

Summer Birds of Port Alleghany, McKean County, Pennsylvania

BY THOMAS D KEIM

THE following observations were made during a trip taken by the writer and Mr. H. W. Fowler in the summer of 1904, covering the week of July 30th to August 6th. The lateness of the season and the consequent absence of songs accounts somewhat for the small number of species seen, while the fact that our time was occupied by other duties, also contributes to the incompleteness of the list.

Passing northward on the railroad, the work of the lumbermen was noted as soon as we left Williamsport, and on all sides could be seen the bare summits of the mountains, with here and there some few acres of trees, mostly hard wood, to remind the traveler of the primeval forest which covered this country in former years.

A word in passing about the hard-wood timber may not be amiss, as it is the innocent agent of much evil. Following closely after the axe of the woodman, there have been established throughout these lumber regions chemical works for the manufacture of wood alcohol, the beech being the principal tree in use for this purpose. During the manufacture of the alcohol a resinous, tar-like compound is allowed to escape into the streams. We found in our experience that in whatever stream this tar was present, the animal life was practically extinct, especially the fish.

Keating's Summit, on the railroad, is the highest point of the watershed, and from here the grade descends all the way to Port Alleghany, where we made our headquarters. The elevation of the town is fourteen hundred and seventy-seven feet above sea level, but the mountains rise on both sides of the valley some three hundred and fifty feet higher. The walking at

all times of day was delightful and the bracing mountain air soon made us forget our fatigue. The country around Port Alleghany is similar to that on the other side of the summit. The timber in the vicinity of the town is cut off, but a walk of two hours to the southward brings one to a large tract of primeval forest. The Alleghany river flows past the town, but at this point is but a small stream.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the season, we saw no evidence of migration, and all the birds seen appeared to be residents. For information on many species I am indebted to Mr. Guy Bert and Dr. McGrannon, of Port Alleghany.

Larus sp One Gull, probably *L. atricilla*, was killed in the fall of 1903. It was shot in an exhausted condition after a storm, and had probably been blown in from Lake Erie. It was in immature plumage

Butorides virescens, Green Heron. Called "Mud-hen." Not common Two were seen

Nycticorax nycticorax naevius, Night Heron. Not common Two observed by Mr. Burt, August 6th

Philohela minor, Woodcock. Gunned after with some success every year. Our only record was one at twilight heard close by.

Actitis macularia, Spotted Sandpiper. Reported common. We observed one along the river.

Bonasa umbellus, Ruffed Grouse. Reported as fairly abundant. Several good bags made by sportsmen last winter.

Ectopistes migratorius, Passenger Pigeon One of these birds was shot at Roulette, Potter county, five years ago by Dr. McGrannon, who was familiar with the pigeon, when a boy, and is certain of the identity of this specimen.

Zenaidura macroura, Mourning Dove. One seen to take a drink close to us while fishing. The note of this species was frequently heard from the mountain sides.

Accipiter velox, Sharp-shinned Hawk. One was seen to make a strike and disappear in some scrubby growth, the small birds scattering in all directions.

Buteo borealis, Red-tailed Hawk. The cry of this species was heard with great distinctness one day for some time. The bird later sailed into the open still uttering his cry, and was then identified without doubt.

Buteo lineatus, Red-shouldered Hawk. One, apparently of this species observed. Its cry was a single, long-prolonged whine.

Syrnium varium, Barred Owl. Captured now and then.

Megascops asio, Screech Owl. Shot now and then; frequently heard.

Bubo virginianus, Horned Owl. Not so common as the former species. Usually heard in big timber.

Ceryle alcyon, Kingfisher. Common

Dryobates villosus, Hairy Woodpecker. The note of this species was heard while walking through the hemlocks.

Dryobates pubescens medianus, Downy Woodpecker One heard on August 1, and one on August 3, in some scrubby growth

Coccyzus pileatus abieticola, Pilcated Woodpecker, called Log Cock and Wood Hen. Not seen by us and reported scarce. We found in the hemlocks a dead tree badly cut, probably the work of this species.

Melanerpes erythrocephalus, Red-headed Woodpecker Three immature birds seen in a wooded ravine. These showed no fear and were quite tame. Not common.

Colaptes auratus luteus, Flicker. On August 2, the notes of this bird were heard on all sides in the valley. Before and after this date it was strangely silent.

Chordeiles virginianus, Nighthawk. Two seen flying over the town August 1, high in the air uttering their familiar cries.

Chattura pelagica, Swift. Common. One flew from a barn where they may have been breeding.

Trochilus colubris, Hummingbird. A female passed us in flying up the ravine, stopping to gather some honey from a flower nearby.

Tyrannus tyrannus, Kingbird. Note frequently heard, usually about gardens or farms. Solitary individuals in most cases.

