

a few had I devoted much time to them. One of the gunners finally procured me an adult male, and with that I had to be satisfied.

Immature, dark-brown specimens were sometimes seen, but were not as plentiful as the full-plumaged white-heads. The natives call the dark birds Washington, or Gray Eagles.

I have taken it for granted that crippled ducks form the chief food item of the Currituck Sound Eagles in Winter almost entirely from hearsay evidence, and I do not think I am mistaken in this, as the evidence of the market gunners all points that way. Frequently could the great birds be seen carrying something in their claws about the size of a duck, and from the ease with which the cripples could be caught along the edges of the marsh and from what I saw and heard, the conclusion is natural that the Eagle of this locality is an epicure, living principally on the flesh of the toothsome Redhead and Canvas-back.

Regarding their nesting I have no data to give. I was told, however, that there were no less than three nests on one single island, and I see no reason to doubt the statement. From their abundance it seems to me probable that they must nest in some numbers along the shores of the Sound; and from their wary habits, and the fact that they are not much molested, or systematically hunted, either for themselves or their eggs, I think it will be years before this noble bird is driven from his chosen home and well-filled larder on Currituck Sound.

A BIRD OF THE NORTHLAND.

(*Spizella monticola.*)

BY HARRY E. MILLER, S. E. N. Y. STATE.

In the last days of the tenth month, golden October, when all the leaves have fallen strewing the ground with a tinted carpet of many colors; when the days are slowly growing colder, reminding us that winter is soon to reign over the rest of the seasons; after other songsters have

flown far away southward to remain till the bright, joyous Spring succeeds the reign of "King Winter," there comes a flock of little birds from many miles to the northward, to our yards, gardens, and fields, singing their sweet little melodies, their calls sounding cheerfully over the keen frosty air.

The Tree, or Canada Sparrow, breeds above the boundary of our country, spending the last part of the fall, winter, and early spring in eastern North America. In appearance this bird is much like the Chipping Sparrow, but as the last named is not a winter resident you are not liable to get the two species confounded. A reddish-brown crown, more or less dusky in the center of the breast, and shades of yellow, brown, and gray constitute the colors of our Canadian visitor.

The little Tree Sparrow is fond of sheltered glens where food is plenty, where the sun strikes the warmest; here you may find them in flocks and squads feeding on the scattered seeds which they can find, allowing you to approach very near without inciting to flight, for this sparrow is not classed amongst the shy birds. No matter how cold it may be he seems always cheerful. Sitting close to a limb with the feathers fluffed up, is a position we see him in often when it is very cold. The best time to observe these birds is generally in the morning when the largest number are together, for later in the day they break up into squads, each party feeding by itself. The Tree Sparrow, as far as I know, has a peaceable character, attending to his own business, which employs all his time, without interfering with other birds' rights and movements.

A flock of these sparrows numbering about two hundred spent the past winter in my locality giving me ample means to study their songs and movements; but this is the first visit they have made to this vicinity as far as I can find out.

The song of the Canada Sparrow is superior to that of any of our local Sparrows; most of the songs, heard by the writer were in the morning between seven and ten. Why

this is so, I do not know unless the birds are glad that "grub time" has come again after the long night's rest. Often when the thermometer is down to zero, one may hear them singing away as if their little throats would split. I am quite positive that this bird does not sing on the ground, but when musically inclined mounts to some position above "terra firma." Most of the notes, for that matter all of them, are clear, bell-like, and decided. A bird singing in winter will be noticed, the song highly appreciated, and if any sweet notes prevail will be noted by the listener more so than when the woods, fields, and yards are full of songbirds. The Tree Sparrow's songs, of which it has a number, have but a slight rising and falling from the beginning to the end. Some of the notes, particularly, will be distinguished from the rest by their liquid, bell-like trembling. The first song in clear silvery notes is as follows: "*tee-dee-tee-dee-tee-dee-dee.*" The last three notes uttered in much quicker time than the first four, which are especially clear, while on the last three there is a slight falling inflection, just enough to make it all the more beautiful. Some songster sometimes includes these notes in the first song which, of all the writer has heard, are the most beautiful, tender, and clear; "*te-a-de-a-te-a-de-a,*" with the longest pause on the "a," where the quivering bell-tone becomes the most noticeable. These last notes are often uttered devoid of any other notes, making what we will call the second song, with a short but very pleasing character. Third song: "*chee-chee-a-chee-chee-che-a.*" Fourth song: "*tee-dee-che-a-che-a.*" The notes already described are not entirely restricted to songs, but are often uttered separately as if used for alarm or calls.

Again, it has a warbling chatter, used a great deal of the time when feeding, as if conversing with each other. The chatter is uttered with a full voice but not extremely so; the notes, from their round and steady flow, seem to run together; that is, from their character, one note is hardly distinguishable from the others. One might say the chatter is a reproduction of some of the song-notes usually

expressed in a lower and harsher key ; still it is pleasant and cheerful.

Besides all the notes so far spoken of, the Canada Sparrow has two separate notes used for calls, alarm, etc. First: "*che-ep*;" well pronounced, the most stress on the "p." Second: "*te-e*;" much like the first but shorter and not as a usual thing uttered with so loud a voice. From careful study the writer believes that he has included all of the notes of our little northern boarder who pays his board with his songs.

If once you have heard the Tree Sparrow's songs, I know you will be watching for them in the last part of next fall when no more is heard the warblings of the birds that have flown far away to the southland. Yet Nature has provided that this bird shall sing to us after she has placed an icy seal on the brook, has robbed us for a while of the flowers, the foliage, and the green grass, has covered the earth with a thick blanket of snow ; still these little birds are bright, active, and cheerful, vieing with each other in making the air respond with clear, liquid music.

THE RED-EYED VIREO.

BY WILL. N. COLTON, BIDDEFORD, ME.

The Red-eyed Vireo is a Summer resident here, and although I have seldom noticed it breeding in York County, nests of this species have been frequently found by the writer in Penobscot County in the northern part of the state.

The nest is usually rather neat and compact, still much variation is exhibited in this respect. One of the first I ever found, I remember, was so large and sprawling that I was at a loss for a time, to what species to assign the nest.

In 1887 I took a series of seven sets, the eggs varying little, in either size or markings ; the reddish-brown dots being sprinkled without uniformity or plan, sparingly on the larger end. This is unlike the eggs of its fellow breeder,