

a good glass, they looked exactly like ordinary young Chipping Sparrows.

Junco remained in the same vicinity during all of June, being seen on several dates, as also being heard to sing freely; he was also seen July 14. Whenever seen he was invariably accompanied by several Chippers, probably the two adults and the family of young. In August I sought him vainly. Repeated search failed to reveal him, and at last I gave up the quest.

The gist of the story is this: *Junco hyemalis* haunted one field in this town from late in May until the middle of July; during part of this time he assisted in feeding a brood of young Chipping Sparrows. Whether he was the real father or only the godfather of these young Sparrows is an interesting question which, I deeply regret to say, I cannot answer.—E. F. HOLDEN, *Melrose, Mass.*

**Distribution of the Species of *Peucaea* in Cooke County, Texas.**—The eastern third of the county is covered with timber, principally post oak and black jack on the upland, with hickory, ash, and elm on the streams. The soil is sandy. In this timber belt is found *Peucaea æstivalis bachmani*. I have never seen this bird in this county in winter.

The central part of the county embraces the Grand Prairie, which is undulating and slopes gently to the southeast, the underlying chalky limestone producing a rich, stiff, almost black soil, and forming an escarpment to the north and west. In this prairie only have I found *Peucaea cassini*. It is only seen during the breeding season, and it is then of irregular occurrence.

Under the scarp of the above-described limestone is a sandy soil grown with post oak and black jack, but in a dwarfed condition, while there is a growth of bramble (chaparral) not seen in the eastern portion of the county. In this part of Cooke County alone have I seen *Peucaea ruficeps eremæca*. I have seen the young on the wing on May 31, and have also seen one pair on December 27.

All three have distinctive songs, but only *cassini* sings on the wing, and it does not always do so. I once shot one singing in the crack of a worm fence.—GEO. H. RAGSDALE, *Gainesville, Texas.*

***Thryothorus ludovicianus* in Massachusetts.**—On September 27, 1891, I shot in my garden in Cambridge, Mass., a Carolina Wren. The bird was an adult male and was in fine condition. He had been in the neighborhood for nearly a week and possibly longer, and was frequently to be heard calling or singing. The spot seemed to be to his taste, for my own and the adjoining gardens afford an abundance of shade trees and shrubbery, while, separated only by a high board fence, is an extensive pile of firewood and odds and ends of lumber the attractions of which he seems to have been the first to discover.

As far as I am aware this species has been captured in New England, beyond the limits of the Carolinian fauna, but three times before: at

Brookline (Nov. 4, 1883) and Lynn, Mass. (July 6, 1878), and at Rye Beach, N. H. (Aug. 7, 1880). In the present instance the habits of the species, as well as the absence of violent storms for some time previous, preclude all idea of the bird's having been swept away from his home and dropped here by some cyclonic gale. In all probability it was simply a case of that restless spirit of wandering that takes possession of most 'non-migratory' species in the autumn, and which is very likely the surviving remnant of a former habit of migration in such species.—C. F. BATCHELDER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**Notes from Springfield, Massachusetts.**—November 14, 1891, I captured on the Connecticut River near Springfield an adult male *Aythya collaris*. Occasionally in autumn a small flock of this species will locate their feeding grounds in this vicinity and remain a month or so, but as far as my experience goes they have heretofore been young birds.

During the first half of November, the most common Duck about here was *Dafila acuta*; this was something quite unusual. One day I was one of a party that captured nine specimens, and we could easily have taken more if we had cared to do so. There were a few *Anas obscura* in company with the *Dafila acuta*, instead of the reverse as is usually the case if any of the latter kind are in this locality.

From the 28th day of last August until about the 20th day of September a water bird, which I suppose to have been a Clapper Rail, located itself and remained among the wild oats that grow on the muddy banks of the Connecticut River upon the shore directly opposite the city of Springfield. During calm days the call of the bird, which very much resembles that of the common Guineahen, could be distinctly heard from this side of the river, a distance of more than a quarter of a mile. All my attempts at capture failed, although I approached within a few feet of the bird. I know of but one Clapper Rail having been taken in this vicinity.

While shooting from a blind this fall, a Wood Duck stopped and fluttered over the decoys, and while in that position, like a flash, a Sharpshinned Hawk flew and fastened itself upon the back of the Duck, when both were shot. I relate this incident to show the ferocity and boldness of this little Hawk.

A pair of Mockingbirds, whose presence in West Springfield I have heretofore recorded, passed this their fourth successive season in the same locality in that town.—ROBERT O. MORRIS, *Springfield, Mass.*

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

AUGUST VON PELZELN, an Honorary Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at Oberdöbling, near Vienna, on the 2d of September, 1891, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. Owing to failing health