

and as fast as they were flushed would shortly return. I could have shot them every day for a week had I cared to. At this small open piece of ground, the Rusty and Crow Blackbirds had collected, but I did not see them kill many Snipe the first day or two, but the third and fourth days they just went for them. I should say that I saw them actually kill ten or twelve Snipe on the ground where the snow had melted, but there were thirty or forty dead ones that I saw in other places. The Rusty Blackbirds were the principle aggressors, and it was astonishing to see how quickly they could attack and lay out a Snipe or Robin. Both species were killed while on the ground and the Blackbirds would only eat the head, or as near as I could see, the brain, while the body was left untouched.

“Up around my house they attacked the Robins and I have no idea how many they did kill, but you could see them lying around everywhere on the snow, and it was the same way all up and down the bay shore. I presume they killed other species of birds but I did not notice any. I cannot account for this sudden change in the Blackbirds’ habits except from lack of any other kind of food and they made the best of what was at hand.”

If any of the other readers of ‘The Auk’ have heard of any rapacious traits in the character of our Blackbirds, I hope they will give us the benefit of their experience.—RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

**Notes on the Breeding of the American Crossbill in Hamilton County, New York.**—I have spent much of my time, during the last three summers, at Camp Killoquah, Forked Lake, Hamilton Co., New York, and have been much interested in watching the habits of some Crossbills that spend most of their time about the camp.

There are several camps on this preserve, which belong to the Hamilton Park Club, but Killoquah seems to be the only one that the Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra minor*) consider thoroughly congenial, and here they replace most acceptably their distant connections, the English Sparrows.

In both 1892 and 1893 I had arrived at Camp too late even to pretend to hunt for their nests, but last year (1894) as soon as I had arrived there, in the last week in July, I immediately inquired for my friends, and was much disgusted to learn that they had built a nest, in under the roof of the tank that supplies the Camp with water, and that on June 5 this nest had been torn down, before any eggs had been laid, as it was clogging the automatic dial, which registers the amount of water in the tank, and as the birds were fouling the water.

Mr. W. Harrison Eisenbrey, the owner of the Camp, as well as the guides who knew the birds well, were present when the nest was torn down, and showed me exactly where it had been placed inside the roof, and on a shelf just above the indicator. The nest, too, was shown me, in a very dilapidated condition; but it was sufficiently well preserved to tell just how it must have looked.

It had been built with a few twigs as a foundation, and a thick layer of bark, stripped from the cedars and hemlocks which grow about there in profusion, and the whole structure, which was very bulky, was topped off and thoroughly lined with plant down. It looked not unlike a large edition of a Phæbe's or Wood Pewee's nest, and was one of the best built and most comfortable nests I ever saw.

The birds, of which there were several pairs, were still about Camp, but no other nests could be found. They were very tame, and extremely fond of salt, and could often be found paddling about in the drippings under the cold storage house, or perched on a yellow birch beside it. Often they might be seen walking sedately about on the banks around the Camp, and the males with their beautiful, clear and almost metallic notes spent much of their time singing from the tops of some of the neighboring pines, a song that once heard can never be forgotten.

Mr. Geo. W. Smith, one of the guides at Camp, informs me that during the latter part of May, 1890, as he and another guide were going through some low spruce brush near Brandreth Lake, Hamilton County, they found a Crossbill's nest placed at the height of about five feet against the stem of a low spruce tree. The nest contained four or five young, which immediately fluttered off in different directions upon his putting his hand into it. This nest he tells me was similar in construction to the one above cited, except that it was not quite so bulky.—F. H. KENNARD, *Brookline, Mass.*

**Peculiar Nest of a Chipping Sparrow.**—Regarding the use of unusual materials in the construction of nests, the following note may be of interest. A nest of *Spizella socialis* was found in Boylston, Mass., June 9, 1890, built entirely of hog's bristles. It was very white and neatly made but being placed in the underpinning of a cider mill in an exposed place, where it was quickly discovered by children, it was abandoned before any eggs were laid.—HELEN A. BALL, *Worcester, Mass.*

**Harris's Sparrow in British Columbia.**—Mr. Brewster states in the last number of 'The Auk' that the second occurrence of Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia harrisi*) in British Columbia is reported by Mr. Brooks from Chilliwack, B. C. The second occurrence of Harris's Sparrow is reported by me in the January number of 'The Auk' taken by Mr. W. B. Anderson at Comox, B. C., on the 20th of November, 1894. (See Auk, January, p. 76, 1895.) On the first of December I received two more specimens of this bird from the same careful observer who reported having seen others. It is very likely Harris's Sparrow is going to make a home in British Columbia. I am certain Mr. Brewster had not seen my notice when he made the statement but this correction is due Mr. Anderson.—J. FANNIN, *Victoria, B. C.*

**The Lark Bunting in South Carolina.**—One afternoon in the early part of April I noticed a very plump looking Sparrow while I was walk-