THE AUK:

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF

ORNITHOLOGY.

VOL. XXXII. JANUARY, 1915. No. 1.

ON THE TRAIL OF THE IVORY-BILL.

BY FREDERIC H. KENNARD.

Plates I–III.

AFTER years of looking forward to a hunting trip in the Florida Big Cypress Swamp, my hopes seemed about to be realized when on the 14th of February, 1914, the teamster, Peter Hogan, started from Fort Myers with our outfit, in a wagon very much like an old-fashioned prairie schooner, hauled by two good looking yoke of oxen; while my guide, Tom Hand, and I were to follow the next day in an automobile; it being our intention to catch up before Peter reached the Big Cypress, and leaving the machine at its edge, go on with him.

The wagon was a stout, broad tired affair, with top like a prairie schooner, and easily held our outfit. We used oxen because, though slow, they could with their spreading toes, pull a wagon through places where horses and mules would be sure to bog down.

Tom and I started the next day soon after daylight, for Immokalee, about thirty-two miles southeast of Fort Myers, running through rather uninteresting open pine woods for almost the entire distance. We bogged down just south of Immokalee, had to cut several trees to use as levers, and finally after building a miniature corduroy road, managed to pry the machine out of the mud and caught up with Peter about eight miles further south, where we camped for the night.

When leaving Fort Myers in the morning, we saw a few Florida Grackles fussing about the orange trees in front of the hotel. A

1. NEST OF AUDUBON'S CARACARA. 2. NEST OF FLORIDA RED-SHOULDERED HAWK.

Mockingbird was warbling from a neighboring telegraph pole, Florida Bluejays were feeding among the palms, and a Loggerhead Shrike was singing somewhere in the grounds. Purple Martins were flying about the water tank at the rear of the hotel, and the omnipresent English Sparrow was yapping among the out-buildings. In the bay back of the house was a bunch of about thirty very tame Lesser Scaup Ducks, close in by the sea wall, while just outside, a couple of big Brown Pelicans were wheeling about in the air, or flopping down into the water; and several gulls and some large terns were flying about.

On our way through the pine woods we saw Turkey Buzzards, of course, and a few Florida Crows, Florida Jays, and Florida Bluejays, Flickers, Pileated, Red-cockaded and Red-bellied Woodpeckers. There were numerous warblers flitting about the tree tops, but in our hurry we only identified the Pine and Myrtle. There were a few sparrows also in the underbrush, which we had no time to identify. We saw Phœbes, Bluebirds, numerous Shrikes, Florida Red-wings, Mourning Doves, and several Kingfishers flying about the sloughs or lakes that we passed in the open places. We saw several large herons, either Ward's or Great Blue, a small flock of Little Blue Herons, about half of which were white, one Louisiana Heron, and in the distance, one large white heron, probably an Egret. There were numbers of Florida Meadowlarks, and after we had passed Immokalee we began to get into the country of the Sandhill Cranes.

About sixteen miles out from Fort Myers we discovered the nest of an Audubon Caracara, placed about thirty-five feet up in the top of a pine, just beside the trail. The nest was a rather bulky affair built of sticks, coarse beneath and finer above, with a depression in the top about four inches deep, lined with weeds, and containing one fresh egg. The birds did not seem to be particularly wild, and at first watched us curiously from a neighboring tree, and later flew off to the edge of an adjoining slough.

Immokalee is a typical little Florida hamlet and consists of a church, several houses, one of which contained a postoffice, a so-called store, and several small orange groves. Its oldest inhabitant, Mr. W. H. Brown, an Englishman who has lived there for forty years trading with the Seminoles, boasted that the town was the highest in Lee County just twenty-one feet above the sea!

The next morning, February 16th, we went on through the pine woods, about seven miles, to the "Rock Spring Crossing" at the edge of the Big Cypress, where we left our automobile in the woods, beneath an extemporized canvas tent. We bogged down twice, en route, and had to wait, both times, for the oxen to catch up and pull the machine out of the mud, a soft marley clay.

