

## BIRD NOTES—SOUTH.

To a man reared in the north, the behavior of the familiar birds, while they are spending their winters south, must be a matter of interest. Of course, with many, such as Blue-jays, Cardinals, etc., this is not different from the behavior of such of these as remain with us; but that of Robins and others is noticeably different. It is well known, of course, that the Robins go about in large flocks, simply screaming in apparent fright, and gorging themselves upon the persisting berries which are so abundant. This winter these birds were unusually abundant on the edges of the Gulf, and were shot for market by the thousands.

I had often wondered if on the pretty, sunny, spring-like days in the south, the northern birds broke into song, but I could not get any information about it. My slight study, while very busy at other work, was along this line. There was no unanimity of habit in these matters. I found the Bluebird, on the Bay of Mobile, with his autumn call only; but at the same place I found the Chewink singing in January, not only a snatch of his old song up north, but one that was entirely new to me and quite charming. I did not shoot any, but I do not think that at this point the species could have been the White-eyed.

But one bird at least, which certainly does not remain south or have any representative here, I found occasionally singing his northern summer song. That was the Peabody bird. These were very abundant about Mobile, and sang occasionally. Brown Thrashers sang all winter on pretty days, and Mockers broke out at intervals; but the unusually severe weather there this winter shut much of this out. I saw the Catbird frequently, but he had little to say and no music.

I found some uninformed persons asking me doubtfully if the Robin actually sang in the north; and they seemed surprised at my affirmative answer.

I found Blue Jays, Cardinals, Chickadees, etc. singing as usual, but Woodpeckers were noisy only after the vernal turn had evidently set in. A beautiful and persistent singer every sunny morning was the Carolina Wren.

This winter, perhaps, gave an unusual aspect to the habits of many birds while south. I saw the Myrtle Warbler much about houses, which people assured me was unusual. Once I saw one try to fly in at a window—fluttering against the glass; and I observed them feeding upon the snow, while it lasted, much as a Snowbird or Tree Sparrow.

This reminds me that I saw our Junco—two specimens—while walking

in the woods one very warm day. These two were flitting their white tail feathers, and chatting much as they do up north here before a snow-storm. I laughed to my wife about the persistency of habit in an environment where such prophecy could be failure only, and we were sorry for the birds. *The next day after the morrow it snowed.*

I was impressed (in many strolls in the woods and swampy tangles, along with some extensive buggy rides) with the scarcity of old bird-nests. Northern people residing there tell me that in the breeding season, bird life is not nearly so evident as it is further north.

I did not hear of or observe any loss of birds by freezing. I see accounts of great destruction on the south Atlantic coast. Neither can I note any diminution of the birds here in Missouri this spring. On the contrary they seem to be unusually abundant and active—a fact noted by the ordinary observer.

I have not seen any Bluebirds, but am able to hear of them in various directions.

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## SOME WESTERN HORIZONS.

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It has long been the fond dream of the writer to take a *leisurely* trip to the Pacific coast, stopping by the way from time to time to take sample horizons. The dream is in a fair way or realization as I pen these lines from Green River, Wyoming, on the Union Pacific railroad.

Birding from a car window is not very satisfactory, never-the-less it is inevitable for one who has birds on the brain. Hence it is that I have lists of "Birds seen between South Bend, Indiana, and Chicago," and "Birds seen between Glidden, Iowa, and Omaha, Neb.," but they are scarcely worth reproducing in print.

Waterloo, Nebraska, was chosen as a fair representative of the eastern portion of the state. This little town is situated in the fertile and well wooded valley of the Elkhorn River, near where this stream unites with the Platte. The woods on the river banks and adjoining lagoons were swarming with birds. The prairie proper and the upland are mostly given over to Dickcissel and he occupies himself here with his endless task of "sheep shearing."

A day was spent at Waterloo, that is from 9 A. M. of one day to the same hour of the next. Owing to a thunderstorm during the night and