred yellow warblers were thus destroyed upon one occasion in a single night.

Seal Island derives its name from the large numbers of seals that formerly resorted there to breed. The first industry of the place was the seal-fishery, the animals being of value for the oil which could be extracted from their carcasses. This of course was long since overdone—now only a few scattered seals are to be seen, but great sand-covered mounds back of the beach mark the spots where the useless bones were piled. At present the island is of importance as a lobster-fishing station.

## THE AMERICAN GOSHAWK NEAR OTTAWA.

BY G. EIFRIG.

The goshawk or blue henhawk (*Accipiter atricapillus*) breeds in some numbers in the vast wooded area to the north of Ottawa. It is a large hawk measuring two feet from bill to end of tail, the wing expanse being three to four feet. It is a beautifully marked hawk. The adults of both sexes are bluish-slate color above, the under parts white, each feather being pencilled with black, producing a fine effect. The young ones are entirely different, brownish-black with some rufous above, and the feathers below being heavily *streaked* with black, not *barred* as the adults. Last fall they were quite common for a while around the city. Their flight is not the slow gliding of the buzzard genus. They fly low and swift and fall on their prey like thunderbolts, and when people come out of the house to look for the miscreant who carried away their chicken, they may happen to see a red-shouldered hawk gliding around above, and, taking him to be the author of the mischief, will vow vengeance, whereas the real author, the goshawk, or perhaps Cooper's hawk, who looks and acts much like him, is far away by this time, enjoying his meal. They are quite fearless, often carrying away chickens or game from the very feet of the husbandman or hunter. They would be real harmful to farmers and poultrymen were they not so rare in settled districts. But for what damage the quick-flying *Accipiters* do, the slow-gliding useful buzzards, *Buteo*, are blamed and punished, as the red-shouldered, red-tailed and broad-winged hawks. Of the accipitrine hawks, which closely approach the falcons in build, rapacity and swiftness, we have only the goshawk, Cooper's and the sharp-shinned hawk, of which only the last is at all common, and he is too small to do much harm to man. He confines his depredations to small wild birds, where he does much harm. In winter he sometimes enters cities, as three winters ago Ottawa, and makes himself useful to the community by doing away with an enormous number of English sparrows.

The following two incidents, which came under the writer's notice, show the fierceness of the goshawk. About May 15th, 1905, Mr. F. Sack, a farmer of Germanicus, Renfrew Co., went into one of his fields, which he had not visited for a while. Suddenly a large hawk swooped down upon him, sailed around him in uncomfortably close proximity to his head, struck at him with his claws, and all this with such fierceness that progress was impossible. He had to turn back. The next day he wanted to finish his tour of inspection, when the same thing

happened. He was absolutely forced to turn back. The next day, seeing that this hawk had established himself there and was making a practice of withholding his field from him, Mr. Sack took a gun along. Even this did not deter the hawk, which immediately resorted to the tactics of the past two days. This time it proved his undoing; a well directed shot put him out of commission. The farmer gave the bird to a friend, who mounted it, when it was seen by the writer.

One morning last February, Mr. Hugo Paeseler, a farmer of High Falls, Labelle Co., Québec, went into his wood-lot near his house. Not far in, he noticed that a fierce battle must have been waged there not long before, because in a space of about ten by ten feet the freshly fallen snow was plowed up and liberally sprinkled with blood and feathers. Searching around for the principals of the fight, he found about ten steps away a large adult goshawk, wings spread, frozen stiff and pretty badly used generally. About the same distance in the opposite direction from the scene of hostilities, he found a barred owl, dead, but yet warm. It had alighted on a little spruce after the battle, from where it had fallen off, as the condition of the snow on the spruce and below showed, and then had crawled in a small log that lay with its hollowness right near the owl. Although she apparently had died later than the goshawk, she was more ripped up than he. The farmer, knowing the rudiments of taxidermy, skinned and "stuffed" the goshawk—in this case that is the appropriate word—of the owl he could only do so with the head, which he thus kept. They were later seen by the writer. The theory is that the goshawk sallying forth early in the morning in quest of prey, made a mistake and pounced upon the barred owl, which was probably then returning home from its nightly foraging. She, however, did not feel like being reduced to a breakfast for the goshawk, and so gave battle, with the result that both had no more use for breakfasts. It is not likely that the owl would attack the larger goshawk, but the goshawk, especially when hungry, does not let the size of his quarry deter him much. Last October a farmer in East Templeton, Québec, near Ottawa, shot a beautiful adult female goshawk in the act of doing away with a large Plymouth Rock rooster. That fight in the snowy woods that morning must certainly have been a battle royal, and an interesting sight could one have witnessed it.