The country had been very uninteresting, and comparatively birdless, only a few sparrows and a buzzard or two having been seen, and the tracks of a few turkeys. After caching the auto, and eating a hasty lunch, we took to the swamp, the main "strand" of the Big Cypress, and for four miles plodded, and waded, and cleared the trail of prostrate trees and overhanging boughs that threatened the schooner's superstructure.

On the margin of the swamp and its bordering jungle, we saw a Catbird, a Brown Thrasher, and a few Florida Yellow-throats, but after we got into the swamp itself we saw not a bird until we reached a small cabbage hammock about half a mile from the other side, which was fairly alive with them. Chickadees (I do not know whether they were Carolina or the Florida sub-species), Tufted Titmice, many unidentified warblers, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers were flying about, while in the waters of the swamp adjoining there waded numbers of Louisiana Herons, Green Herons, Egrets, Wood Ibis, Black-crowned Night Herons, and large herons, either Ward's or Great Blues.

On coming out of the swamp the trail led across a fine large hammock of open pine woods, interspersed with cabbage palms, live-oaks, and an undergrowth of saw-palmettos, dotted here and there with numerous depressions filed with cypress and jungle. Peter and I went ahead looking for a "burn" on which to camp, near water and pasturage, while Tom took my rifle, and soon brought in two turkeys which he had "roosted" in a cypress, near the edge of the swamp.

In choosing a camp site in this country one should usually choose a "burn," or place that has recently been burned over, as otherwise one may return to camp, only to find that it has vanished in smoke.

The natives everywhere in this region; cowboys, alligator hunters, and Indians alike, seem to travel with boxes of matches in their pockets, which they distribute impartially as they ride through

the country, generally in order to make better pasturage for their cattle; but in this particular region where there are no cattle, in order to burn out the thickets and jungle, which would otherwise become impenetrable, and to supply food and convenient hunting grounds for deer and turkey which come out on the "burns" to feed on the fresh young growth.

We stayed here until the 19th, wading the swamps, beating the brush, or exploring the neighboring savannahs; collecting a few birds here and there, and filling our larder with turkeys and venison, both fresh and smoked, but always keeping in mind the main object of the expedition, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Pileated Woodpeckers there were in plenty, and I would not even try to guess the number of miles we foolishly traveled after large woodpeckers and strange noises that we thought might perchance emanate from an Ivory-bill. They were always Pileateds.

In the swamps there were herons galore; Ward's, Louisianas, Little Blues, Greens, and Black-crowned Night Herons, Wood Ibis or Flint-heads as they are locally called, bunches of White Ibis, numbers of American Bittern, and an occasional Egret. In the main swamp also were numerous fresh tracks of otter, bear, several large alligators, to say nothing of flocks of little fellows. Along the edges the joyous Carolina Wren was almost always in evidence, while on the hammocks numbers of Florida Quail and Mourning Doves flew up almost from under our feet. Florida Barred Owls were everywhere, and as usual particularly loquacious, and Tom could talk their language better than anyone I ever heard. Turkey Buzzards were always soaring somewhere in sight, particularly when we had meat hung up; and a pair of Florida Sparrow Hawks had a nest in an old pine stub close beside the camp. There were warblers in the tree tops, particularly in the cabbage palms, where they, as well as almost every other bird in the vicinity, seemed to find food among the ripe fruit that hung there. Even the Pileated Woodpeckers fed freely on the berries.

There were turkeys here, singly, in pairs and in flocks; sometimes two or three of them would stampede right through camp while we were sitting there, perhaps skinning one of their relatives; while in the mornings and evenings we could always hear the old gobblers a-gobbling from their chosen perches.

I do not think that throughout the entire trip there was ever a morning in which we could not hear at least two or three gobblers, apparently vying with each other, and everybody else for that matter, as to which could make the most noise. If we had heard a gobbler in the distance and wanted to locate him, all we had to do was to let out a few unearthly hoots, like a very large Barred Owl, and he would invariably reply; and once I remember when Tom, at dusk, had shot a small turkey from the top of a cypress tree, the old gobbler that was sitting unobserved on a nearby pine, let out a series of record breaking gobbles in an apparent effort to outdo the shotgun.

