

NOTES

A Clay-colored Sparrow summers in the Adirondacks. — It couldn't be, but it was! There it sat on a small spruce branch day after day, singing (?) its most unmusical song, "buzz buzz buzz" all day long. So on this Sunday afternoon after dinner, Dr. Marguerite Kingsbury and I took our binoculars and Petersons and went to examine the bird. We were able to get very close, to within about ten feet.

The bird did not have the big head and very short tail of the grasshopper sparrow. The song was also quite dissimilar. It was small, not much over five inches in length, pale in color, and had a very definite brown ear patch outlined in black. Its back was striped black and light brown, its pale breast unmarked. And it kept on singing the unmusical rasping, "zee, zee, zee, zee, zee." Independently we concluded that the bird was a Clay-colored Sparrow. Continued examination tended to confirm our judgment.

The location was the shrub nursery on the Sunmount Hospital grounds. This Veterans Hospital is on the outskirts of Tupper Lake, Franklin County. It is situated on a large plateau and none of the grounds are heavily wooded. The nursery is three-fourths acre in size, contains small tamaracks, spruces, pines and some flowering shrubs. It is just off a private road in a clearing of forty or fifty acres. This clearing is mostly grassland, outlined with evergreens and maple trees. Horned Larks seek out this area for nesting as do a few Meadowlarks. In winter occasional but large flocks of Snow Buntings feed on its weeds. All in all, the whole plot resembles a prairie.

All during the month of June and on until after July 4, 1956, this sparrow was perched on top of one of the spruces, singing its monotonous song. He never seemed to stop even to feed. No other sparrow was seen in the immediate vicinity, and we are quite certain that he found no mate. At the end of the first week in July the bird stopped singing and we saw no more of him.

Volume II of the National Geographic Book of Birds states that this species does wander from its migration routes and may be discovered in the most surprising places. Dr. Kingsbury and I both surmise that none could be more surprising than this — Agnes Amstutz, Sunmount Veterans Administration Hospital, Tupper Lake.

New York State Museum publications now available. — A new list of sales publications has been compiled by the New York State Museum and is available without charge on request to the Museum at Albany 1, New York. The revised list includes a considerable number of zoological bulletins, circulars, handbooks, etc., that were formerly considered out of print and have been available only through dealers. The stock of some of these items is small; in such cases, preference will be given to orders from libraries and universities, foundations and other organizations. —Victor H. Cahalane, Assistant Director, New York State Museum and Science Service, Albany 1. (Ed. Note: Perhaps the best example of the publications on this list is Eaton's two volume "Birds of New York," which has for some time been available only at inflated prices from bookstores.)

A late nesting record for the Short-billed Marsh Wren on Long Island — Fifteen years ago Cruickshank (1942, "Birds around New York City," p. 333) stated that the Short-billed Marsh Wren "must be considered a very uncommon to rare local summer resident. . . . There are nesting localities very thinly sprinkled . . . along the South Shore of Long Island from Idlewild to Mastic. . . . There are undoubtedly two broods, local egg dates ranging from May 19 to August 20." Since publication of this account all but possibly one of these localities have been abandoned or destroyed. Therefore, it appears worthwhile reporting the discovery of a new nesting locality for this species — a record made doubly interesting by the extreme lateness of the date.