

It is a beautiful sight to watch the Herons, some setting in the nests, some flying and some standing tall and majestic upon the dead snags, and it makes a picture long to be remembered with pleasure.

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## THE LARK FINCH.

*Chondestes Grammica.*

BY J. A. SINGLEY, GIDDINGS, TEXAS.

The Lark Sparrow is a common summer resident here, arriving from the 1st to the 10th of April, and departing early in November. It can be found anywhere in the uplands and prairies during its stay with us; but it does not frequent the bottoms. It is one of our best singers and occupies the same position here that the Grass Finch does in the northern states. The birds mate shortly after their arrival, and by May 1st nest building is in order, and eggs can be taken from the 10th of May until the last of July. The first nests are usually placed on the ground, but with the advance of the season as many or more nests will be found in trees and bushes than on the ground.

The nest varies considerably, sometimes being of grass throughout (this is the case when built on the ground) and again, of a mixture of grass and weeds lined with horse-hair. Very often an old Mockingbird nest is appropriated and reduced to smaller dimensions by filling up with grass and lining with hair. On one occasion I found where the Lark Finch had fitted up a nest of the Orchard Oriole, enlarging it to suit and depositing its eggs in the swinging nest.

Like most of the Sparrows, this species is sober colored. The upper parts grayish-brown, the middle of the back streaked with black: under parts white, tinged with brownish, a black blotch on the breast, top of head chestnut, with a median stripe of whitish. The lateral tail feathers are black, tipped with white. When flying, the tail is spread and the white tips show plainly, making it one of the easiest of the Sparrows to identify. The usual number of eggs in a set is four or five, but I have found as many as eight eggs in a set. Color, grayish-white, spotted and marked with dark, almost black lines and scrawls. The eggs resemble those of the Baltimore Oriole. Average, .85x.65.