Right here perhaps a brief description of our methods of hunting turkeys may be of interest to those unfamiliar with this much written up subject. Briefly, we either "called," "roosted" or "still hunted" them.

For "calling" or "yelping" we got up in the morning before daylight, and after making our way to a comparatively open space near which we knew some gobbler roosted, we would hide in the brush or behind a tree, and then imitating the call of a hen, coax him down from his perch and up within gun shot. Usually the smaller hollow wing-bone of a turkey hen is used as a "yelper" for this purpose; but Tom could conjure the most coaxing calls out of a piece of grass, a leaf or any thing. At this season of the year very little coaxing is really necessary, and the old gobblers would come in on the run at the slightest provocation.

The hens usually roost in a tall cypress near the edge of the swamp, while the old gobblers, at this season seem exclusive, and prefer to roost alone; usually in some tall pine on the nearby hammock. Then when morning comes, after a few preliminary gobbles when the hens have flown down and begun to feed, the old gobbler comes down and is supposed to pay his respects to each of his consorts, or for that matter any other consort that happens to be near.

When the birds are to be "roosted," if it is a gobbler you are after, it is comparatively easy to locate him by his gobbling. If there is any uncertainty as to his exact direction, gobble, or hoot like an owl, and unless he sees you he will invariably reply. Then work your way carefully in his general direction until you have him

located accurately, and then when it is sufficiently dark, creep up with infinite pains to some spot where you can shoot him in the head. It is hardly believable to one who has not tried to locate him how inconspicuous a very large old gobbler may be while sitting in perfectly plain sight, on the limb of a big old pine. My objection to this method of hunting is that when a large bird like a gobbler, weighing fifteen to eighteen pounds, falls seventy-five feet or so from the top of a tall tree he is likely to damage his plumage by striking the limbs and be ruined as a specimen.

"Still hunting" hardly needs a description further than to say that one must know something of the habits of the birds and their daily haunts, and remember that a turkey's eyes are extremely sharp, and that it can run like a deer. There was one enormous old gobbler that I particularly wanted to bring home to an unbelieving friend of mine, and I laid for him on several occasions. I knew almost exactly where to find him at a certain hour in the afternoon, and would approach this particular hammock as stealthily as possible, only to be rewarded each time by seeing him scooting across the prairie to a neighboring swamp. Once, and only once, I chased him. He never seemed really to hurry and disdained taking to his wings. We named this particular place "the quarter mile run"; and yet I have on several occasions walked almost onto an old gobbler "a-droning" in the middle of the trail.

The turkeys of this region are reputedly the smallest of the Florida subspecies; the hens that we shot weighing from five and three quarters to eight and a half pounds, but old hens, I am told, frequently weigh as much as ten pounds or more and I know of one big one that weighed eleven pounds. The young gobblers that we shot weighed from eight and a half to ten pounds, and I am informed, frequently weigh as much as twelve, or even in extreme cases, fourteen pounds. The old gobblers that we collected on this trip, and we did not kill any very large ones, weighed from fifteen to eighteen pounds, but I know of Big Cypress gobblers that have been weighed by friends of mine whose evidence is unquestionable, that weighed twenty-two, twenty-three, and in one extreme case, twenty-five pounds.

On the afternoon of February 19 we broke camp for a hammock

FLORIDA WILD TURKEYS IN DEEP LAKE GROVE.
1. Gobbler. 2. Hens.

about four miles away, where there was an isolated grove of orange and grapefruit trees belonging to Mr. Frank Van Agnew of Kissimmee, Florida, who had very kindly offered me all the hospitality possible. This grove really was the objective point of our expedition, for it was here in 1908, that a friend of mine had seen Ivory-bills, and had presented me with the skin of a beautiful male as a proof that these rare birds were still to be found in southern Florida. On the trail, which led through a fairly dry and more or less open country, we saw several deer and numerous turkeys, several bunches of Quail, and one Great Crested Flycatcher, besides the usual number of warblers, woodpeckers, etc.

