

wherever a convenient corner projected. Without uttering a note, they frequently exchanged perches, as if they were engaged in a strigidine "pussy wants a corner"; they were silent as wraiths, but their big, bright eyes saw everything.

When I was able to be about and out-of-doors again, I soon became too deeply engrossed in my work to give to my bird-friends the attention they deserved, but my heart will ever be grateful to them for the entertainment they afforded me while time passed so slowly.

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### THE LURE OF THE GODWIT.

He approached me whenever I visited the Yellow Rail Coulee in the Choctaw Basin, Benson County, North Dakota. T'was difficult to determine the direction from which this Marbled Godwit came. Before I could see, away in the distance, his voice of suspicion would pierce the horizon and over the ridge he skimmed with the wing strokes similar to a Killdeer.

I climbed through the slopes of badger brush where a Prairie Sharp-tail Grouse had a setting of fifteen eggs, and hunted up and down the uncultivated patches. This wary Marlin stood in the grass close by and scrutinized my actions.

The Western Willet surveyed conditions from "on wing" but never pausing to alight even though he manifested considerable curiosity at my presence.

In the Red River Valley of Minnesota there were quite a few Godwits this spring. Heavy rains and "no shooting" contributed largely to the conditions which made the environment attractive. Residents said the "Indian Moccasin State" was fast losing its virgin prairies, but I saw thousands of acres undisturbed and without fences. After visiting the headquarters of the Red River of the North and the Mississippi and making an inventory of the bird life now in evidence, I found Minnesota more promising than North Dakota, for waders. Dakota is still par excellence



for Ducks but the population of Cranes, Phalaropes, Bartramian Plovers and Marbled Godwits in Northwestern Minnesota was a revelation to me. Too late for eggs of the Sandhill Crane but apparently Godwits and Uplands were sitting close.

Two or three miles is a trivial distance for male Godwits to patrol. They are not so aggressive as the Curlew, but just as watchful and suspicious. Less dove like than the Bartramian and more bold than the Willet, a Marbled Godwit will worry any man or dog if the intrusion is even remote. I was certainly surprised to discover my first Godwit's nest with the parent crouching beneath a little screen of woven grass blades on four heavily blotched eggs. Her general contour and the situation and design of the nest was suggestive of many King Rails whose nests I have found, after noticing how the grass blades were woven together canopy like to shield the bird and her treasures. About a mile from this nest and screened on one side by willow sprouts sat another tame Godwit. This time the grassy hollow held five boldly marked eggs. Incubation was one-half completed and the date was June 8th. These five eggs bear a general resemblance to each other and I believe they are all the product of the same bird.

In size Marbled Godwit's eggs are larger than Willet's but smaller than Long-bill Curlew. The shape is rather different from either of the preceding and can possibly be better described when the outline may be said to compare quite accurately with typical eggs of the Wilson's Snipe, although the latter are, of course, very much smaller.

The color patterns are distinctive, and may be classed in two types. In one the ground color is an olive green, while others have a pale chocolate background. The markings are less inclined towards specks and spots, as compared with other shore birds' eggs, but are manifest in the form of blotches or cloudings usually similar to the ground color prevalent in the same setting, but several shades darker. The shell is glossy.



Godwits behave like Black Terns after the nest of the former are actually found, but until then the male very cleverly controls his actions in such a manner as to defy the application of any fixed set of rules, should an effort be made to analyze his conduct.

GERARD ALAN ABBOTT

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### NESTING OF AMERICAN LONG EARED OWL

During a walk in search of birds, on March 16, I and my two brothers discovered two long-eared owls in an evergreen tree in a deserted farm-yard.

After a period of two weeks we again visited this locality and saw but one of the owls in the same tree. We concluded at that time that the female must be upon her nest some place near. We continued our journey to an old orchard about a quarter of a mile away and while looking for screech owls' nests, I noticed two long feathery tufts protruding over a thick collection of sticks in a crotch in an apple tree about fifteen feet above the ground. Upon closer examination I noticed two bright eyes peering at me from beneath a stick. I called my brothers and showed them this queer specimen. I climbed a tree about twenty feet away for further investigation and to my astonishment a long eared owl flew out. I had my camera along but I could secure no good pictures. My brother climbed the tree in which the nest was located and obtained a picture of the nest and eggs which turned out well.

About the nest small branches were very dense, thereby offering very good protection for a secluded nest. The nest itself was composed entirely of sticks with but a very few leaves for a lining. The three eggs in the nest were completely white. In another crotch in the same tree we observed an old nest, identical in composition to the present one. As the long-eared owl has been recorded in this vicinity every year recently, doubtless the second nest was last year's.



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