

without being in any way related. It is an ecological association of a novelkind.—A. H. LEIM.

NOTES ON THE OCCURRENCE OF SOME RARE BIRDS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA. During the last few years, several species of birds of unusual occurrence in this part of Central Alberta have been recorded. The writer has been an observer of birds in this region since 1892, and failed to detect any of the birds enumerated in this article until quite recently. With the exception of one species, the Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) the records have been obtained from the vicinity of Camrose, which is in lat. 53, and just east of Meridian 113. In other words, Camrose is in the same latitude as the southern extremity of Labrador, and on the same meridian as Butte, Montana, and Phoenix City, Arizona.

Within a few miles of Camrose, three life zones are represented by well known birds, during the breeding season. The Hudsonian by the Fox Sparrow and Hudsonian Chickadee; the Canadian by the Red-breasted Nuthatch, Canada Jay, Olive-backed Thrush and White-throated Sparrow, and the Transition by the Catbird, Bobolink and Black-billed Cuckoo. This merging of species of different zones, might reasonably be expected in the proximity of high mountains, but this locality is nearly two hundred miles east of the Rockies and embraces the rich agricultural park-like areas of Alberta.

#### FORSTER TERN (*Sterna forsteri*)

On the 13th of July, 1925, Arthur Twomey, of Camrose, shot a male of this species in a marsh at the upper end of Dried Meat Lake, seven miles south of Camrose. On the 20th of the same month, the writer found the nest with two young, and secured the female. These were given to Prof. Rowan, of the University of Alberta, Edmonton, who identified them. The nest was placed on the top of an old muskrat house, which was in open water surrounded by tall reeds, and was about ten inches above the water level.

In the same marsh, large numbers of Black Terns, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, Coots, Grebes and several varieties of ducks were nesting. The nearest colony of Common Terns was in the Miquelon Lakes, about twenty miles due north of Dried Meat Lake. This is probably the first record of Forster Tern being taken in Alberta.

#### BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*)

On the 23rd of June, 1924, a dead Black-billed Cuckoo was picked up in the village of Duhamel, twelve miles south-west of Camrose, which had evidently been killed the night before by flying against a close-meshed wire fence. The writer

made an examination of the vicinity the following day and, although unable to find the dead bird's mate, located a partially completed nest of the year, and one which, no doubt, had been used the previous year. Both nests were placed in crotches of large willows about one foot above the ground. The bird was sent to Prof. Rowan, in whose collection it now is. On the 21st of June, 1925, the writer observed a pair of cuckoos for half an hour in a thick patch of brush and poplars at the Camrose Golf Course. A few days later their notes were heard from another brushy area, a half mile distant from where they were first seen. These birds are rare summer residents in the country seventy-five miles south of Camrose, around Sullivan Lake, and their appearance as recorded above seems to be their northern limit at the present time.

#### BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

On the 7th of June, 1919, the writer observed, and enjoyed the song of a bobolink for over an hour, in a meadow close to Battle River, seven miles south of Camrose. The female was not seen, but from the actions of the male, she was undoubtedly nesting in the immediate vicinity. In the hope that a colony of these southern birds might establish themselves in this territory, the writer visited the meadow the following years, but was unsuccessful in his search for them.

The Bobolink has been reported from the country south and east of Camrose, but the observation recorded above is the first and only time the writer has seen the bird in Alberta.

#### TOWNSEND WARBLER (*Dendroica townsendi*)

Mr. Arthur Twomey collected a young male of this species at Miquelon Lake, about fourteen miles north of Camrose, on August 21st, 1925. It was with a large number of other migrating warblers, and apparently the only one of the kind. Mr. P. A. Taverner identified it as *townsendi*.

#### BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*)

The writer observed a Brown Thrasher for a considerable time, about two hundred yards south of the grain elevator at Rossyth (six miles east of Hardisty) on the 19th of June, 1925. Being very familiar with this bird in Ontario when a boy, there could be no doubt as to the identification. Rossyth is about eighty-five miles east, and somewhat south of Camrose, and the location seemed to be admirably suited to the bird. It is possible that this species will be found to be a regular summer resident of the sandy, rolling country in that section through which the Battle River flows. The Brown Thrasher has been reported from the lower Red Deer River, near Steevesville, more than one hundred and fifty miles south of Rossyth.