Upon arriving at Van Agnew's, we found, on the edge of the open pine woods, a very comfortable three room bungalow with an open hallway and piazza, built of cypress and set upon posts about six feet above the ground, which at certain seasons of the year is under water. A short distance away, across an open space and a piece of pretty wet cypress swamp, was the hammock, with about ten acres above flood level planted with a very healthy looking grove of trees. Somebody had been there ahead of us and abstracted the oranges. The grapefruit were however still there, the trees loaded with them; and they tasted very good to us after the villainous water that we had been forced to drink for the last few days. Distances are great in Florida and the natives do not think much of them. It has been customary to drag this fruit to market sixty miles by ox team.

I had come on ahead of the rest of the party, and while waiting for them, put in my time exploring the grove. On my entrance a whole flock of turkeys rose just in front of me, lit in some live oaks at the edge of the swamp, and I was lucky enough to knock over two of them with my rifle.

The ground, except for little circles, which had been cultivated immediately about the trees, was waist high with a luxuriant growth of weeds, which were reported to be full of rattlers. The surrounding swamp I knew to be full of moccasins, and the prospect was creepy. There were a few cabbage palms and live oaks scattered through the grove, and about the edge of the clearing was an almost impenetrable jungle of live oaks, underbrush, vines, etc., which gradually merged into the more open cypress swamp

beyond. Even here the going was not any too easy; the cypress trees were very tall and I had an attack of cold feet every time I thought of the job I had before me, if by any chance I should happen to be lucky enough to discover that needle in a haystack, an Ivory-bill's nest, in the top of one of those trees.

We camped here until March 1st, sleeping by preference on the piazza, and out of reach of the elements and things that crawl. Game was plenty, fine water in a cistern by the house, and the ever present grapefruit, with which to assuage our thirst.

The only drawback was the sickness of one of Peter's oxen, which came very near dying, poisoned apparently by something it had eaten; and the loss of which might, we were afraid, seriously handicap our expedition. It seems there is something that grows hereabouts, which if eaten by the cattle is apt to cause them to sicken and die, and which invariably seems to kill the calves. The cattle men have, on this account, not yet invaded this country.

Pigs, too, find it unhealthy, as the bear and panther are apt to make away with them; and a "cracker" has little use for a region that is neither healthy for cattle nor pigs.

The country is too difficult of access for the average sportsman, so that with the exception of a few Seminoles and an occasional alligator hunter or a few "crackers," who are "hiding out," the region is practically uninhabited, and one of the finest natural game preserves I have ever visited.

Deer, turkey and quail abound. Signs of bear were all about us, and some of them big ones too; their tracks where they lumbered through the swamps and the marks where they had sharpened their claws on the cabbage palms, not infrequently helping themselves to the very edible buds thereof. Peter, late one afternoon, found a nest where an old she bear had very recently had her cubs in some brakes on a cabbage hammock in the swamp, about half a mile from camp.

On the 20th we hunted unsuccessfully all day for signs of Ivory-bills, but it was not until the afternoon of the 21st, while Peter and I were off hunting in another part of the swamp, that Tom, who was on the watch in the grove, was lucky enough to discover a female Ivory-bill, which he followed for four or five hours. There was considerable excitement in camp that night, when we all turned up for supper.

The next day, immediately after breakfast, the bird again appeared in the grove and from 8.20 till 8.40 A. M. clung to the side of a cabbage palm about fifteen feet up, and only about fifty feet from where Tom and I were hiding. She simply clung there uttering her call note, often accompanied by an upward and forward movement of her head, and sometimes by a sudden slight movement of her wings.

The note was entirely different from anything I had ever heard, and reminded me of one of those children's toys that one squeezes, or better still a child's tin trumpet, for the note had rather a metallic ring. It was uttered at intervals, averaging about one second apart, though sometimes longer; once, twice, thrice or more in succession. Later in the day when the bird was hitching up the side of a tree, I counted one hundred and seventy-four calls in four minutes.

Audubon says that the note resembles "the false high note of a clarinet," while Wilson describes it thus: "His common note, repeated every three or four seconds, very much resembles the tone of a trumpet or the high note of a clarinet, and can plainly be distinguished at a distance of half a mile, seeming to be immediately at hand; though perhaps more than a hundred yards off. This it utters while mounting along the trunk or digging into it." A good description of the note, and its ventriloquial peculiarities.

