

that time there has been further increase, and the birds formed a great multitude during the late summer and the early autumn of 1923. Even the busiest streets of the city were visited by them at times. On September 10 the writer noted a small flock on the roof of a building at the corner of Congress and Park streets, from which several birds descended to the sidewalk to pick up fragments of food fallen from some person's lunch-basket. I saw others elsewhere in the heart of the city at other times. When I left Portland for the season, on October 10, hundreds of Grackles were still frequenting the suburbs.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine*.

Redpoll (*Acanthis linaria*) in Alabama.—Mr. Arthur H. Howell in his 'Birds of Alabama,' just published by the State Department of Game and Fisheries, gives (on page 223) but two records of the occurrence of the Redpoll within the boundaries of this State. Both of these were made in extreme northern Alabama—Stevenson and Florence—and the validity of the first is questioned by Mr. Howell because September, the date of the reported capture, seems too early for such a boreal species to appear so far south. Therefore the following recent record, which I publish through the courtesy of Mr. Lewis S. Golsan, of Prattville, is of especial interest.

On February 13, 1924, Mr. Golsan was driving in a buggy along the Prattville-Booth road when, about three and a half miles west of Prattville, he saw a Redpoll in a roadside hedge. The bird, described by Mr. Golsan as a "fine male", was in company with three or four Pine Siskins and might have been passed unnoticed but for its bright red cap. Mr. Golsan stopped his horse and inspected the bird at a distance of about fifteen feet, noting plainly the small size, sharply pointed bill, and reddish breast-patch, as well as the red crown-cap. As Mr. Golsan has been a life-long student of birds and is thoroughly familiar with the Purple Finch, the only species that, in this locality, could possibly be confused with the Redpoll, I unhesitatingly vouch for the accuracy of his diagnosis.

That northern birds should appear farther south than usual this year should not occasion surprise when it is remembered that the closing months of the past winter were extremely severe.—ERNEST G. HOLT, *312 Bell Building, Montgomery, Ala.*

Breeding of MacGillivray's Seaside Sparrow in South Carolina.—On the afternoon of May 16, 1924, the writer had the pleasure of discovering the first nest and eggs of MacGillivray's Seaside Sparrow (*Passerherbulus maritimus macgillivrayii*) ever found in South Carolina. The details of this discovery may be of interest.

On May 13, together with Mr. E. B. Chamberlain, I left Charleston for a collecting trip for the Charleston Museum, with which we are both connected. Our destination was about thirty-six miles south of this city, and our route lay over the Charleston-Savannah Highway. About fifteen miles out from Charleston, this highway crosses a wide tract of salt marsh, and the causeway just completed over this waste was the situation that

lead to the finding of the nests three days later. On our way down the country, on the 13th, while crossing this causeway, a bird flew from the marsh, and lit on the embankment that lines the concrete road. We recognized it as a MacGillivray's Sparrow, and as the sight of this bird at this time of year is unusual, we at once stopped, and watched it for several minutes with binoculars, at a distance of about thirty or forty feet. Several others were seen flying about the marshes, and of course we wondered if they could be breeding.

It has been long suspected that this form does breed on the South Carolina coast, but no proof had ever been brought forward. We determined to try to establish the fact that they do nest here, and so on our return from the collecting trip, we decided to put in a day on the marshes. On May 16, we left early in the morning, and went to the scene of our former acquaintance with these birds. The tide was rather high, so we spent several hours in the nearby woods, until two o'clock in the afternoon, when we entered the marsh, and began our search.

The birds were there in numbers, and as each place seemed as likely looking as the next, our search was rather erratic. Watching a certain individual bird, we would mark where it lit, and go cautiously toward the place, flush it fairly close, and then burrow into the tall grass to see what was possible; and very little was to be seen, as the grass is tall, grows in heavy clumps, and possesses needle like points, which pierce cloth with no trouble whatever. A half hour's work of this kind yielded no return, so we left the wide stretches of marsh, and started to examine certain isolated clumps, growing here and there over the mud. Meanwhile the birds were all around us, and singing constantly. The song is very peculiar, consisting of a sort of guttural roll, heard only when the observer is very near the bird, then a short trill, ending with a strange rasping buzz.

We started at the clumps, each taking one and walking slowly through it, parting the grass from right to left, and getting as low down as the needles would allow us. As I was going through a rather small bunch, I suddenly found myself looking down on a nest with three eggs. We examined the nest critically, then retired a short distance, and were soon rewarded by seeing a sparrow fly into the clump, and upon going to the place, flushed it from the nest. We returned to the car, and taking a camera, the nest and location were photographed.

This done we looked for others, and shortly afterward, Chamberlain found a nest with four eggs, and we flushed the bird from it a few minutes later. In the course of the afternoon, three more were found, one with a broken egg, and two fresh nests. All of them were composed of grass, attached to the stems of the marsh grass from four to six inches from the ground, and as a rule, nearer the outside of the clump.

As noted above, it has been supposed that this form bred on our coast, and I quote from A. T. Wayne's 'Birds of South Carolina' as follows:

"I have been unable to find this form breeding on our coast, yet it is possible that it does, since the young in first plumage occurred during the

second week in July, and the adults in worn breeding plumage are to be seen during the third week in July. A distinct northward migration takes place about April 16, and continues until April 27, when all the birds have gone north, and of course to their breeding grounds."

One or two very old nests were also found, presumably last year's, and there can be little doubt that these birds have bred here for years. At any rate the doubt which has been associated with the breeding of this form on the South Carolina coast has been dispelled.

I immediately wrote Mr. Wayne about the finding of the nests, and he made a trip soon after to the same general locality, and succeeded in finding two nests himself.

Chamberlain and I again visited the marsh on May 22, and caught a young bird of this form that could fly with ease, for about twenty-five yards. It seems strange that the nest and fresh eggs should have been discovered only six days previously. We have been unable to find any more eggs, but have noted several young which fly well.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C.*

Melospiza melodia atlantica on the Coast of South Carolina.—In 'The Auk' for January, 1924, pages 147-148, Mr. W. E. Clyde Todd has described a new race of the Song Sparrow from Smith's Island, Virginia. As soon as I had read his description I knew that I had taken near Charleston about 37 years ago several specimens of this bird, but do not possess them now. I therefore made a systematic search from February 12 to March 1, 1924 for this new bird and obtained five typical specimens, these being compared with two birds that my friend Mr. J. H. Riley sent me from the U. S. National Museum collection taken at Smith's Island, Va. This bird *atlantica* is outnumbered in winter by a red Song Sparrow in the proportion of five hundred or more of the latter to one of the former. This is an addition to the fauna of South Carolina.—ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*

The Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga erythromelas*) on the Coast of South Carolina.—Although this species has been taken on the coast of South Carolina on a few former occasions, the dates of which are given below, this record is of interest in that no specimen, heretofore, has been taken on any coast island, or in such close proximity to the ocean.

The writer, together with his wife, and Mr. E. Burnham Chamberlain, were spending a few days on Sullivan's Island, one of the barrier islands of the South Carolina coast about five or six miles north of the city of Charleston. The object of our stay was to collect certain species of shore-birds for the Charleston Museum, with which the writer and Mr. Chamberlain are connected. On the afternoon of May 1, all three of us were walking along the back beach of the island, and had just secured two Least Sandpipers, and had gone over to a nearby unoccupied house.

While there, my wife asked how many records there were for the Scarlet