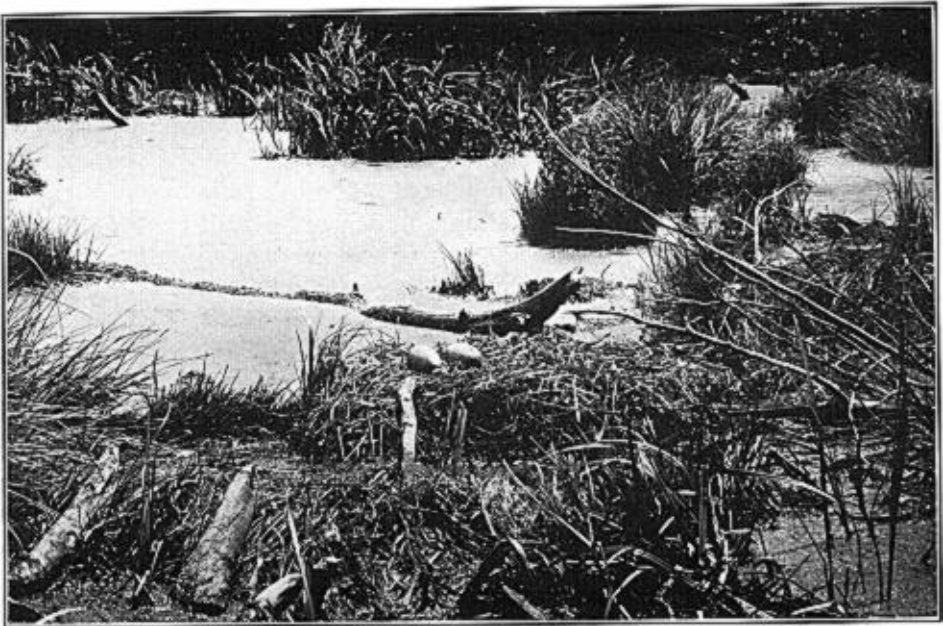


A Sandhill Crane's Nest

BY EDWARD R. WARREN

WITH A PHOTOGRAPH BY THE AUTHOR

IN the western part of Gunnison county, Colorado, between the slope of Ragged mountain and Muddy creek, is a high, rolling plateau, of an elevation of 8000 feet or more. In amongst the hollows of this plateau are many little lakes or ponds, varying in size from fifty to sixty feet in diameter to a hundred yards or more. During the past three seasons I have been about this country very much, surveying, and every season have seen sandhill cranes (*Grus mexicana*) flying overhead and heard their melodious ? notes, but did not find a nest until June 5, 1903, when, while chopping out a line across the top of a little knoll just south of a small pond, my assistant disturbed a crane. This kept flying about and croak-



NEST OF SANDHILL CRANE, GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO

ing so anxiously as to make him think there was a nest there, and going to see he found it, with two eggs. When I came along he showed it to me.

Out about twenty feet from the shore, was the nest, on a bare space among some tussocks of grass which lay more or less in a line. The water was not very deep but the mud was and I could not get to the nest as there was nothing of which to make a bridge, so I had to content myself with a careful examination from the shore.

The nest was irregular in shape, about two feet across and made of dead marsh grass. On this platform, such as it was practically, lay the two large eggs, looking, my man said, something like turkey eggs. They were rather a light brownish green, spotted and blotched all over with light reddish brown, the spots being thickest and largest on the large end of the egg, though there did not appear to be any great difference in the size of the ends.

The lake was about one hundred by one hundred and twenty-five feet, lying in a hollow, all surrounded by the hills and its shores thickly covered with alders and small aspens, one tall charred spruce stump standing on the shore near the nest.

I made up my mind when I saw the nest what my next Sunday's work would be, and when Sunday, the 7th came, I went to the spot with the camera and took several photographs from different points of view. As I was going through the brush around the shore of the lake the bird flew off, and all the time I was there kept flying about overhead, often accompanied by her mate. After I finished there I visited a number of other lakes and saw two more cranes but found no nest.

A few ducks also nest about some of these ponds though not so many as in past years. Large game was formerly very abundant here but has mostly been killed off or driven away and the birds are also much scarcer.

Colorado Springs, Colo.

Midwinter Birds at Palm Springs, California

BY JOSEPH GRINNELL

THE small village called Palm Springs lies in Riverside county, California, about seven miles south of the Southern Pacific station of the same name. It is situated on the floor of the extreme western arm of the Colorado desert. This arm terminates on San Geronimo Pass which separates the lofty San Bernardino range on the north from the precipitous San Jacinto mountains on the south. Palm Springs itself is close to the abrupt base of San Jacinto peak, and is at about four hundred feet elevation. But the desert sinks away gradually to the southeastward until in places it is two hundred and fifty feet below sea-level.

The plant-life of this belt is startling to a novice in its strangely adapted desert forms. In the vicinity of Palm Springs the desert floor is more or less closely dotted with several peculiar species of cacti, the creosote bush, screw-bean, mesquite and various Daleas, one of which is called locally the smoke-bush, from the filmy bluish aspect presented by a thicket of it at a distance. At the mouths of canyons and in the desert in the vicinity of springs, grow clumps of giant palms, which give a tropical air to the landscape. Cottonwoods flourish wherever there is sufficient underground water supply. The remains of numerous small annuals attest to occasional rains which, though rare, result in a luxuriant but brief-lived additional vegetation. These leave a crop of seeds to be garnered in the rest of the year by the remarkably numerous kangaroo rats, as well as by various birds, and granivorous insects such as ants.

From all accounts the summer temperature of this region must be well nigh unbearable. We were told that the town of Palm Springs is deserted during the summer months by everyone but Indians. But the winter climate is truly delightful—the days and nights perfectly clear, a little warm for comfortable tramping in the middle of the day, but cool and pleasant the rest of the time. The excessive dryness of the atmosphere is a bit disagreeable, resulting in chapped hands, and thus increasing the danger of arsenic-poisoning if one happens to be preparing specimens continuously.

Mr. Joseph Maillard and myself were recently fortunate enough to participate