At 8.40 A. M. the bird flew north, down into the swamp. Tom followed her through the jungle, while I kept watch in the grove, either for her return or the possible advent of her mate. She fed in the swamp quietly until 9.20, when she again started calling, and kept it up until 9.50 A. M., when she flew off north, further into the swamp, where we lost her. At 11.05 A. M. the bird again appeared at the edge of the jungle, and kept up her calling until 2 P. M., when we went back to camp for lunch. At 3. P. M. we returned, this time accompanied by Peter, and though the three of us spent the rest of the day beating about the swamp, we were unable to find any trace of the bird.

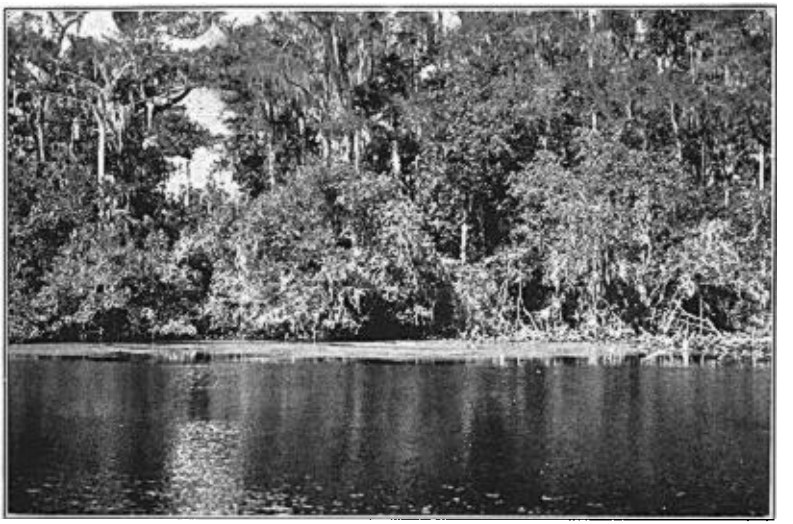
From now on there was always one of us on the watch in the grove for the Ivory-bill; while the other two spent their time cruising the adjoining country. On February 23, at 5.50 A. M. Tom heard a bird call three times from the cypress swamp south-

east of the grove, and a few notes at a time for the next thirty minutes. He did not get sight of the bird, and from then until the morning of March 1st, neither of us saw or heard her again. The male, if there was one, was never seen, though they should have been breeding at this time. We waded through miles of swamp, crawled through miles of jungle, dodging snakes, and devoured by red bugs, our necks stiff from searching the tree tops for possible nests. Pileateds were in abundance, and we found several of their nests, but no Ivory-bills.

The grove itself and its immediate surroundings, were fairly alive with bird life; Mockingbirds, Redbirds, Catbirds, Florida Yellow-throats, Great Crested Flycatchers, and noisiest of them all some Vireos, none of which I collected, but which I suppose were the Key West Vireos. Turkey Buzzards were always soaring somewhere overhead. Florida Red-shouldered Hawks were forever screaming, and even in broad daylight, the hooting of Florida Barred Owls could often be heard. Occasionally a beautiful Swallow-tailed Kite could be seen overhead in swift and graceful flight; and that most characteristic of Florida woodpeckers, the Red-bellied, was always somewhere in hearing. Florida Grackles were wading about the mud in the swamp between the hammock and bungalow, and the croak of White Ibis could be heard deeper in the swamp. Brown-headed Nuthatches and chickadees were in the pine woods about the bungalow, while Tufted Titmice could often be heard in a willow thicket down by the edge of the swamp, and there were colonies of Boat-tailed Grackles in some of the many sloughs.

On February 23 we saw our first Robins, a whole flock of them; and I shot a male Red-headed Woodpecker, which seems to be a rather uncommon bird in this vicinity. Of quail there were many bunches.