Ottawa, Ont., August 16th, 1907.

LIST OF COLEOPTERA TAKEN BY PROF. JNO. MACOUN  
ALONG THE LINE OF THE G. T. P. RY. BETWEEN  
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MAN., AND EDMONTON,  
ALTA., IN 1906.

DETERMINED BY JOHN D. EVANS WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF PROF.  
H. F. WICKHAM.

No.		SPECIMENS.
116	<i>Carabus mæander</i> , Fisch.....	2
119	<i>Carabus tædatus</i> , Fab.....	8
142	<i>Calosoma calidum</i> , Fab.....	1
145	<i>Calosoma moniliatum</i> , Lec.....	5
195	<i>Nebria Sahlbergi</i> , Fisch.....	1
308	<i>Bembidium inæquale</i> , Say.....	3
630	<i>Amara carinata</i> , Lec.....	3
652	<i>Amara pallipes</i> , Kirby.....	1
666	<i>Amara confusa</i> , Lec.....	3
742	<i>Calathus gregarius</i> , Say.....	2
794	<i>Platynus affinis</i> , Kirby.....	1
800	<i>Platynus cupripennis</i> , Say.....	4
829	<i>Platynus sordens</i> , Kirby.....	1
883	<i>Lebia pumila</i> , Dej.....	1
940	<i>Cymindis cribricollis</i> , Dej.....	4
1094	<i>Harpalus herbivagus</i> , Say.....	1
1101	<i>Harpalus cautus</i> , Dej.....	2
	<i>Harpalus near fraternus</i> , Lec.....	1
1465	<i>Rhantus notatus</i> , Fab.....	1
1698	<i>Necrophorus marginatus</i> , Fab.....	1
1706	<i>Silpha lapponica</i> , Hbst.....	3
1711	<i>Silpha ramosa</i> , Say.....	1
	<i>Anisotoma</i> sp.....	1
2124	<i>Staphylinus badipes</i> , Lec.....	1
2996	<i>Olibrus vittatus</i> , Lec.....	1
2998	<i>Olibrus striatulus</i> , Lec.....	1
3051	<i>Hippodamia parenthesis</i> , Say.....	2
3059	<i>Coccinella transversoguttata</i> , Fab.....	1
3583	<i>Saprinus lugens</i> , Er.....	1
3734	<i>Pocadius helvolus</i> , Er.....	31
3739	<i>Meligethes mutatus</i> , Har.....	1
3893	<i>Byrrhus Kirbyi</i> , Lec.....	1
4287	<i>Agriotes limosus</i> , Lec.....	1
	<i>Melanotus</i> sp.....	1
4426	<i>Corymbites virens</i> , Sch.....	1
4576	<i>Dicerca prolongata</i> , Lec.....	1
	<i>Podabrus</i> sp.....	1
4952	<i>Telephorus oregonus</i> , Lec. Var. B.....	1

5513	<i>Aphodius occidentalis</i> , Horn.....	2
5550	<i>Aphodius consentaneus</i> , Lec.....	25
5659	<i>Dichelonycha testacea</i> , Kirby.....	5
5674	<i>Serica vespertina</i> , Gyll.....	1
5681	<i>Serica sericea</i> , Ill.....	1
5706	<i>Diploxys tristis</i> , Kirby.....	2
6550	<i>Orsodachna atra</i> , Ahr.....	2
6614a	<i>Cryptocephalus notatus</i> , Fab.....	1
6781	<i>Entomoscelis adonidis</i> , Fab.....	1
6807	<i>Chrysomela lunata</i> , Fab.....	1
6810a	<i>Chrysomela Bigsbyana</i> , Kirby.....	1
6838	<i>Lina tremulæ</i> , Fab.....	4
6907	<i>Galerucella decora</i> , Say.....	1
6948	<i>Disonycha caroliniana</i> , Fab.....	7
6958	<i>Disonycha xanthomelæna</i> , Dalm.....	1
7320	<i>Eleodes tricosata</i> , Say.....	6
7697	<i>Scotodes americanus</i> , Horn. (Not heretofore recorded from Canada).....	1
7846	<i>Mordellistena unicolor</i> , Lec.....	7
7887	<i>Corphyra terminalis</i> , Say.....	1
8061	<i>Macrobasis unicolor</i> , Kirby.....	10
8083	<i>Epicauta sericans</i> , Lec.....	1
8132	<i>Cantharis Nuttalli</i> , Say.....	1
8133	<i>Cantharis cyanipennis</i> , Say.....	4
8210	<i>Rhynchites bicolor</i> , Fab.....	8
8279	<i>Nocheles æqualis</i> , Horn.....	2
8357	<i>Trichalophus simplex</i> , Lec.....	3
8540	<i>Gryphidius equiseti</i> , Fab.....	2
8543	<i>Erycus puncticollis</i> , Lec.....	1

