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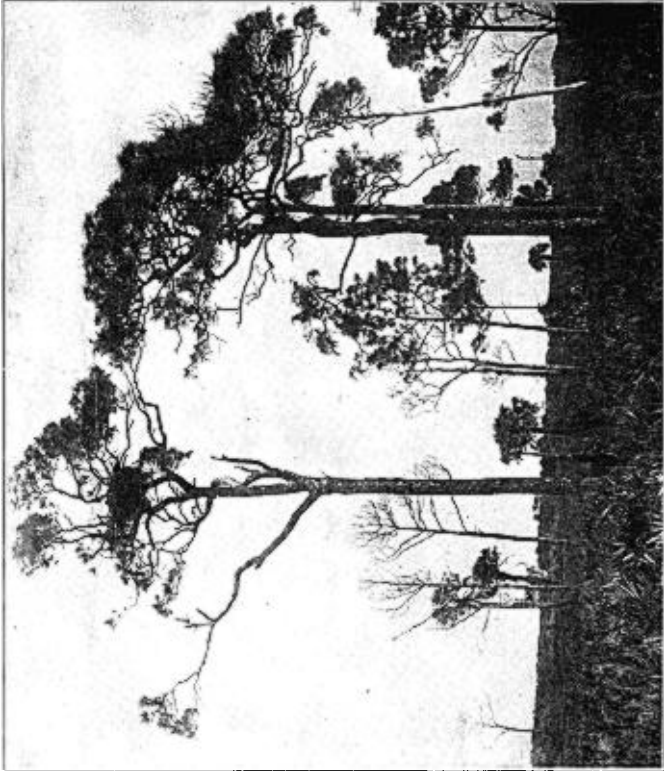
A MARCH BIRD LIST FROM THE CALOOSA- HATCHEE RIVER AND LAKE OKEECHOBEE.

BY FRANK M. PHELPS.

The species appearing in this list were observed between March 2d and 13th, 1912, principally on a motor boat trip from Fort Myers to Lake Okeechobee in company with Oscar E. Baynard, the warden of the National Association of Audubon Societies, who was going into this region to search out rookeries of Egrets, with the view of having them guarded.

Because of certain points of interest we have included the notes of a one-day trip, taken March 2d, down the Caloosahatchee River to Sanibel and Pine Islands, lying in the Gulf just off the river mouth. The primary purpose of this trip was to visit an Eagle's nest on Pine Island, previously known to Baynard, with the view of taking a series of photographs of the big, six weeks' old eaglet, who was its sole occupant. This nest was about fifty feet up in a pine, but the strong wind blowing off the Gulf and lack of space to operate in made photography somewhat difficult. By posing the youngster on one edge of the nest or a nearby limb and backing out onto a limb on the opposite side, success was finally achieved and several good pictures obtained.

We started for Lake Okeechobee on the afternoon of the 4th, in Baynard's motor boat, "The Egret," towing a canoe