TOWNSEND SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes townsendi*)

Possibly the only record of this mountain-loving bird in Central Alberta, is one which the writer procured at Lake de May, eight miles north east of Camrose, on October 7th, 1921. The skin was sent to Mr. P. A. Taverner, Victoria Museum, Ottawa.—FRANK L. FARLEY, Camrose, Alta.

A BIRD SANCTUARY AT VICTORIA, B.C.—The harbour of Victoria, B.C., extends for several miles inland. It first passes through a narrow, rocky and picturesque channel known as The Gorge, and then expands into a lake of considerable size. At one place, this lake is over half a mile wide. Its shores on the western side are heavily wooded and there are two promontories projecting into it, both covered with primeval forest. All this water is part of a Bird Sanctuary proclaimed under the Migratory Birds' Convention Act, passed by the Federal Government at Ottawa on the 27th day of October, 1923.

On one of these wooded points, Mr. H. E. Newton has commenced the establishment of a colony of wild fowl. He obtained, last spring, a flock of twenty wild ducks, consisting of eight drakes and twelve ducks, and all the members of this flock have become very tame. They occasionally take to wing and go away some distance from their home, but they always return at feeding time, and on one or two occasions, they have brought some of their wild cousins with them.

They are so tame that they will readily take food from the hands of human beings, and it is a pretty sight to see little children holding out handfuls of grain to the birds, who eagerly gobble it up.

Though the waters of this estuary are included in the game sanctuary, unfortunately the shore above high water mark is not, and as the shores are steep, there is nothing to prevent so-called sportsmen from wandering along them, gun in hand. The spectacle of a flock of wild duck lazily floating only a few yards away and quite unafrighted by the presence of man is a temptation that can hardly be resisted. So far, however, no casualties have occurred, but if this flock of wild birds becomes, as it is hoped it will be, the nucleus of a colony of wild fowl of all sorts, including swans, geese, and other species, it is almost too much to hope that none of them will fall victims to shore poppers.

A little further inland are several lakes, most of which are surrounded with bush and have swampy margins, eminently suitable as homes and breeding places for wild fowl. The largest of these lakes, known as Elk Lake, is already declared a Bird Sanctuary, but if a line was drawn across the southern end of Vancouver Island, just north of

these lakes, and all the territory between it and the sea declared to be a game preserve, much greater security for feathered visitors would be obtained, and this part of Vancouver Island might become a recognized resting place for the millions of wild fowl that pass over it in their two annual migrations.—CHARLES ST. BARBE.

“FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH—AND BEYOND!”—Mott Lake, Buffalo Park, froze over on the night of October 26th, 1925. While patrolling this area on October 27th, I noticed a live Canada Goose about four hundred yards out on the lake, and on coming closer to it, I observed that there was another one, apparently dead, and frozen in the ice, with the live mate standing guard over it.

It was still there on the 28th, but was missing on the 29th. I had my boy skate over to the spot, where he reports finding feathers, and also coyote tracks, which seems to show that the mate stood by until driven off, or probably captured, by the coyote.—D. W. DAVISON.

OCCURRENCE OF *Epigæa repens* L. IN THE LABRADOR PENINSULA.—In the last week of May, 1925, I found several plants of *Epigæa repens* L., the Trailing Arbutus or “Mayflower”, in bloom near the village of Seven Islands, Saguenay County, Quebec. They were in sandy soil, about one-half mile north of the northern end of the village. I identified the plants without difficulty, as I have been familiar with this species from childhood. Unfortunately, I did not preserve any specimens, as I supposed at the time that the species must have been recorded previously from a place which, like Seven Islands, had been visited by a number of naturalists.

While I saw only a few plants of the Trailing Arbutus near Seven Islands, there must have been a good many more close at hand, in some neighboring area unvisited by me, as the villagers of Seven Islands knew these flowers well and were accustomed to gather them in small quantities for the decoration of their homes. As all of these plants were on the eastern side of the large Bay of Seven Islands, they were undoubtedly growing in the Labrador Peninsula, even if the base-line of the peninsula is considered as meeting the southern coast at the head of the Bay of Seven Islands.

As Dr. M. O. Malte informs me that the National Herbarium contains no specimen of this species from the Labrador Peninsula, and as Mr. Harold St. John has not recorded it here as a result of his botanical explorations in this region in 1915 (which extended even as far as Pentecost River, south-west of the Bay of Seven Islands), it has seemed desirable to make this record.—HARRISON F. LEWIS.



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