

Plectrophenax hyperboreus. MCKAY'S SNOW BUNTING.— Next to the Pribilof Sandpiper this is the most abundant bird of the level lands. It was most common along the shingle beaches where it nested in old hollow drift logs. One nest was found in an old hollow spruce which had been excavated by some woodpecker on the mainland when the tree was standing. A few birds were found to the tops of the highest mountains. Flying young and fresh eggs were found, indicating that two broods are reared. No other Snow Bunting was obtained and it is not believed that any other resides on the reservation in summer.

Calcarius lapponicus alascensis. ALASKA LONGSPUR.— The Longspur breeds abundantly on the lower parts of the islands. One nest was found loosely constructed of sedges and lined with a few feathers. It contained six eggs. On June 12 an adult male came aboard the ship while we were in the ice and stayed all day. It seemed very fond of cracked hominy.

Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus. WESTERN SAVANNAH SPARROW.— One was flushed on Hall Island on July 13 but was not secured. Another spent the day aboard the ship while we were in the ice south of St. Matthew June 10. If it breeds at all it is very rare.

Budytes flavus alascensis. ALASKA YELLOW WAGTAIL.— A pair, (apparently from a nest), was found on Hall Island July 13. They were much disturbed at my presence and flew back and forth over my head for half an hour before descending into gun range. It doubtless breeds but rarely.

NESTING OF THE CAPE MAY WARBLER AT LAKE EDWARD, QUEBEC.

H. F. MERRIAM.

LAKE EDWARD lies in the Laurentian hills one hundred miles north of the city of Quebec. Since the great forest fire some twelve years ago a growth of birch, alder and briars has sprung up and a comparatively small part of the country is still covered with the original spruce and balsam. In these restricted areas are to be found in abundance many of those Warblers which find their summer homes in coniferous woods. The islands in the lake are within this class, being wooded for the most part with spruce and balsam of moderate size interspersed with large white and yellow

birches. It was on one of these islands that the Cape May Warbler was found nesting.

The nesting site was discovered on June 7, 1916, when the female was seen carrying material to the thick top of a spruce about forty feet from the ground. This was in a rather open part of the woods perhaps fifty feet from the shore of the lake. Identification was for a time uncertain. But observations on six different occasions between June 7th and 18th of from one to two hours duration each time, were sufficient to remove all doubts. During this time the female was seen many times on the ground or in the low growth at a distance of ten feet or less, and the male with his characteristic markings was seen clearly in bushes or low trees at least five times within fifteen feet besides many times at greater distances and heights.

The female was not at all timid and apparently gathered most of her nesting material at two places, both within sixty feet of the nest tree. By taking a partly concealed post within a few feet of these places many excellent opportunities for observation were secured. Several times the female flew directly from the nest to the ground or brush passing within a few feet of the observer's head. While searching in the low growth she was absorbed in manner, giving only occasionally a sharp chip. In going to the nest her actions were more rapid and she chipped more frequently, generally alighting ten to twenty feet below the nest and working her way up from limb to limb on the outside of the tree. She was an industrious worker and during the period of nest building was found at work whenever this part of the woods was visited, both morning and afternoon.

The male was not seen to carry any nest material but seemed to be generally in the immediate neighborhood. At times he accompanied the female part way to or from the nest and sometimes remained near her in the low spruces. Once the female was attacked by a Junco and after a chase the Junco actually caught and held her. At this commotion the male Cape May flew down and lit close by but took no active part in the argument. The Junco was apparently victor for after one more flight to her nest the female Cape May was not again seen to trespass on the Junco's territory or do any more nest building that morning. The male

spent most of his time well up in the trees and seemed particularly fond of a large white birch. Among the small branches of this tree he was seen and heard many times. Once when a small hawk flew overhead a rapid chipper seemed to indicate the Cape May note of alarm or warning.

On June 11 the male was seen to chase the female. The next day nest building was apparently complete. An hour's watching on the 13 also failed to show any further nest construction, although the female was frequently heard in the low growth. Once she flew ten feet up in a spruce and gave a peculiar note at the same time lifting her tail. Immediately the male flew down and copulation took place. The whole proceeding resembled very much that of the Chipping Sparrow.

Neither male or female were seen again until June 18 at which date the set was judged to be complete. When the writer had climbed perhaps ten feet up in the nesting tree, the female flew off but soon returned to the nest. This was repeated once more before the nest was reached. The male was heard but not clearly seen.

The nest was placed about six feet from the top of the tree on a short branch nine inches from the trunk and an equal distance from the tip. From the ground it could not be seen even with field glasses. From a few feet below the nest was apparently a green ball of moss. Closer examination, however, showed it to be a neatly cupped nest resting on the branch and short twigs. To these it was not securely tied and was lifted intact from its position without difficulty.

The exterior of the nest was of green Sphagnum moss, interwoven with vine stems, and a very few twigs, bound lightly with plant down, small wads of which appeared here and there over the moss. The body of the nest consisted of fine grass stems. Within this was a lining of white hairs apparently from the rabbit, one small partridge feather and a few fine black rootlets. The nest was bulky but very neatly and fairly compactly put together. At the rim one side was very smoothly finished. This was probably the entrance side toward the tree trunk. It was an unusual and beautiful nest.

Dimensions: outside 4 " wide, $2\frac{1}{4}$ " deep.
inside $1\frac{3}{4}$ " " 1 " "

The eggs, six in number, were a clear white with many spots and blotches of light reddish brown distributed over the surface, confluent at the large end to form a wreath. They were also characterized by a few light lavender marks and a few almost black lines and spots.

Average dimensions .698" \times .50".

The author is aware that the observations here recorded do not appear to harmonize well with the accounts of J. W. Banks and others of the nesting habits of the Cape May Warbler. It seems probable that this pair of birds were not typical in their choice of a nesting site. It is also probable that nest construction varies considerably in different localities as is often the case with other warblers. Notwithstanding these variations it is hoped that the details here given may be of service in the further study of this very interesting warbler.



THE STATUS OF "*LARUS THAYERI*, THAYER'S GULL."

BY JONATHAN DWIGHT, M. D.

Plate XV.

ABOUT two years ago a new Arctic Gull was described as "*Larus thayeri*" on the strength of a few birds obtained in Ellesmere Land (see Brooks, Bull. M. C. Z. LIX, No. 5, Sept. 1915, pp. 373-375). Recently, thanks to the courtesy of Mr. P. A. Taverner, of the Victoria Memorial Museum of the Canadian Geological Survey, I have had opportunity of comparing his fine series of Arctic Gulls with the type and others of *thayeri* loaned me by Mr. O. Bangs of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy. Other specimens in the American Museum of Natural History and in my own collection bring the series examined up to twenty-five and these compared with a much larger series of the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) demonstrate that the supposed new species is nothing more than a