

BRANT ROCK.

THIS pleasant summer resort is situated on the eastern coast of Massachusetts, in the town of Marshfield, Plymouth County, and during the hot months is visited by many of the inhabitants of our inland towns and villages, who find rest and enjoyment in boating, bathing and other sports to be found at our seaside watering places.

Brant Rock, from which the village takes its name, is a rocky headland projecting several hundred yards into the ocean, and connected with the mainland by a narrow strip of beach, which is high water, and completely covered by the rock on an island. I am not sure as to how it received the name, but have been told that in olden times great numbers of brant were shot at this point, and on that account it was so named. In the fall when the geese, coots and other wild fowl commence their southward flight, Brant Rock becomes to me a place of the greatest interest, and about the first of November generally finds your correspondent upon the spot. At this point are three good hotels, with their billiards and bowling to pass away the dull days that will always be encountered at gunning stations. Then, again, you can always be sure of good accommodations, good boats, and men that understand the business to handle them, if desired, at reasonable prices.

After an easterly wind there is generally quite a surf on the beach, which makes it lively for the gunners and affords much fun for the lookers on, who watch the boats land after a day's shooting. It is exciting to see them come on in their light dories, over and through the breakers; some of them coming to grief and wading ashore with their boats bottom up.

The shooting is mostly from brants, although in rough weather there are some good wild shooting from the point of the Rock. In boat shooting the boats are anchored in line about two gun shots apart, the line extending a mile or more to sea. Sometimes there are so many boats that they make another line in the rear, or to the southward of the first line. I have counted fifty-one boats anchored in this way, and have been told that it is not uncommon to see many more. The boats are generally covered with canvas, and are manned by a man or two, who are ready to pull up the shooting begins about "sun up." Flock after flock of old white-wings come down through the line, followed by sheldrakes, quailies, and, in fact, all kinds of fowls that frequent our shores. Occasionally an old loon comes bearing down, and after receiving volley after volley, looks us calmly in the eye and keeps on his way.

If you are not used to this shooting, you will look blue after trying a few times. The motion of the boat in a sea, together with the swift flight of the birds, make this kind of shooting the most difficult I have ever attempted.

You have made two or three poor shots and are getting discouraged when down comes a bunch of coots. You make up your mind you will redeem yourself, and lie low until they are in range. You wait until the gun when a coot calls the boat, and you wildly wave the mizz of the gun at them, and in the jumble both barrels are discharged and the chances are the charge comes nearer the next boat than the birds. Such is coot shooting as experienced by a green hand in a heavy sea. Even the most expert will miss the most provoking shots, and it takes a good shot and a tremendous sight of the water to get into the habit of shooting. In handling most shooting one can only get the hang of it. They are not wild, and give good shots, but are extremely hard to kill and will carry off a lead mine.

Last fall I was at this place gunning and we had one day that Andrew, Nat and Rube will not so on forget. We went out at daylight, and at sunrise loons commenced to fly. We had them for two or three hours as fast as we could get them into our guns, Andrew using a heavy ten bore, while I used a twelve bore eight pound Fox gun, altogether too light for such shooting. Andrew killed three pair straight, but I was nowhere. I emptied about fifty shells and got about six loons, which was about one-fourth of what fell in the water, but could not get. Andrew was more used to it. But bringing them down and getting them are two different things, and that of all I had the prettiest get before. We saw coots did not fly we took Andrew's old fox bound and in a few hours' tramp generally managed to start a fox, which would elude the dog during the day, leaving us to tramp home empty handed. But such was not always the case as two skins hanging in Andrew's cabin will testify. At other times we would tramp the pastures and stubbles for quail, of which there was no abundance in this part of the country where a man can enjoy himself better. It is distant from Boston about thirty miles on the Duxbury branch of the Old Colony Railroad. Get off at Marshfield depot and a coach carries you to the Rock, about four miles. On arriving there Captain Churchill or Mr. Brown, of the Brant Rock House will take good care of you, and Bill Adams will be glad to take you out and give you as good shooting as the weather and birds will permit. To a visitor this part of the country is full of interest. The home of Daniel Webster is in sight, and although the old house is gone, the very trees and stone walls seem to speak of his presence. It is only a few days ago we drove a fox directly through the little burying-ground down the large orchard that was once Waverley's private burial place, and high over the gate we saw a gainer, but not often seen.

To the southward in the distance we see the monument on Captain's Hill, erected in memory of Miles Standish, while beyond is the city of Plymouth. To the left is Clark's Island, and beyond loom up the dark hills of Monomet. Looking seaward on certain pleasant days Cape Cod may be seen, eighteen or twenty miles distant, while to the north a landscape of forest, streams and sea meet the eye. If all prospers, I hope in another year to meet my friends at Brant Rock, and try the white wings again, and give that sly old fox a run. RAMEBO.

PUBLISHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Holabird Shooting Suit. Uphrengro & McCallan, Valparaiso, Ind. Hop Bitters gives good digestion, active liver, good circulation and buoyant spirits.

MR. E. DUNN & SUTHERS, the well-known advertising agent of this city, has removed to No. 3 Park Row, where all evidences so to show that his business is progressing. Mr. Sutton is energetic, capable, trustworthy and, as a matter of course, popular and successful.