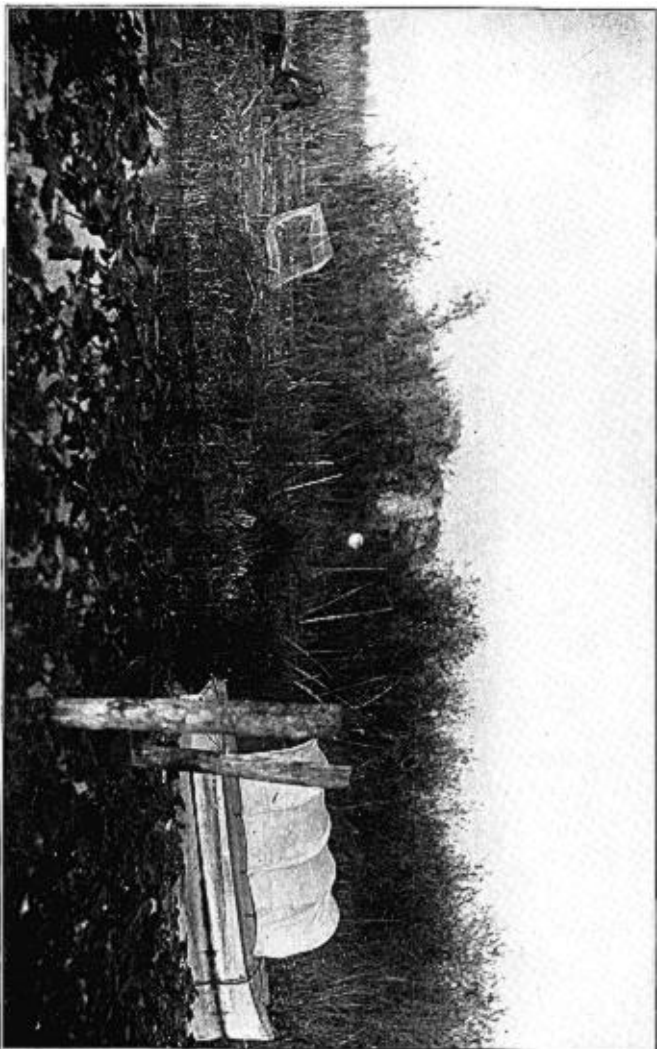


Bald Eagle's Nest on Pine Island. The eaglelet can be seen projecting slightly above the rim of the nest where it had crowded out to avoid Baynard. (Photo by Baynard.)

for use in the shallow waters that abound in the Everglades. The Egret served not only as a means of transportation, but as a home as well. She was equipped with bows over which a canvas covering could be drawn to keep off rain or dew. In the stern we carried a gasoline stove, as fuel is difficult to obtain in this region, and by slipping a board between the lockers running down the sides a bed could be quickly arranged. This latter is a somewhat necessary provision to make as the sleeping out on the ground is hardly to be recommended in a place where nature has been so lavish with reptiles and insects as in the Everglades.

One extra passenger was carried in the person of a young Caracara, taken by Baynard late in February in the Indian Reservation of the Big Cypress country. His particular duty was to pose for pictures at regular intervals, but the rapid traveling and the rather miscellaneous diet we were forced to offer did not suit "Holiwakus," as Baynard had affectionately dubbed him, and he sickened and passed away at Lake Okeechobee on the 10th, not, however, without having served his purpose to some degree.

From Fort Myers, following the winding Caloosahatchee River and the drainage canals, it is approximately one hundred miles to Lake Okeechobee. In its lower course the Caloosahatchee is a broad and imposing river, averaging about two miles in width. A few miles above Fort Myers it narrows rapidly and soon becomes quite an ordinary stream. Up to the vicinity of LaBelle and Fort Thompson its banks are as a rule well wooded, principally with palmetto, water oak and pine, often heavily draped with the long, gray Spanish moss. Along much of its lower course the shores are fringed with mangroves. Fine orange and grape fruit groves border either bank at frequent intervals. From Fort Thompson to Lake Hicopotchee the river channel has been dredged and canalized. For many miles out of Fort Thompson the canal runs through a prairie country, with few or no trees to be seen except occasionally a clump of cabbage palmettoes, locally known as "cabbage islands." The prairie merges grad-



In Camp at Lake Hicopchee. (Photo by O. E. Baynard.)

ually into the Everglades with its great vistas of waving saw grass and rushes. Now and then a "cypress" may be seen not far from the canal. A last straight stretch known as the Four Mile Canal brings us to Lake Hicopochee. This is a small, roundish shaped lake about five miles in diameter connected with Lake Okeechobee by the Three Mile Canal. About Lake Okeechobee the timber is principally cypress on the east side, with great tangles of the impentable custard apples on the south and southwesterly side.

On the first day out but a short distance was made, owing to motor trouble, but on the 5th, running from daylight till well on into the evening, we reached Lake Hicopochee. On the following day we explored the marshes and prairies about the lake, and in the late afternoon ran through the canal to Lake Okeechobee, tying up for the night under the "Flat-topped Cypress," a landmark well known to all travelers of this region, serving as it does to guide their craft to the canal. The 7th was stormy, so we did not venture out onto the lake, but on the 8th, the weather clearing, we ran to Rita, a little settlement at the beginning point of the South Canal, which is to lead to Miami. The 9th, 10th and 11th were spent searching for rookeries about the southerly and easterly portion of the lake. At Kramer's Island in South Bay we had the misfortune to suffer a serious breakdown in the form of a cracked piston, which halted further progress. As we were planning to make the balance of the four-week trip in a canoe, we had the further misfortune of Baynard being taken down with a severe attack of chills and fever. After he had taken 120 grains of quinine and apparently getting worse, and being 140 miles from a doctor, we decided it better to cut short our stay, and an opportunity offering, on the morning of the 12th, we had the disabled Egret and owner towed back to Fort Myers, reaching there on the morning of the 13th.