Sayornis phoebe, Phoebe. Two records

Contopus virens, Wood Pewee. More common than the former. Note frequently heard.

Cyanocitta cristata, Blue Jay Cry heard several times from the side of the mountain Not common

Corvus corax principalis, Raven. One flew over our heads in the hemlocks. Made no sound. Not common.

Corvus brachyrhynchos, Crow. Common. Young heard at different times crying continually.

Dolichonyx oryzivorus, Bobolink. A number seen in the meadows. All females or young or else males after the molt. Their usual "clink" was frequently heard. At one time quite a large flock of about thirty passed by. They were in the grain field and about low bushes, only taking to larger trees when frightened. As usual they were not shy or difficult to approach. They were seen at various places.

Molothrus ater, Cowbird. An adult male and several brown females or young noted in the meadow lands.

Agelaius phoeniceus, Red-winged Blackbird. Two females and one male. Found as usual in meadow land.

Sturnella magna, Meadow Lark. Common.

Quiscalus quiscula aeneus?, Bronzed Grackle. Mostly about houses or in the town. A number were evidently young, judging by their notes. No specimens secured, but probably this race.

Astragalinus tristis, Goldfinch. This was by far the commonest bird of the valley and was seen at all hours of the day, mostly solitary.

Poocetes gramineus, Vesper Sparrow. Found during our stay in its characteristic localities. Common.

Spizella socialis, Chipping Sparrow. Common.

Spizella pusilla, Field Sparrow. Common in waste pastures or scrubby fields, especially in milk-weed patches with the Goldfinches.

Junco hyemalis, Snowbird. One seen in a wooded ravine. The nest was found on the side of a steep, shady bank. Eggs three, whitish, with a few pale-brown markings in a ring around the larger end. Frequently heard in hemlock woods.

Melospiza cinerea melodia, Song Sparrow. Common.

Pipilo erythrophthalmus, Chewink. Common.

Cyanospiza cyanea, Indigo-bird. Heard occasionally, not common. One female seen.

Piranga erythromelas, Scarlet Tanager. Heard in the hemlocks.

Petrochelidon lunifrons, Cliff Swallow. Perhaps more abundant than the next species.

Hirundo erythrogastra, Barn Swallow. Fairly abundant. Roosting along telegraph lines in company with the Cliff Swallows.

Ampelis cedrorum, Cedar-bird. Very abundant. Note frequently heard

Lanus ludovicianus migrans, Migrant Shrike. One, apparently of this form, perched on the telegraph wires, and allowed us to pass beneath him. He flew several times to the ground, apparently after food

Vireo olivaceus, Red-eyed Vireo. Two records.

Mniotilta varia, Black-and-White Warbler. One seen and heard in a ravine, among some small maples.

Dendroica aestiva, Yellow Warbler. Fairly abundant.

Dendroica caerulescens, Black-throated Blue Warbler. One observed, attracted by the cries of a Canadian Warbler. Later a male and female were found in the hemlocks. Probably common

Dendroica pensylvanica, Chestnut-sided Warbler. One seen on the side of the mountain in scrubby growth

Dendroica Blackburniae, Blackburnian Warbler. One record in the hemlocks.

Dendroica virens, Black-throated Green Warbler. One seen in some hard-wood trees in the hemlock forest

Geothlypis trichas, Maryland Yellow-throat. Common, and well distributed. One pair found on top of the mountains in dense, scrubby growth.

Wilsonia canadensis, Canadian Warbler. We were probably close to the nest of this bird, as it became much excited at our presence, and kept up a continual calling, which attracted other birds to the scene while we were there.

Setophaga ruticilla, Redstart. A female was seen in some scrub chestnut growth at the summit of one of the mountains

Galeoscoptes carolinensis, Catbird. Common, not in song.

Toxostoma rufum, Brown Thrasher. Several seen in the scrubby growth on top of the mountains.

Troglodytes aedon, House Wren. One record on top of the

mountain in scrubby growth; also two seen near some out-buildings on a farm.

Olbiorchilus hiemalis, Winter Wren Common in the hemlocks.

Certhia familiaris americana, Brown Creeper. One heard in the hemlocks.

Parus atricapillus, Chickadee. One record.

Sitta canadensis, Red-breasted Nuthatch. Common. Heard in several places.

Hylocichla mustelina, Wood Thrush One heard at evening during the twilight uttering his familiar, scolding note.

Hylocichla guttata pallasii, Hermit Thrush This was the most abundant of the Thrushes, the note being frequently heard from the mountain sides, and in the hemlocks Common

Merula migratoria, Robin Common

Sialia sialis, Bluebird. Common, several pairs noted with young.