#### MEETING OF COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Council of the Club was held on Tuesday, September 12th, with the following members in attendance: Messrs. A. E. Attwood, E. E. Lemieux, H. H. Pitts, T. E. Clarke, Rev. C. G. Eifrig, Miss A. L. Matthews and Miss Q. Jackson.

The following were elected ordinary members: Rev. W. A. McIlroy, Ottawa; Rev. B. Thompson, Hintonburgh; Mr. W. D. Fitz-Henry, Myrtle, Man.

It was decided to recommend to the Council for the next club year, that a programme of excursions for the season be drawn up at the first meeting of the Council and that a printed copy of the programme be mailed to each member of the Club. Fall excursions were arranged for as follows:—

September 14th, Beaver Meadow, Hull; September 21st, Queen's Park, Aylmer; September 28th, Rockliffe.

## REPORT OF THE ZOOLOGICAL BRANCH, 1906.

The Zoological Branch of the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club have the honour to report as follows: Two meetings have been held during the past season, the first on November 9th, when the principal business was the making arrangements for the zoological exhibit at the soiree on December 4th; but the zoologists present afterwards joined in a general discussion upon various topics of interest. On March 16th, the second meeting took place, and the season's work was reviewed, but it is necessary in the report now presented to refer only to such matters as may have general interest and in some cases have an element of novelty. Both the meetings, it may be added, were held at the house of the convener of the Branch (Professor Prince).

An important feature of the season 1906 was the abnormal lowness of the water in the Ottawa River and tributary waters, affecting, indeed, the whole district. Many creeks and ponds which in previous dry seasons have retained a quantity of water were perfectly dry, and the usual stock of aquatic animals and plants seemed to have disappeared. Whatever the cause, the effect of this drought upon aquatic life in many localities near Ottawa has been serious. Certain ponds in the suburbs of the Capital which have been favourite hunting grounds for members of the Club, and have not been dried up before, or not for many years, were perfectly parched, and one member instanced some most prolific ponds along the upper Ottawa River, near Pembroke, in which the destruction of young fishes and amphibians, and of invertebrates, had been most disastrous. One pond was visited when in the last stage of drying up, and in a small area of two or three square yards, were huddled together in a seething mass, thousands of living creatures, including tadpoles of various species of frogs and toads, numerous young fishes, *Lepomis*, *Micropterus*, *Perca*, *Etheostoma*, *Lucius*, etc., and myriads of insect larvæ, Coleoptera and Neuroptera, and numerous specimens of *Argyroneta*. Several enthusiastic young naturalists, with nets and tin vessels, rescued most of these imperilled creatures and deposited them in shallow places in the main river. It will be interesting to see the effect generally of this drought upon the aquatic life in the dried-up ponds referred to.