Taken as this list was in the early part of March, it of course contains many northern birds still lingering here in their winter haunts. A number of the early returning migrants from points still farther south were drifting into this

region too. Several resident species that a traveler not more than a decade ago would have found perhaps in comparative abundance are to-day missing, some of them forever: the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the Parrakeet, the Roseate Spoonbill and the Limpkin. The Egrets, both the large and the little Snowy, the Swallow-tailed and Everglade Kites and the Sandhill Crane will follow too before many years. The drainage of the Everglades is also playing its part in the bird-life of this region. The water-birds, unable to accommodate themselves to the changing conditions, are seeking new haunts, and with their passing is coming a rapid influx of the small land-birds, such as the Florida Cardinal, Mockingbird, Florida Yellowthroat, White-eyed Towhee, Florida Wren, Ground Dove and Florida Blue Jay.

1. *Podilymbus podiceps*. Pied-billed Grebe. Common both along the river and on the lakes. A flock of about 40 was seen on Lake Hicopochee March 6th.

2. *Gavia immer*. Loon. One bird was seen on Lake Okeechobee March 8th.

3. *Larus argentatus*. Herring Gull. Quite common* on the river from Fort Myers to the Gulf, and on Lake Okeechobee as well.

4. *Larus atricilla*. Laughing Gull. Abundant on the lower river. Noted occasionally on the lakes.

5. *Sterna maxima*. Royal Tern. A few were seen about the river mouth March 2d.

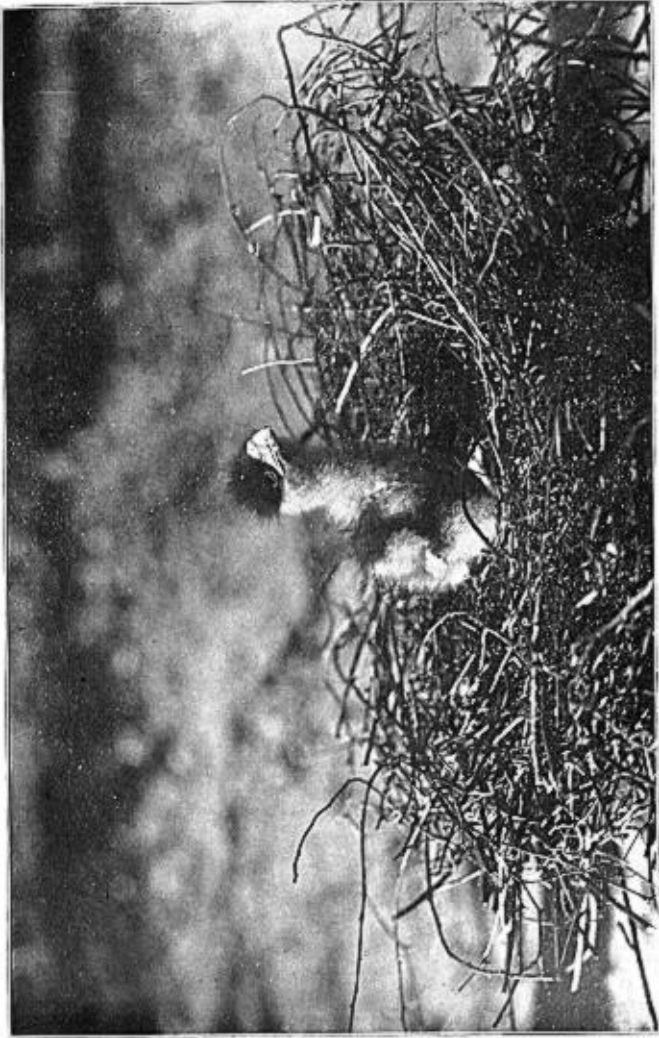
6. *Anhinga anhinga*. Water Turkey. Common and usually observed many times each day. It is often seen on some limb or stump at the water's edge, with wings wide spread, enjoying a sun bath.

