

GENERAL NOTES.

An Early Colorado Record of the White-tailed Ptarmigan.— There is an exceedingly interesting, but almost unknown book, dealing in part with pioneer times in Colorado entitled *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border*. It was written by Capt. R. B. Marcy, who later rose to the rank of General in the U. S. Army; his daughter married General Geo. B. McClellan, and his grandson was sometime mayor of New York.

Capt. Marcy had in him the making of a splendid naturalist, but duties and training turned his activities into other channels. This particular book of his, contains many references to birds, and should be read by every one interested in western bird life. During the course of his military duties, Capt. Marcy made a trip from Fort Bridger, Utah, to Fort Montgomery, New Mexico, crossing the Continental Divide over Cochetopa Pass, doing so in the dead of winter (January, 1858); he and his men suffered almost unbelievable hardships from the arctic cold, and from hunger, yet they succeeded in reaching their goal. On page 234 of the above cited book, Capt. Marcy says, "One day we were . . . near the summit of the mountains . . . my guide pointing to a snow bank, said there were some birds he had never but once before seen . . . we . . . killed two of them. They were white as the snow itself . . . two specimens which were sent to Professor Baird of the Smithsonian Institute showed them to be *Sagopus leucurus* [spelling as in original], or white-tail ptarmigan. This beautiful bird was before supposed to be confined to that part of the Rocky Mountain Chain north of latitude 54° north. The specimens sent to Professor Baird are said by him to be the first indication of their occurrence within the limits of our possessions, and it extends the supposed range about a thousand miles to the south."— W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*

Wild Geese at Moose Factory.— In connection with his work with the wild geese at Kingsville, Ontario, Mr. Jack T. Miner has put tags on a number of Canada Geese, some of which have been returned to him, mainly from the north country, and he has had some interesting letters from Hudson Bay men, from one of which, from Mr. Owen Griffith, Moose Factory, the following quotation is taken.

"I am now stationed here at Moose for the winter and shall be going to Albany in the spring. This is a post on the opposite side of James Bay to Fort George, but a very good place for game, especially those birds we call "Wavies"; it is a strange thing that on the West Coast of James Bay, we get almost nothing but "White Wavies" with an occasional blue one in the flock, while on the East Coast it is just the opposite with almost nothing but Blue (grey) with a few white ones in the flock. While a short distance farther north (on the East Coast) at Whale River the

White reappear again in large numbers, so that they evidently cross the Bay on their annual migrations.

"There are lots of geese both on the East and West sides of the Bay, but I believe that more pass on the East (Fort George side) than the other as the Coast is rocky with lots of islands where they can breed. We have some Islands out in the Bay called the "Tioms" which are great breeding places and every summer the Indians make quite a haul of young and moulting geese there.

"The Indians who killed those tagged geese said that they seemed to be tamer than the others and came out of large flocks and down to the decoys when the rest of the band would not turn.

"About three miles north of Fort George Post there is a big Bay (salt water) with lots of mud and grass at low tide and in the spring almost every flock of waxies and some geese feed in this Bay on their way North; the Indians never hunt them on their arrival in this Bay but gather on a long hill on the other side and then shoot at the birds as they are going off; they generally get up in small flocks and as they have to rise considerably to clear the hill, they can be seen getting up sometime before they get to the hill, and then everyone runs along a path and tries to get right under where the flock is going to pass; of course if three or four flocks get up at the same time, there is shooting on different parts of the hill and the hunters are apt to spoil one another. The Indians say that once these birds leave this Bay that they do not feed again till they get far North (Hudson Straits or Baffin Land) in fact a Waxies' nest is a great rarity. Strange to say they do not feed in this Bay in the fall.

"We have no wild rice in the Bay and the birds seem to feed mostly on grass in the salt water and in the fall they go out to the Islands to feed on berries; they fly out to the Islands in the mornings and back into the small Bays for the nights." — W. E. SAUNDERS, *London, Ont.*

Wood Duck Removing Young from the Nest.—How does the old Wood Duck get her little ones into the water from the nest in a hollow tree or stub, forty or fifty feet from the ground and which is, may be, two or three hundred feet from the water? Mr. Burroughs says, "That the feat of getting down from the tree top cradle had been safely affected probably by the young clambering up on the inside walls of the cavity and tumbling out into the air and then coming down gently like huge snowflakes. The notion that the mother duck takes the young one by one in her beak and carries them to the creek is doubtless erroneous. But this is precisely how she gets them into the water.

Early in July, 1898, while tented on the bank of the Michigamme River, Township 43 — North Range 32 west section one, Iron County, Mich., I had the good fortune to see it done. The nest was in a hollow pine that stood directly back of the tent and about two hundred feet from the water, and the hole where the old duck went in, was fifty or sixty feet from the ground. After seeing the old duck fly by the tent, to and from her feeding