WIDEN'S CRICKETER'S ALMANAC FOR 1881. This record of the full scores and bowling summaries of the principal matches played in 1880 has been sent us by the publishers. The book contains 22 pages replete with most useful information and should be in the hands of all lovers of the game of cricket. John Widen & Co., London, England. Price one shilling.

HOW WE FEED THE BABY, to make her healthy and happy; with health hints. By C. E. Page, M. D. 144 pages. Paper, 50 cents; cloth, 75 cents. New York: Fowler & Wells, 753 Broadway.

Natural History.

DOMESTICATION OF A SIBERIAN DEER.—The young horns of a certain Siberian deer (*Cervus maral*) while they are yet filled with blood and before they have become ossified are highly prized by the Chinese, who purchase all that they can obtain of them on the Siberian frontier, paying the high price of from six to twenty pounds sterling per pair for them. In consequence of this demand for these horns the Maral has been very eagerly hunted, so that it is now rather rare. The Cossacks near Kiakhka, some time since, attempted the domestication of this deer, and it is said that the domesticated animals have of late greatly increased in Western Siberia, and that some of the herds now number seventy individuals.

SENSE OF SMELL IN INSECTS.—An interesting paper on this subject has recently been published by Hon. Gustav Hauser, of Erlangen, in which he gives an account of a number of experiments made by him. A number of different species of insects which had been induced to approach vessels containing turpentine and acetic acid showed, by their evident desire to retreat and by moving their antennae, a decided perception of the odor but after the extremities of the antennae had been cut off the same insects, placed close to the vessels, manifested no uneasiness. A number of flies which had approached a piece of putrid meat showed no desire to return to it after the third segment of the antennae had been cut off.

CATALOGUE OF THE BIRDS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—It is said that the fifth volume of the Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum will soon be published. The families described in it will be the Thrushes and Warblers, and the work will be done by Mr. Henry Seebohm, who has devoted several years of close study to these groups, and who is one of the highest living authorities on them.

SPRING SNIP.—A correspondent who writes from Wading River, Suffolk county, N. Y., under date of April 4, says:— "This day I found a brace of English snipe on the meadows and killed them. The female contained the inclosed specimen which I believe to be the eggs. I would like to know how many eggs they lay and when they nest."

The Wils' snipe builds its nests on the ground in meadow land, usually not very far from a damp or wet spot; the eggs are four in number, clay colored, spotted with black. By far the greater part of the snipe which stop with us in spring pass on beyond the borders of the United States to breed but a few remain with us, nests of this species having been found in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The specimen sent us was a mass of the undeveloped eggs of the bird. We have seen snipe killed late in the spring which contained eggs as large as the end of a man's thumb, and have heard of others in which have been found eggs ready for deposition.

A HAWK NEW TO THE UNITED STATES.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, Washington, D. C., April 6, 1881.

Editor Forest and Stream:

It affords me great pleasure to be able to announce through your columns the addition to the United States fauna of a species of hawk hitherto not recorded from any point north of Mirador, Mexico. The question of what name the species pending which I will call it, provisionally, *Buteo fuliginosus*, Selater. It is a small species, about the size of *B. pennsylvanicus*, but with longer wings, and of a uniform black color, like *B. abbreviatus*. It has been considered by various writers to be a dark or melanistic phase of *B. brookii*, but in this view I cannot concur, no specimens among the many which I have examined indicating that any light color-phase exists; both young and old, though otherwise quite different, being uniform black below as well as above.

While premising that this bird may be the *Buteo fuliginosus* of Selater, it should be remarked that in "History of North American Birds" (vol. iii., p. 266.) I referred this name to *B. macrurus*, on the presumption that it was probably based on a small example of the latter species in the dark phase of plumage; but I may have been wrong in this determination.

The specimen in question was shot at Oyster Bay, Florida, Jan. 28, 1881, by W. S. Crawford, and was secured for the National Museum from H. H. Collins, of Detroit, Mich. Very respectfully yours, KOZBUR RINGWAX.

MIGRATORY QUAIL AND HOUSE SPARROWS.

QUEBEC, Canada, April 7. I HAVE again ordered 200 migratory quail for this neighborhood which, I have no doubt will arrive in good order. The point, however, as to the fact of this variety of quail returning with the other spring birds does not appear to be clearly established, so that I shall be obliged to some of your numerous readers to record what they may observe this year on this very interesting subject.

The winter in Canada has been less injurious to house-sparrows than usual. Our inhabitants have noticed this bird is a good bird. "Il suit la religion, il vitales clochers, les convents et les Presbyteres," and is therefore in a fair way for salvation.

The imported quail again recommends itself to our farmers as a bird that lives in France, they do not know the word "Caille," but they understand it is a little partridge and a French bird, so on the principle of the Irish sparrow they are quite prepared to give quail every protection.

My idea is if we can once get quail established on the Laurentides to the north of Quebec the bird may become as numerous as robins or crows, but spring shooting must be discontinued all over this continent, otherwise all the migratory

birds will disappear. As the common bird of America is now the house sparrow all the others appear to have vanished and as the house sparrow only lives in towns where there are horses and stables the country places are very bare of birds.