7. *Phalacrocorax auritus floridanus*. Florida Cormorant. Noted occasionally on the lower river. At Lake Okeechobee these birds are quite abundant and nesting at this season. The fishermen, however, are rapidly decreasing their numbers, using them, wherever there is a rookery handy, to bait their hooks.

8. *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*. White Pelican. Four birds were seen flying high overhead on Pine Island March 2d and presumably the same four over Sanibel in the afternoon.

9. *Pelecanus occidentalis*. Brown Pelican. Very common on the lower river and about the docks at Fort Myers.

10. *Anas fulvigula fulvigula*. Florida Duck. Four birds were seen at Lake Hicopochee March 6th.



Young Audubon's Curleura in his Palmetto Home below the Big Cypress, Lee County.
(photo by O. E. Baynard)



Anthon's Caracara at the age of seven days. (Photo by O. E. Baynard.)

11. *Marila affinis*. Lesser Scaup. Common along the river and in sheltered bays on the lakes. They are hunted quite persistently in power boats. However, they seem to know where they are safe, for about the docks at Fort Myers they are almost as tame as barnyard ducks.

12. *Guara alba*. White Ibis. Not observed until we reached the Everglades, where we found them in great abundance. Flocks ranging from two or three hundred to several thousands were seen on several occasions. Breeding had not yet begun.

13. *Mycteria americana*. Wood Ibis. Small groups were observed feeding along the river several times. At Lake Okeechobee many thousands of these birds gather at this season to breed in rookeries in the cypresses. Nesting begins early and many of the young are hatched by March 1st.

14. *Botaurus lentiginosus*. American Bittern. One bird was flushed in a marsh near Lake Hicopochee March 6th.

15. *Ardea herodias wardi*. Ward's Heron. Observed daily. A few were found breeding at Lake Okeechobee, the young having already hatched.

16. *Herodias egretta*. Egret. No longer common in this region. Two small flocks were seen in the Everglades.

17. *Egretta candidissima candidissima*. Snowy Egret. Not more than a dozen birds were seen. These were occasional individuals feeding along the river or canals.

18. *Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*. Louisiana Heron. Commonly and regularly distributed throughout this region.

19. *Florida carulea*. Little Blue Heron. About equally abundant with the preceding species.

20. *Butorides virescens virescens*. Green Heron. Observed frequently along the river, and several times in the Everglades.

21. *Nyctanassa violacea*. Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Noted but once, at Lake Hicopochee March 6th.

22. *Grus mexicana*. Sandhill Crane. Still fairly common in the Everglade region. On the evening of March 5th as we were approaching Lake Hicopochee, flocks of from four or five individuals to twenty or more were seen coming in from their feeding grounds at frequent intervals.

23. *Rallus elegans*. King Rail. Heard several times in the marshes.

24. *Ionornis martinicus*. Purple Gallinule. Common throughout this region wherever the rushes and lily pads offer suitable haunts.

25. *Gallinula galeata*. Florida Gallinule. Observed about equally as often as the preceding species and in like situations.

26. *Fulica americana*. American Coot. Many flocks were met along the river and on the lakes.

27. *Gallinago delicata*. Wilson's Snipe. One bird was flushed on the marshy shore of Lake Hicopochee March 6th.

28. *Oxyechus vociferus*. Killdeer. A few were noted at various points along the river and in the Everglades.

29. *Colinus virginianus floridanus*. Florida Bob-white. On the prairies near Lake Hicopochee we found several covies. They were very tame, quite refusing to flush and running just a few steps ahead.

30. *Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*. Mourning Dove. A common resident observed at various points.

31. *Chamepelia passerina terrestris*. Ground Dove. A few were seen along the river and canals.

32. *Cathartes aura septentrionalis*. Turkey Vulture. Abundant everywhere. Great numbers of this and the following species gather at the fishing camps on Okeechobee to feast upon the odorous refuse.

33. *Catharista urubu*. Black Vulture. About equally abundant with the preceding species. We stopped to inspect a "buzzard roost" on an island in the river a few miles above Fort Myers. Quite a number of the birds were sitting about in the palmettoes and the roost showed evidence of considerable usage.

