

Note on the Killdeer in Maine.— A detail which is perhaps worth preserving of the great flight of Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) along the coast of Maine in 1888 has never found its way into print. This relates to the duration of the stay of the birds near Portland. A note by myself¹ made the limit December 4. Dr. Arthur P. Chadbourne's article,² dealing with the entire subject of the flight along the Atlantic coast, advanced the date to December 10 on evidence obtained from lighthouse keepers. About the middle of the following January, after my note had gone to press, G. E. Staples, surfman No. 2 of the Cape Elizabeth life-saving crew, reported to me that the plover were seen in twos and threes on the Cape up to December 25, 1888, and that his half-brother, W. D. Dresser, shot three of them on that day. Staples said that about twenty birds were noted after December 4, if all which he saw were to be considered as seen but once. It may be added that Hon. John M. Kaler, of Scarborough, told me at the same time that the Killdeer visited Prout's Neck in that town during the height of the flight.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine.*

The Passenger Pigeon in Missouri Fifty Years Ago.³— In the issue of 'The Youth's Companion' of February 9, 1911, under the head of Nature and Science, I notice an article on the Passenger Pigeon. You say the latest record of a great flock noted by Mr. Wright was in the Mississippi Valley in 1844. I have seen great flocks of pigeons at a much later date in Missouri.

I was born near Pisgah, in Cooper County, Missouri in 1852. In the latter part of the fifties and the early sixties I saw flocks that, as you say, almost darkened the sky. I shall try to tell you how they looked to me and when I saw them, asking you to make due allowance for a boy's method of fixing dates.

On the Moniteau, a creek that runs through Moniteau and Cooper counties, about four miles from Pisgah, is a stretch of land known to this day as "The Pigeon Roost," and there they came by millions. I have watched them for hours.

As I remember, they would start out early in the morning for their feeding grounds and in the afternoon, about four o'clock, they would begin returning to this roost. From that time until it was too dark to see, I have watched that unbroken line stretched against the sky as far as the eye could reach. Not in straight lines they flew; I remember thinking it looked like some mighty river winding its way through the air. In the roosting place the trees were broken in pieces by them and thousands would be left crippled or killed — for the foxes and other wild animals to feed upon.

¹ Auk, VI, p. 69.

² Auk, VI, p. 256.

³ This and the following note on the Passenger Pigeon were kindly transmitted by the editors of 'The Youth's Companion.'

I remember once in the fall of the year, perhaps November, it was a very windy day, they began alighting within fifty yards of our house in a grove of sumac bushes which were completely broken to the ground by them. I am sure it is no exaggeration to say that five acres of ground were covered by them. My uncle went out with his old single barrelled shot gun and brought in a sack full. He gave us a common sized water bucket full.

In the sixties the method of fattening cattle for the market was to cut the corn in the fall and shock it. These shocks were afterward hauled out and scattered on the ground for the beef steers. As a matter of course a great deal of shelled corn was left on the ground. I have seen those lots literally covered with pigeons. My brother, three years older than myself, was allowed to handle a gun but I was n't old enough, so all I might do was watch him and pick up the pigeons. He came in one day and measured what he had gotten at five shots. It was one of those large old time dish pans and it was even full. I thought if I had had the gun I should have killed a barrel of them. As a matter of fact, though, they were shy and a little difficult to shoot, the least noise or movement frightening them to instant flight.

This was, I am sure, as late as 1862, for my father was in the army and the only way we could keep a gun was to hide it in a hollow tree when not in use, for if the "Federal" did n't get it the "Rebels" would if kept in the house.

I left Cooper County in the spring of '65. Whether pigeons were seen here after that I do not know.

We came to this (Cass) County, since then I have seen a few small flocks and killed two or three pigeons.

The last I ever saw was here on the farm where I now live. There must have been ten or twelve of them sitting on an old dead tree, their favorite resting place, I had my gun and I thought I would surely have pigeon for dinner, but just as I was ready to shoot away they went, and little did I think, as I watched them disappear, they were the last I should ever see of a species of bird that was once numbered by the millions. This I think was in 1882 but it may have been a little earlier.

They are certainly gone, and who can explain it? Surely the hunters are not responsible for it in this instance and in so short a time.

With them have gone the Prairie Chicken, the Wild Goose and the Pheasant [Ruffed Grouse].

From 1860 to 1870 they were to be found in this State in great numbers. Now a Prairie Chicken is rarely seen, and only once in a very great while one may hear the once familiar "honk! honk!" of the Wild Goose, but he flies so high one scarcely can see him. I have not seen a native pheasant for twenty-five years.

I have watched, with much interest, the efforts of our legislatures to stock our country with new varieties of game, and have wondered if some-

thing, instead, might be done with reasonable success, to restock with some of the old friends so numerous here in the early days.

Such a movement would have the hearty coöperation of every reputable citizen of this portion of the country, as does every effort on the part of the Government to protect our remaining game.—THOS. J. GEORGE, *Gunn City, Mo.*

Passenger Pigeons in Eastern Iowa, in 1856-1860.—My father, Gustavus Allbee, moved with his family from Rockingham, Vermont, to Davenport, Iowa, reaching the latter place December 6, 1855. We lived in Davenport during the winter, moved to a farm 14 miles from there in March, 1856, and to another farm near by, upon which I now reside, in March, 1857; and although but a mere boy at the time, I very distinctly remember flocks of these pigeons passing both homes, that were miles in length and streamed over, reaching further than the eye could reach in either direction. Equally distinctly I recall sitting in a clump of bushes most of an afternoon with my uncle as he shot his bag full of them; also of how I enjoyed eating them afterwards.

As they passed over this home they were here as late as 1857, and I feel quite positive they appeared for two or three seasons after we came here, or up to 1859 or 1860, but I may be mistaken as to this. But that uncle shot the pigeons on this place and that I ate them here, and that mile after mile of them passed over me as I worked in the fields on this farm is beyond any doubt whatever. My uncle sometimes sang, "If I could shoot my rifle clear at pigeons in the skies, I'd bid farewell to pork and beans and live on pigeon pies."—E. A. ALBEE, *Montpelier, Iowa.*

Old Notes on the Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*).—In an old note book formerly belonging to Mr. Luther Adams of Townsend, Massachusetts, and loaned me by one of his descendants, I have copied verbatim some interesting data contained therein relating to the Passenger Pigeon. Mr. Adams, who was a farmer and horticulturist, availed himself of the opportunity afforded him by netting these birds, and the old nets which he used, with many feathers clinging to them, are still on the premises. As a record of what took place in the movements of these birds from August 26, 1847, to September 11, 1848, in this particular locality, it is particularly interesting, as it gives the data for the spring and summer months of 1848. Townsend, is 48 miles from Boston, the country is springy and hilly, with hard woods (many chestnuts) and pine. The pigeon stand was located on a high knoll, which is now covered with pine trees a quarter of a century old. The number of pigeons taken in 1847 was 5,028; in 1848, 1,926 were taken.