

The next season I saw several of the birds but found no nests. In March, 1901, in company with Nathan Hargrave of Banning, I made a trip to Toros and Martinez, thirty and thirty-five miles southeast of Palm Springs, and from fifty to one hundred feet below sea level. Here we saw several pairs and found two incomplete nests, and one containing two fresh eggs. All were in mesquite trees from three to eight feet from the ground. The birds were quite numerous and tame around the home of a Moravian missionary living at Martinez, and amused themselves by pulling up young alfalfa and millet that he was trying to raise. A few days later, March 24, at Palm Springs, I found in a desert shrub a nest with two fresh eggs.

In the winter of 1902 the birds were quite common at Palm Springs, six pairs being noted one day. In fact there were "all kinds of towhees" around that winter. One day, in the immediate neighborhood, half a mile from town, I saw the California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis senicula*), spurred towhee (*P. maculatus megalonyx*), Abert towhee (*P. aberti*), and the green-tailed towhee (*Oreospiza chlorura*).

On April 17, 1902, I found a nest in a desert bush containing two infertile eggs and a young bird. Two days later I took a set of three partly incubated eggs from a nest in a pepper tree. April 25 and 30 I found two nests in orange trees containing respectively three and four eggs each, and May 11 and 22, I found in orange trees two nests with three eggs each. The last two nests found were second sets, the birds moving a few yards from the first nests. Three seems the usual number of eggs in a set, four being found only in the one instance. Some of the birds were rather close sitters, while others slipped from the nest at my first appearance. The male birds exhibited some concern, hopping about in a nearby bush or tree and chirping uneasily.

The composition of the nests varied according to location. Those found in the desert bushes, three nests, were some distance from any house and were composed of coarse bark and a few grass stems and lined with fine bark. The other nests were in an orchard not far from a dwelling house and a barn and their composition differed from the other three. The nest found in the pepper tree was made of cottonwood bark, pieces of paper, grevillia leaves, and strips of gunny-sack and old overalls, and was lined with horse hair and fine bark. The nests in the orange trees were quite similar, varying only in detail. One was lined mostly with an old white-wash brush, pulled apart of course. One had much paper, in large pieces, jute, and cotton twine in the walls; while another displayed a fancy colored tomato can label. All were from five to ten feet from the ground.

Palm Springs seems the western limit of their range though they may occasionally stray as far as Whitewater, ten miles further west, where there are a few mesquite trees. But I have never seen one west of Palm Springs.

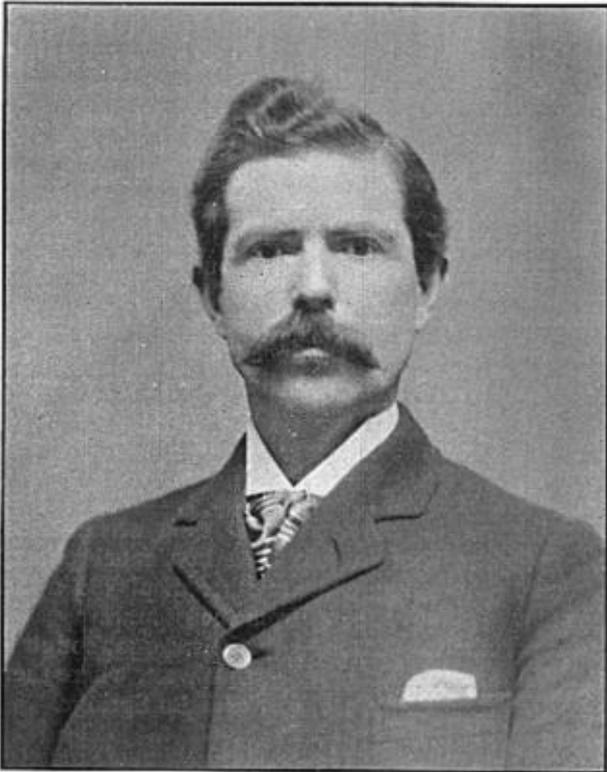
The Author of "Birds of North and Middle America."

DURING 1903, THE CONDOR will publish in each issue the portrait of an eastern ornithologist, that the Cooper Club may become better acquainted, as it were, with those *men*, whose *work* is already so well and deservedly known.

We therefore take pleasure in opening the series with the portrait of Mr. Robert Ridgway, whose work, the "Birds of North and Middle America," besides marking a distinct advance in the progress of systematic ornithology, at once places its author in the lead of contemporary systematic ornithologists. We believe we do

err in stating that when completed this work will be the largest piece of regional systematic zoology ever done by one man.

For over thirty years Mr. Ridgway's ready pen has been active, and he is the author of a long list of papers and books. Space does not permit even a complete enumeration of the longer and most important. As far back as 1869 we find "Notices on Certain Obscurely Known Species of American Birds," and during the few following years many other papers appeared. In 1874 "A History of North American Birds," (Land Birds, three volumes) by Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway was published. Besides the monograph of the Raptores, Mr. Ridgway contributed much of the technical matter. Following this, his "Ornithology" of the Fortieth Parallel Explorations, appeared in 1877; Nomenclature of North American Birds, 1881; A Revised Catalogue of the Birds of Illinois, 1881; Water Birds of North America,



MR. ROBERT RIDGWAY.

Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway, 1884; Nomenclature of Colors for Naturalists, 1887; Manual of North American Birds, 1887; Ornithology of Illinois, Vol. I, 1890, Vol. II, 1895; The Humming Birds, 1892; Birds of the Galapagos Archipelago, 1897; Birds of North and Middle America, I: Fringillidæ, 1901, and recently (1902) part II of the same work.

As a sympathetic painter of birds, Mr. Ridgway is too well known to need mention here. His work ranks with the best that has ever been done, and its characteristics include not only fidelity to nature but a certain delicacy in execution, which renders his pictures particularly pleasing.