34. *Elanoides forficatus*. Swallow-tailed Kite. A few were seen in the Everglades, but they are no longer to be found commonly.

35. *Elanus leucurus*. White-tailed Kite. Observed only once. A bird flew over the canal as we were approaching Lake Hicopochee on the evening of the 5th.

36. *Rostrhamus sociabilis*. Everglade Kite. A few were seen in the vicinity of Lake Hicopochee, but like the Swallow-tails they are no longer so common as formerly.

37. *Circus hudsonius*. Marsh Hawk. One bird was seen near Lake Hicopochee March 6th.

38. *Accipiter velox*. Sharp-shinned Hawk. Sharp-shins were observed twice a few miles above Fort Myers.

39. *Buteo borealis borealis*. Red-tailed Hawk. One record, at Lake Okeechobee, March 9th.

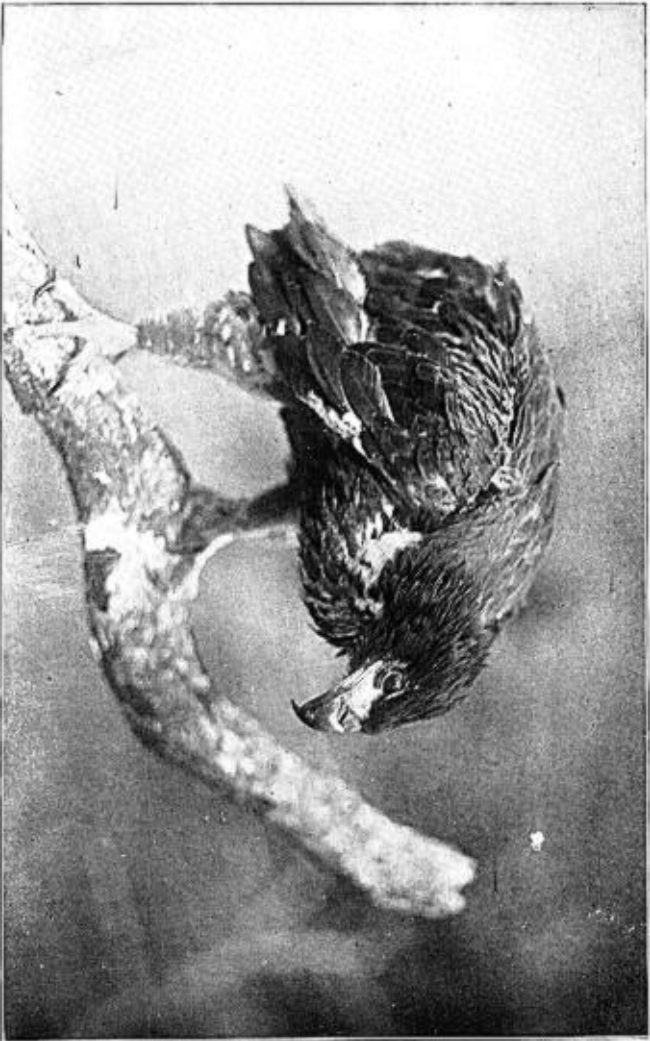
40. *Buteo lineatus alleni*. Florida Red-shouldered Hawk. Abundant. The characteristic hawk of this region. Nesting was beginning and the birds were very noisy.

41. *Buteo platypterus*. Broad-winged Hawk. One flew over our boat a few miles above Fort Myers on the 4th.

42. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus*. Bald Eagle. Fairly common along the lower river and the islands in the Gulf. Several nests were seen. A few pair are resident on Lake Okeechobee.



The Pine Island Eaglelet on the Edge of the Nest, six weeks old.
(Photo by O. F. Baynard.)



The Pine Island Eaglelet on a Limb beside the Nest. (Photo by O. E. Baynard.)

43. *Falco sparverius paulus*. Little Sparrow Hawk. Observed regularly. Likely to be found wherever there are a few trees to offer nesting sites.

44. *Polyborus cheriway*. Audubon's Caracara. While not common, the birds may be met almost anywhere in this region. One or two were usually to be found in company with the Vultures at the fishing camps. A pair were making noisy attacks on the Black Vultures at the roost mentioned above. A careful search through the palmettoes, the usual site, failed to reveal a nest. We were probably a little too early for them here.