I have no birds on my farm, and the same complaint is general with my neighbors, and during a hunt I made last winter I only saw three partridges (rufted grouse) in four weeks. W. RHODES.

THE PINE GROSBEEK.

THIS interesting bird is, if we may credit the reports, an abundant one, although rather an irregular winter visitor to Massachusetts. It must be remembered that very few of the many persons who may have observed the bird are possessors of sufficient ornithological knowledge to tell to what species it belongs, and but very few of these who know it ever publish their notes. This, taken with the fact that, except observations are confined almost exclusively to the vicinity of dwellings, owing to the difficulty of getting about in the woods at the only time that it is present with us, leads to the conclusion that it cannot be other than quite an abundant species in our pine woods and other places where it is able to procure suitable food during the winter months. Dr. Coues gives its habitat as follows:—"In this country it occupies the whole of British America, migrating regularly into the northern tier of States in winter, and occurs locally to Maryland, Ohio, Illinois and Kansas. A formerly resident resident near Santa Nevada, of California, and certainly so in the Rocky Mountains within the United States, south to Colorado, where it breeds."

There are also well authenticated instances of its breeding in Maine. I have observed the species in this vicinity every winter for the last five years, while it is unusually abundant this winter throughout, owing to the difficulty of getting about in a large tract of flooded land constituting part of the pond known as the "reservoir." This tract contains a superficial area of about two hundred acres, with an average depth of about four feet of water, which is so completely choked with aquatic vegetation of many species, some floating and others firmly rooted, as to be impetrable for any distance for man, except in two paths made in the winter, and by Maryland, Ohio, Illinois and Kansas. A formerly resident resident near Santa Nevada, of California, and certainly so in the Rocky Mountains within the United States, south to Colorado, where it breeds."

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The seeds and berries of this plant form an inconsiderable part of the food of the wood ducks which resort here in flocks for food and to roost, coming in from the ponds in the vicinity after sunset, sometimes as many as several hundred in a single flock. Although most writers tell us that the wood duck is seen in flocks of from three to twelve only, yet I have frequently seen flocks of twenty to thirty fly in after sunset and leave again early in the morning. Besides the wood ducks there are many other species of birds which feed on these berries, including the subject of this sketch. I have not noted them here during the winter, but berries are not in such abundance in winter. In the fall of 1879 the berries were very plenty, and the water in the reservoir and swamp having been kept "up," there were unusual numbers of ducks there feeding on them. After the patch was covered with ice there were no berries and I saw but one small flock of grosbeaks all winter. Whether the ducks stripped the bushes so that there were none left for the Grosbeaks or not, I do not know, but I believe that to be the case, for last fall the berries were no more abundant than in the fall of 1879, but the water in the swamp having been down so that the place was dry or contained but very little in the reservoir all the latter part of summer and fall, there were no ducks, and the bushes have been loaded with berries all winter and have formed almost the entire food supply of an immense flock of grosbeaks.

I noticed the first birds on the 12th of December, the weather having been quite cold and the ground covered with snow for twelve days previously. From this time my visits to this place were quite frequent, and I have never failed to find them here at whatever time of day I came before 4 P. M., at which time they usually retired to the woods to roost. All the winter they have been here, although only in the early part of the day, and I have seen them in the woods on four or five days during the month of January. The mean of three observations each day—morning, noon and night—during this month was 16 degs. In spite of the cold they spent most of their time in this bleak, unsheltered spot, exposed to the full force of the wind, subsisting entirely, so far as I was enabled to know, on the seeds of the black alder.

At the time of my first visit to the birds in the "swamp" the entire flock numbered twenty individuals and had no material increase of numbers for three weeks, when they began to receive additions until, about the 15th of January, the flock numbered as many as three hundred. About the 1st of February they began to disappear until, the 30th of that month, a diligent search failed to reveal a single bird of any species in the swamps, but since then a few have been seen, though in front of a residence on the main street of the village on the 18th of March and, although there were teams and pedestrians constantly passing, they remained undisturbed for nearly two hours, quietly feeding and uttering their peculiar whistle, the only sound I have heard them make.

The grosbeak is in many respects a very peculiar bird. It seems to be so very unsuspicious of man, I have been able to walk up to within four feet of the flock when feeding on the bushes, when I could easily have touched them with my gun. I tried the noise on the end of a pole, as described by Mr. C. J. Maynard, and although I caught none, owing to the numerous twigs and small branches catching in the noise, I had no difficulty in touching them with the noise, they manifesting no concern, but continuing to feed, although in the pole to which the noise was attached was only seven feet long.

They seemed to regard my dog, who sometimes accompanied me, with more distrust, often circling about him and uttering their plaintive whistle and scolding very uneasy so long as he remained in sight. They are very sensitive to noise. Although they manifested so little concern at my presence, the report of a gun would send them in a moment to a body, to avoid the unassuming of man. I have often seen them walk up to within a few feet of me, although in the place from which they started, and at others in another part of the swamp; and although I shot among them several times to