

THE BELL'S VIREO.

Vireo bellii.

BY LYNDS JONES, GRINNELL, IOWA.

At Grinnell, Iowa, Bell's Vireo usually arrives during the second week in May. His favorite resort is the underbrush, whence his characteristic song issues from spring to autumn. Any attempt at a description of this song would be futile. It is not rich and flowing like that of the Warbling Vireo, nor short and broken like that of the Red-eye; but is a steady breath with many inflections and accents, and always ends with a flourish and rising inflection, suggesting inquiry.

Often when in close proximity to the nest, though ignorant of its exact position, I have watched the birds as they scolded severely. Then, while the female continued this protest, the male would suddenly cease and take up his song, apparently at a distance, while he sat as if a part of the branch on which he was perched. I very soon learned his trick and watched him as he practiced ventriloquism on me.

Bell's Vireo is a very sociable little fellow. He never retires to the secluded woods to build his nest; but chooses some roadside or by-path where he sets up housekeeping. Building usually begins late in May, and the eggs are laid during the first week of June. The nest is lashed to the slender twigs of some tree or bush, preferably the hazel bush here, and is seldom more than five feet from the ground. It is not as neatly woven and compactly built as nests of Red-eye and Yellow-throat, nor is it as artistically finished as theirs; but is usually quite long and made of some grayish or drab colored material externally, quite often stuccoed with cobweb and hickory blossoms. Inside this covering may be found cottony or woolly substances, and lastly a lining of brownish colored bark-fibres and a few horse-hairs.

From what has been said above of the nesting sites, one might infer that the nest is easily found. Experience tells a different story. Small and of modest tint, it is not easily recognized amongst the woody stems and green foliage. I have often searched hours for a single nest and failed to find it.

The eggs, three or four in number, are a delicate white when fresh, spotted and dotted, never blotched, with several shades of brown,

thickest near the large end ; but seldom inclined to form a wreath. I have taken sets in which there was one pure white egg. The eggs measure .65x.58 to .70x.56.

THE BIRDS OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS.

PAPER No. 1.

BY JAS. H. RACHFORD, BEAUMONT, TEXAS.

Every year hundreds of people go to Florida to collect birds and birds' eggs, while Texas, with its birds, is as yet almost unmolested. Yet a wider and more diversified field nowhere in the United States presents itself to the collector than here in Texas. As yet we know little of the birds in this State. Every year some new bird is found here which is represented in scientific books as being only the inhabitant of Florida or some other particular locality ; as for example, the Florida Barred Owl and Florida Crow are said to be strictly local species of Florida, yet they both are abundant, and the most common birds of their kind in South-east Texas. Thinking that perhaps a detailed description of the birds here will be instrumental in causing some one to become interested in the study of our birds, the writer will try to describe some of them, and tell something of their habits, and the times when they may be found among us.

During the months of February and March, thousands of little winged journeymen stop to rest among us, and wait for the bright, sunshiny days of spring to chase away the cold of winter before they venture further north, where they make their summer home. These are known as the American Robin, and can be known as having their upper parts of slate color, with a shade of olive ; a black head ; eye-lids and spot over the eye white ; eyes dark brown ; bill yellow, often with a dusky tip ; the throat streaked with white, and the under parts chestnut. This bird usually goes to the Northern States to nest, building its nest, which is composed largely of mud, upon the horizontal bough of a tree, depositing from four to six eggs ; size, about 1.18x.80 inches, of a uniform greenish-blue color.

The next bird, which shall claim our attention, is the Mockingbird,