45. *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*. Osprey. An occasional bird was seen along the river. At Lake Okeechobee they are quite common, and at this season nesting is under way.

46. *Strix varia alleni*. Florida Barred Owl. Rather common. A Barred Owl serenade was a regular feature of each evening.

47. *Otus asio floridanus*. Florida Screech Owl. Heard occasionally at night along the river.

48. *Speotyto cunicularia floridana*. Florida Burrowing Owl. One bird was seen on Sanibel Island, the first record for Sanibel according to Baynard.

49. *Ceryle alcyon*. Belted Kingfisher. A very common bird along the river.

50. *Phlæotomus pileatus pileatus*. Pileated Woodpecker. Several were seen between Fort Myers and LaBelle.

51. *Centurus carolinus*. Red-bellied Woodpecker. Observed two or three times along the river.

52. *Antrostomus carolinensis*. Chuck-will's-widow. The only one heard was early on the morning of the 13th as we were nearing Fort Myers.

53. *Myiarchus crinitus*. Crested Flycatcher. Several were heard in the custard apple groves at Lake Okeechobee.

54. *Sayornis phæbe*. Phæbe. Rather common along the river.

55. *Cyanocitta cristata florincola*. Florida Blue Jay. Frequently seen along the river and at several points in the Everglades.

56. *Corvus brachyrhynchos pascuus*. Florida Crow. Four or five were seen at LaBelle on the 5th.

57. *Corvus ossifragus*. Fish Crow. Abundant along the lower river, especially about Fort Myers.

58. *Agelaius phæniceus floridanus*. Florida Red-wing. One of the most abundant birds met. Every favorable locality in the Everglades was well populated with them.

59. *Sturnella magna argutula*. Southern Meadowlark. Rather common on the prairies near Lake Hicopochee.

60. *Quiscalus quiscula aglaeus*. Florida Grackle. A number of these birds were preparing to nest in a pine grove in Fort Myers.

61. *Megaquiscalus major major*. Boat-tailed Grackle. Even more abundant than the Red-wings. Great companies were assembled at prospective nesting sites in the Everglades.

62. *Poecetes gramineus gramineus*. Vesper Sparrow. Four birds were seen at LaBelle on the 5th.

63. *Passerculus sandwichensis savanna*. Savanna Sparrow. The commonest sparrow of the Everglades at this season according to our observations.

64. *Ammodramus savannarum floridanus*. Florida Grasshopper Sparrow. On the prairies near Lake Hicopochee they were quite common.

65. *Passerherbulus nelsoni nelsoni*. Nelson's Sparrow. Several were seen at Lake Hicopochee March 5th and one specimen obtained.

66. *Spizella passerina passerina*. Chipping Sparrow. Observed at Rita March 9th.

67. *Melospiza georgiana*. Swamp Sparrow. Noted at several points in the Everglades.

68. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus alleni*. White-eyed Towhee. Observed at Rita on March 9th.

69. *Cardinalis cardinalis floridanus*. Florida Cardinal. Very abundant throughout this region, being surprisingly plentiful in the Everglades.

70. *Piranga rubra rubra*. Summer Tanager. One bird was seen at Rita on March 9th.

71. *Progne subis subis*. Purple Martin. Quite common at Fort Myers, where they were preparing to nest in bird boxes about the docks. Also noted at the railroad bridge a few miles above Fort Myers.

72. *Hirundo erythrogastra*. Barn Swallow. Large flocks were observed circling over the marshes at Lake Okeechobee.

