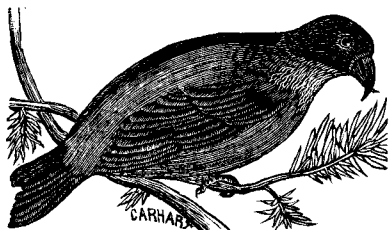


Manitoba and other north-western portions of the Canadian Dominion, and some nests have been found in northern New England.



WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL.

The chief difference between it and the Red Crossbill is that the wings are crossed with bars of a white color.

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## SPARROWS AND WARBLERS.

BY WILL. N. COLTON, BIDDEFORD, MAINE.

Sweet bird ! thy bower is ever green,  
 Thy sky is ever clear ;  
 Thou hast no sorrow in thy note,  
 No winter in thy year.

—Logan.

How well this applies to that beautiful fleeting family, *Mniotiltide* the Wood Warblers ! Only with us a comparatively short time each year, they yet endear themselves, cheering us as no other bird can. They do not flit around our door-yards ; but have to be visited in their own haunts, the forest and swamp, and here we can see them in unrestrained freedom.

That which is hardest to obtain, we prize most, and it will pay anyone for a tiresome tramp, to have the opportunity of watching and studying the rarer Warblers, with their gay, restless movements, seldom still ten seconds at a time, flitting from twig to twig. The more common species are often found in orchards and near to man ; but they have more subdued tints and of a more timid air than their wilder brethren.

My purpose is especially, to speak of the Blue Yellow-backed Warbler, as a good representative of his family. How he "tweats" and warbles his simple lay ! There is certainly "no sorrow in his

note." It is a sharp, yet melodious warble and very noticeable. As I stroll through some secluded woods on a summer day, I notice a delicately formed, elegant little bird, flitting back and forth in a low tree. I stand still, hidden by the giant trunk of a lofty pine. I notice the golden-yellow throat and bronzed breast, contrasting with what an admirable effect with the blue back, set off by a triangular patch of buffy behind the shoulders, from which he takes his name.

The first nest of this species found by me last year was on June 20th. I was wandering through a deep woods, by the border of a small pond, when I came upon the male. His excitement on seeing me prompted me to retire and watch his motions, unobserved, from distance, feeling sure the nest was close at hand. He soon flew to it and I hastened forward to take a peep, in hopes of discovering some oological treasures. In fact I did find four, fully in keeping with the appearance of the bird and as delicately pretty specimens, both in texture and color, as any collector could wish to place in his cabinet.

The nest, a typical one, was made of long moss from the neighboring trees, and vegetable fibres; lined with horse-hair. The materials are all piled in a bunch and placed in a crotch, and the nest was hollowed out of the side. It was in a bush, about 5 ft. from the ground, on a limb overhanging the water. The eggs were of a delicate white, spotted with reddish.

Perhaps not so interesting, yet fully as instructive will the study of the Sparrow family prove. This family has so many representatives in every locality that to describe any considerable portion of them in a brief article would be futile; hence, I shall only speak of one species, which is one of the rarer breeders in this vicinity. I have found only two nests of the White-throated Sparrow, *Z. Albicollis*; both within the last year. The first was discovered one day when I was watching a Nuthatch in hopes of discovering its domicile. It was in a low, damp grove, and suddenly my attention was attracted by a thin, silvery whistle which I had never heard before. I sought in vain for the bird. In a moment I heard it again, "a wandering voice." This time I discovered its author, in a low bush, some distance away. The melodious tones sounded inexpressibly sweet, ringing upon the ear in the lonely solitudes of the pines. Having no gun, I pulled out the next best thing, a notebook, and while doing so my eye fell upon the nest, built low in a bush a few rods away. It contained one egg and a week later I took the set of four.

July 14th my second nest was found. It was placed on a tussock of grass in the middle of a small brook and the three incubated eggs it contained being submerged, had been deserted. The nest was made principally of grasses and mud. The eggs, of a sort of grayish ground, were so spotted and blotched with reddish-brown as to present a general reddish appearance; but in the two sets there is an infinite variation in markings. This ends my brief notes on the two species; but I hope sometime to be able to describe some other members of these two great families.

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## THE ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.

*Habia Ludoviciana.*

BY AUSTIN CASWELL, ANN ARBOR, MICH.

This rose-bud of North American birds, as Davie calls him, arrives in this section about the second week in May, and about the last of that month and the first of June their eggs may be sought for, chiefly along a river or any good sized stream, although I have often found them on the edge of a woods, in a swamp, or sometimes even in a small thicket. The nest is almost invariably placed in a bush between five and fifteen feet from the ground, although I have several times found them from twenty-five to thirty-five high in a maple tree on a public street.

This bird is extremely abundant in this locality. The alder, any thorny bush, and sometimes the sumac bushes are generally their nesting sites, and here a shallow structure composed of fine twigs and lined with grasses is made a receptacle for their four eggs, greatly resembling those of the Mockingbird and Scarlet Tanager.

The eggs differ considerably in size and markings. The average measurement I find to be .97 inches long by .72 inches broad. Often the ground color, which varies from a pale greenish-blue to a greenish-white, is concealed by blotches and streaks of reddish-brown over the larger end of the egg, and sometimes forming a circle around the largest part. The number of eggs is generally four, although three and sometimes five may often be found. I have several times found