On the morning of March 1, after we had become thoroughly disgusted and the sick ox seemed well enough to be led, we broke camp for a pine island five or six miles further south. Just before leaving Tom and I went over to the grove for a last look for the Ivory-bill and incidentally for a few grapefruit. We were picking the fruit, and had our bag almost full when we heard several very loud woodpecker calls, closely resembling the "pump handle" note of the Flicker in the breeding season, and that lone widow



1. PETER HOGAN AND THE 'SCHOONER.'
2. DEEP LAKE, FLORIDA.

"pecker bird" as Tom called her, flew out from the swamp and onto the side of a cabbage palm, only about sixty feet away from me. She joined her mate, if mate he be, in my collection. On dissection her ovaries showed no sign of the breeding season.

We traveled about five miles across a very uninteresting country of scattered "pine islands," "cypress heads," "strands," and broad savannahs, until we came to a rocky "pine island," where we found a poor camping site on a "burn," near a depression in which we scraped a hole for some vile water. We camped here because it was centrally located in a country over which we wished to hunt.

The next day Peter and I, leaving Tom at camp, tramped to Deep Lake about six miles, through more "pine islands" and "cypress strands," across prairies which were still pretty wet and on which we saw a few Killdeer. At Deep Lake there is a hammock with a fine grove of several hundred acres owned by a company, to the superintendent of which Mr. Walter G. Langford of Fort Myers had very kindly given me letters, and in whose care also I had had my mail sent.

Here, while walking through the grove to the superintendent's bungalow, we saw several flocks of turkeys scurrying away across the aisles among the grapefruit trees, and counted over forty hens and one gobbler. These birds, which are here protected, become very tame and can be seen at almost any time from the piazza of the house running about and feeding among the trees of the grove, and the superintendent showed me one old cypress stub just back of the cook's camp where a little earlier in the season about seventy-five turkeys roosted nightly.

Deep Lake is a beautiful little sheet of water entirely surrounded by huge cypress draped with hanging moss. Several alligators were sunning themselves upon the surface. Snake-birds were flying rapidly overhead or perching with the Turkey Buzzards who sat indolently on some of the overhanging boughs, while numbers of Black Buzzards were soaring high above. Florida Gallinules were running or swimming about the edge of the lake, several Swallow-tailed Kites were flying about the nearby grove, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers seemed everywhere, and Florida Crows and Fish Crows were calling from a neighboring stub.

March 4th all hands were up early, preparing to start north for

Van Agnew's, when to our disgust we discovered that the oxen were missing. This was not an at all uncommon event, and while the men were off hunting them up, Charlie, the Deep Lake colored hunter-cook, wandered into camp with a letter for me, and a yarn to the effect that the teamster at Deep Lake had yesterday seen three Ivory-bills, just south of the grove. While I put no faith in the story, for no one hereabouts seems to know that there are two large species of woodpecker, I thought it best to change my plans, and as soon as the oxen were driven in, traveled south to Deep Lake, where we camped on a hammock just north of the grove. Here we stayed for a week, hunting the region as thoroughly as possible for signs of Ivory-bills, but without success.

On the 7th, I went to Everglade, some fifteen miles south, over a new railroad they were constructing from Everglade to Deep Lake in order to be able to market the thousands of cases of fruit which had heretofore been allowed to rot on the ground. The railroad had already been constructed to within half a mile of the grove and Mr. John M. Roche, the principal owner, very kindly took me over the line on his "private car," a small flat car with a settee tied onto it. The rails were laid on ties of almost any kind of wood, laid flat upon the surface of the prairie, with long trestles over the numerous bog holes, and bridges over the creeks. As we traveled south from Deep Lake the cypress swamps rapidly dwindled both in number and in the size of trees, and gave place gradually to the mangroves, both black and red. The swamp immediately about Deep Lake seeming to mark the southerly boundary of the large cypress.

The southern terminus of the railroad was on the north shore of Allen's Creek, about three quarters of a mile above Everglade, where besides a few scattered houses, there is a postoffice, store and a little hotel, all run by Mr. G. W. Storter.