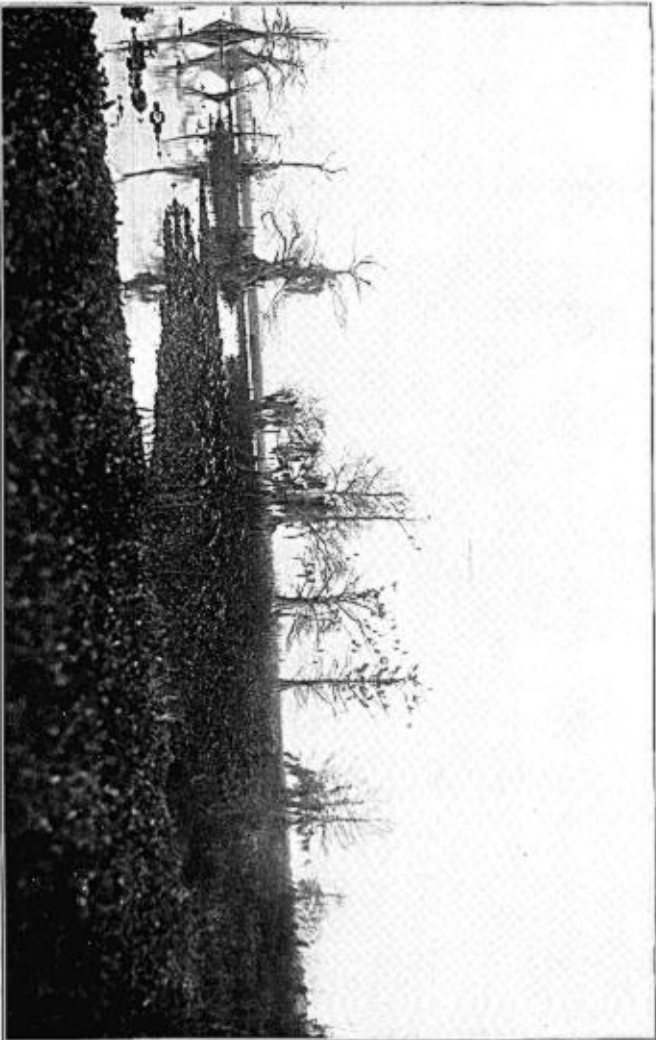
73. *Riparia riparia*. Bank Swallow. Several flocks were seen along the river and canals.

74. *Lanius ludovicianus ludovicianus*. Loggerhead Shrike. A common resident.

75. *Vireo griseus griseus*. White-eyed Vireo. Noted at several points about Lake Okeechobee and also at our camp on Lake Hicopochee.

76. *Protonotaria citrea*. Prothonotary Warbler. One bird was seen on the river bank March 5th.

77. *Vermivora peregrina*. Tennessee Warbler. Four or five of



Florida Cormorant Rookery—Lake Okeechobee. (Photo by O. E. Baynard.)

these warblers were feeding in the custard apple trees about our camp on Kramer's Island.

78. *Compsothlypis americana americana*. Parula Warbler. Several Parulas were feeding in company with the Tennessees above noted.

79. *Dendroica aestiva aestiva*. Yellow Warbler. One bird was seen near the canal March 5.

80. *Dendroica coronata*. Myrtle Warbler. A common warbler throughout this region at this season.

81. *Dendroica vigorsi*. Pine Warbler. Observed at Rita on March 9th.

82. *Dendroica palmarum palmarum*. Palm Warbler. The most abundant of the warblers seen. At Fort Myers they were particularly common.

83. *Dendroica discolor*. Prairie Warbler. Several were singing in the thickets on Pine Island March 2d, which is the only place we found them.

84. *Geothlypis trichas ignota*. Florida Yellowthroat. Common in the Everglades.

85. *Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*. Mockingbird. Noted regularly at all points. The Mockingbird and the Florida Cardinal are the most universally distributed of the smaller birds.

86. *Dumatella carolinensis*. Catbird. Several were observed about our camp at Kramer's Island.

87. *Toxostoma rufum*. Brown Thrasher. Observed at Rita on March 9th.

88. *Thryothorus ludovicianus miamensis*. Florida Wren. Quite common in the Everglades. The birds were singing freely.

89. *Troglodytes aedon aedon*. House Wren. Several were seen on March 6th in thickets near our camp at Lake Hicopochee.

90. *Tannus hiemalis hiemalis*. Winter Wren. A bird was seen at the edge of a "cypress" near the canal March 5th.

91. *Poliophtila caerulea caerulea*. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Gnatcatchers were observed frequently in the trees bordering the river.

92. *Planesticus migratorius migratorius*. Robin. Hardly common, but single birds were seen regularly.

93. *Sialia sialis sialis*. Bluebird. Noted two or three times along the river.