Of mammals mention must be made of a band of wolves heard howling near Pembina Lake in the upper Lievre River district, these animals uttering their weird cries even in the day time, it is asserted. Virginia deer were reported at the Rockcliffe Range in the fall, and bears and deer at Hammond. A black musk-rat, *Fiber zibethicus*, was captured near Ottawa and



added to the Fisheries' Museum collection. It is, of course, a case of melanism. Of reptiles the interesting capture of a most elegantly tinted milk snake (*Coronella*) is worthy of note as the specimen is a very young one, not exceeding 9 inches in length, and its coloration is quite unlike the common type, indeed it resembles a southern variety. It was captured at the Rifle Range. A number of young specimens of *Menobranchus* have been recently obtained from the city water pipes: one barely 2¼ inches long shows two bright longitudinal bands of conspicuous yellow along the head, back, and the sides of the compressed tail, over the ramose external gills occur small yellow spots, and the gills are pale red; so that the immature creature differs very markedly from the adult. A larger specimen, 5½ inches long, is covered with dark spots, and thus approaches the full grown mud-puppy in external coloration. Young *Spelerpes*, Mr. Odell mentions, is yellow on the abdomen, but with spots, and the back is dark brown in the centre with a lighter band on each side. Mr. Halkett, who furnished the details regarding *Menobranchus*, also called attention to the predaceous habit assumed by some gold fish in the Fisheries Museum, which ate a young gar-pike (*Lepidosteus*), placed in a lively condition in their tank. It was two inches or more long, but only half of the specimen could be found when search was made for the missing ganoid. The capture of a tarpon (*T. atlanticus*) near Halifax, N.S., was reported by Prof. Prince, who points out that the range of this fish hitherto has been stated to be the warmer Atlantic waters from Brazil to Long Island. As several other southern fishes have been noted on our northern shores in recent years, possibly some deep causes are at work which encourage this migration of southern species. Mr. Halkett stated that a series of specimens of fish had been received from the salmon weirs in St. John harbour, N.B. They included *Cyclopterus lumpus*, the lumpsucker; *Lophius piscatorius*, the angler fish; a young specimen *Cryptacanthodes maculatus*, the ghostfish; *Zoarces anguillaris*, the eel-pout; and of the picked dogfish, *Squalus acanthias*, a specimen containing eight young with large yolk sac attached; this species being viviparous. Lastly the lamprey from the old salmon-retaining pond, Carleton, N.B. was recorded, possibly a land-locked variety of *Petromyzon marinus*. Mr. E. E. Lemieux had arranged for a collection of fishes being made at Pembina Lake, and a series of cyprinoids introduced into the lake in 1905 had been secured and may afford information as to the rate of growth. A local collection of sturgeon, percoids, cyprinoids, eels, the silvery lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon concolor*) and young gar-pike

were obtained during the past season, and the shipment of a huge German carp, from the Bay of Quinte, to Ottawa, is of interest, as this ponderous specimen measured over 27 inches in length.

The Crustacea came in for much attention by the zoological members of the Club. Mr. Halkett observed a specimen of the river crayfish (*Cambarus*) which laid eggs, the eggs being attached to the swimmerets on the under side of the body. The eggs were not only large in proportion to the size of the female crayfish, but they were actually larger than the eggs of the lobster, a decapod of immensely greater size. Mr. W. S. Odell reports an abnormal abundance of certain crustaceans observed under the following circumstances: at the openings cut through the ice on the clay ponds or pits near the Rideau River, crowded masses of *Canthocamptus*, *Cyclops*, and *Asellus aquaticus*, came to the surface of the water. Sunfish, perch, etc., indeed an astonishing abundance of animal life, crowded thickly at these water holes and formed a thick sheet or scum so dense that the horses refused to drink the water. The ice was about a foot in thickness and the cold was intense, yet these water animals had not been so thick for many years. They decreased most markedly on the first mild day. Mr. Odell once noticed a similar superabundance of the dark winter eggs of *Daphnia* (the water flea) which formed a sheet like a layer of soot upon the surface of a pond, yet in no previous or subsequent season were they ever seen to be so plentiful, being in some winter seasons exceedingly scarce.

Mention may also be made of specimens of the whitefish and the Atlantic salmon from Magog, Que., of a few small mud-turtles from the Thousand Islands, of a specimen of turtle from Belleville, to be determined, and the purchase of two small alligators for the Fisheries Museum. The Branch notes with interest that a Fisheries Museum report is about to be issued and will contain fuller notes for popular information than previous reports. Dr. Whiteaves' valuable Bibliography of Canadian Zoology, 1905, is a welcome addition to the scientific literature of the year. It is also worthy of note that the early issue of a second part of the Contributions to Canadian Biology published in connection with the Marine Biological Station is announced and will contain some very important zoological papers by eminent Canadian scientists.

