

There were several of these birds on the grounds, and their singing was so much in evidence that boys took it up and could often be heard whistling an imitation.

L. B. CUSHMAN.

North East, Pa., Dec. 30, 1913.

Sandpiper Notes.

The fall migration of 1913 proved to be rather unusual in regard to the sandpiper movements. Many species lingered later than usual in this locality and several new species were noted. Immense mixed flocks of shore birds fed on the mud flats around the bayous from Aug. 20 to Sept. 12. In these flocks the usual Pectoral, Semipalmated, Least, and Solitary Sandpipers and Lesser Yellowlegs were abundant. In addition Baird's Sandpipers (*Pisobia bairdi*) were present in considerable numbers from Aug. 22-27, and several specimens were taken. One Greater Yellowlegs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) was noted Oct. 6. From the 12th of September the numbers decreased rapidly, although a few individuals remained much later. The last records for the more common species are as follows: Pectoral Sandpiper (*Pisobia maculata*), Nov. 12; White-rumped Sandpiper (*Pisobia fuscicollis*), Nov. 7; Least Sandpiper (*Pisobia minutilla*), Oct. 12; Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Ereunetes pusillus*), Oct. 12; Yellow-legs (*Totanus flavipes*), Nov. 1; Solitary Sandpiper (*Helodromus solitarius solitarius*), Oct. 5; and Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*), Oct. 8.

On the 6th of October, after the bulk of the shore birds had departed, a flock of four Red-backed Sandpipers (*Pelidna alpina sakhalina*) were noted feeding on the deserted mud flats and one was taken. The birds were tame and unsuspecting and allowed a close approach. On the 10th the ponds were visited again and a flock of about sixty found in the same place. Four were taken at this time. All authorities to which I have access state that this species is uncommon in the interior in the fall and it was a surprise to me to find them so numerous at this time. This is the first time that I have noted this form in the fall. A few lingered until the 25th of October, when the last one was seen.

IRA N. GABRIELSON, Marshalltown, Iowa.

“The Guide to Nature.”

Many magazines, hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers and parents have tried to instruct children in a knowledge of nature. Yet the really natural child takes to nature for enjoyment like a duck to water.

Why urge the duck, why compel it to go into the water? When we destroy spontaneity and liberty, we prevent enjoyment and all consequent benefit. “We love the things that love us.”

It is, however, not nature nor even natural science as a matter of instruction, as the adult understands it, that the child wants, but the fun of seeing things. Where is the boy or girl that is not pleased by the

sight of an elephant or a grasshopper? But when the mammal or that insect must be studied as so much nature or natural science, then is diminished the satisfaction of the watching, and when the watching is made a matter of study, of literature or of science, it becomes still less pleasing unless the observer is naturally studious. Compulsion always removes the zest and blunts the edge. We do best the things that we best like to do. This point of view has been strongly emphasized in Edward F. Bigelow's experience during his fourteen years' editorship of the department of "Nature and Science" of "St. Nicholas," his correspondence with boys and girls having probably been larger than that of any other editor. He has severed his connection with the "St. Nicholas" magazine and will establish in "The Guide to Nature" a department entitled "The Fun of Seeing Things."

Dr. Bigelow is an amateur naturalist. He revels in nature because he likes nature. He believes that young folks make the best companions when they are free from restrictions imposed by parents or teachers. He enjoys their unrestrained spontaneity. He enjoys their letters when the letters have not been revised and made so correct that they are deprived of all originality and heart. He wants young people as they are, not as some one thinks they should be, as he wants nature as she is, unchanged by man's meddling. The tangled thicket is more beautiful and instructive than the formally trimmed hedge. The wild grass is far more beautiful than the closely shaven lawn; a laughing brook in a secluded ravine is far more picturesque than a ditch with concrete banks.

He will conduct the new department, "The Fun of Seeing Things," as he would lead a party of young folks on a ramble. There will be more spontaneity than restraint, more originality than formally trimmed rhetoric.

Boys and girls that wish to share in this real fun may address Dr. Bigelow at Arcadia, Sound Beach, Conn.

"The Guide to Nature" pays for contributions only in the satisfaction that comes to every contributor in having his best work well published for the benefit of other workers. There can be no better remuneration. Therefore your best work in this great "labor of love" is solicited.

You are invited to share in the liberal pay received by the editor and the members of the family who assist him, and that is the joy of working faithfully in a cause than which there is none better on earth. This is the pay that the editor has. Your observations described in a plain and simple way, will help the magazine and encourage its readers.

Every cent of income from "The Guide to Nature" and from The Agassiz Association is placed on the "Received" side of the cash book. On the "Paid" side are only actual expenses—paper, printing, engraving, mailing, etc.