On March 8th, as we had found no signs of Ivory-bills and as the sick ox seemed considerably better, we yoked up the cattle and as the water had dried up considerably, were able to make the entire twelve miles to Van Agnew's in one day. Nothing of particular interest happened on the road except that I slew a large moccasin, the second largest I have ever seen. He was five feet six inches long, about three and one half inches in diameter, and contained a

recently swallowed snake three feet long and about two inches in diameter, and another partially digested, eighteen inches long, and about one and a quarter inches in diameter.

We stayed at Van Agnew's until the 10th, replenishing our water and grapefruit supplies, hunting turkeys etc., and, of course, always on the outlook for a glimpse of an Ivory-bill.

On March 10th we moved north to our first camping ground in the Big Cypress where we stayed for two days, hunting turkey hens of which we had hitherto secured but few good specimens. We had killed only gobblers at first thinking that we could get the hens at any time, but as the hens were now taking to the woods for their nesting season good specimens had not been so easy to secure.

The next day, while Tom was again hunting hens, Peter and I explored the nearby strand of the big swamp in a last hunt for the elusive Ivory-bill but without success. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were breeding and in the woods only a little way from camp a Pileated Woodpecker was sitting on a nest, about seventy-five feet up in the top of a tall cypress. The nest was evidently very shallow, for the bird, a male, invariably sat with his head out of the window apparently examining the surroundings. One Florida Red-shouldered Hawk's nest that we investigated, contained a day old chick and one pipped egg.

On Friday the 13th of March, we broke camp, and after crossing the main strand of the swamp, in which the waters had now subsided considerably, said goodby to the Big Cypress and its many attractions.

In my early youth I had had a geography in which was a picture, supposedly of the Big Cypress Swamp, with an Indian magnificently gotten up in war paint, feathers, etc., just stepping into a birch bark canoe from a wooded bank. That picture, which at the time made a great impression on me, might have been fairly accurate except for the fact that the Seminoles neither wear war paint nor feathers, do not build birch bark canoes, and there are no wooded banks in the Big Cypress. The few Indians that we saw were much better dressed than I. Their canoes are long, very graceful dugouts, made from cypress logs.

The region known as the Big Cypress covers a large area, extending in a generally northeasterly direction from near the gulf coast to a point a few miles southeast of Immokalee, and is very different

from those saw-grass areas, known as Everglades, which cover the greater part of southern Florida, and with which it is often confused by northerners. The Big Cypress consists of a series of swamps, the "main strand" with outreaching arms or "strands", and "cypress heads," interspersed with broad savannahs and prairies, with occasional sawgrass sloughs. All of these are under water for several months in the year; and are dotted here and there with small areas, elevated a few feet above the reach of the ordinary floods, known as hammocks, which are covered with a growth of pine, cabbage palm, live oaks, saw palmetto, etc., and to which, in time of flood, the game of the region resorts.

Our trip, so far as Ivory-bills were concerned, had been pretty discouraging. We had secured one specimen, to be sure, but had found no nest, and had learned but little of the bird.

I do not know any better description of the bird's habits than that given by Robert Ridgway in 'The Osprey' for November, 1898, in which he says, "As a result of my three trips to southern Florida, I feel sure that the Ivory-billed Woodpecker is not only a rare, but very local bird in that part of the State, and that it only occurs in large cypress swamps or their immediate vicinity, its true home being within the cypress, and its feeding grounds the cabbage palmetto and live oak hammocks just outside."

"Although a far more powerful bird, the Ivory-billed looks no larger at a distance than the Pileated Woodpecker, but its color, its actions (particularly its manner of flight), and its notes are so totally different that once seen it need never be mistaken for that species, or vice versa. The Pileated Woodpecker is a noisy, active bird, always in evidence from its loud yelping or cackling notes or its restless movements. The Ivory-bill, on the other hand, is comparatively quiet and secluded, and its notes would not attract attention except from one keenly alert for new sounds, being notable for their nasal tone and perfect monotony rather than any other quality." Mr. Ridgway goes on to say that the notes "resemble nothing else so much as the toot of a child's penny trumpet, as described by Wilson, or a false high note on a clarionet as Audubon describes it, repeated three or more times (like pait, pait, pait), with absolute monotony; but instead of being audible for a distance of half a mile as Audubon states, I am sure that those heard by me would have been inaudible beyond half that distance."