E. E. PRINCE,  
W. S. ODELL.

A. HALKETT,  
E. E. LEMIEUX.

## SUB-EXCURSION.

On Saturday, May 25th, the 5th Sub-excursion of the Club was held at the Experimental Farm. The weather being warm and bright, with a cool breeze blowing, which made walking delightful, there was an attendance of about fifty members and friends of the Club.

The leaders present were: the President, Mr. Wilson, Dr. Sinclair, Dr. Fletcher, Mr. Kingston, Rev. Mr. Eifrig, Mr. Halkett and Mr. Gibson. On reaching the Arboretum, the different parties separated under leaders, to visit the spots of most interest to them. The beautiful lawns and beds of many colored tulips about the Farm grounds were the centre of much admiration. Dr. Fletcher, with a party, studied the different trees, shrubs and botanical plants; while Mr. Eifrig and his followers sought for birds of many species. With the exception of a few hibernating kinds there were not many insects found, owing to the lateness of the season.

At 5 o'clock the members reassembled in a grove of pines and spruces near the centre of the Arboretum, and delightful talks were given by Drs. Fletcher and Sinclair and Rev. Mr. Eifrig.

Dr. Fletcher, in his charming manner, spoke of the different kinds of pines and firs found in Canada, also the imported species used for garden decoration, showing the difference between the pines by the number of their leaves and the nature of their cones. He gave both their common and scientific names, stating how in various provinces of Canada one common name is sometimes applied to different kinds of trees. He gave a piece of useful information in the way to make a camp bed of fir boughs. By putting the flat side of the branches uppermost, and placing all the butt ends of the twigs towards the head, sloping the leaves to the foot, one can procure a comfortable, springy bed. The firs are better for this purpose than the prickly spruces.

He also spoke of the Japanese quince, which is used for decorative purposes, and which grows luxuriantly in the Niagara district; and told how the fruit, which is irregularly conical, enclosing a nut-like kernel, is used as a table dessert in Japan, but has never found favor in this country, although it sometimes fruits well here. It has a strong aroma.

Dr. Sinclair was next called upon and spoke briefly of the artificiality of education, stating that all education was more or less artificial. He pointed out that the members of the Club, by visiting the Experimental Farm, which he called a laboratory, for the study and experiments of different varieties of trees, etc., were given a chance to study the artificial side of Nature in the

planting of and experimenting with imported trees, shrubs, flowers, etc., of which the Farm, in trees alone, had over 3,000 specimens.

Rev. Mr. Eifrig told of the birds he had seen and heard. He touched briefly on the lateness of the season in keeping a great many birds away that should have been here some weeks ago. Therefore the birds were not as plentiful as he had hoped to find them. He, however, saw or heard over 35 species during the afternoon, some of which were fairly numerous.

His list consisted of 3 meadow larks, 10 red-winged black-birds, 1 phoebe, 3 bluebirds, 10 bobolinks, several song sparrows, 6 cow-birds, 5 black-and-white warblers, 10 yellow warblers, 1 Blackburnian warbler, 1 junco, 10 goldfinches, chipping sparrows, 1 black swallow, barn swallows, 1 flicker, house wrens, 2 cat-birds, 1 swamp sparrow, 1 king-bird, 2 Carolina rails, 1 Baltimore oriole, 1 purple martin, 2 blue-jays, marsh hawks, purple finches, 1 bronzed grackle, 1 American redstart, 1 white-throated nuthatch, 1 red-eyed vireo, many chimney swifts, 1 crested fly-catcher, common crows. The more important and rarer species of his list were: 1 spotted sandpiper, 4 parula warblers, 1 black-throated green warbler, 1 myrtle warbler. He spoke of the bad habit of the cow-bird of laying its eggs in the nests of other birds; when the two broods hatch, the fledglings of the cow-bird being much larger are apt to smother the other young birds, therefore when found the eggs should be thrown out and destroyed.

Mr. Eifrig's address brought the interesting discussions and a most enjoyable outing to a close.

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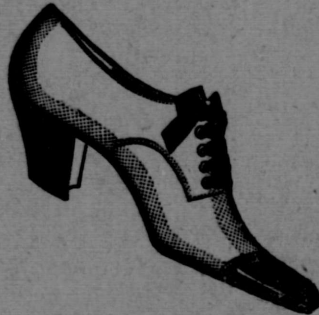
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