

Coastal
Ngali

Medison + Minnesota

from the top of the tree. The behavior of the Cape Mays was ^{unusual} ~~interesting~~ and accounts for our failure to find the nest sooner. The birds do not fly directly either to the nest or to the nest tree. They approach at a low level usually going first to a nearby tree, then to the lower branches of the nest tree which they climb close to the trunk until they reach the height of the nest then they ^{walk} ~~go~~ out onto the end of a branch to look around before going back in to feed the young. On leaving the nest ^{only occasionally does} ~~either bird flies~~ straight out ~~very often~~ but instead ~~usually~~ dives toward the ground ^{before flying} ~~and flies~~ away, ~~low down~~. When in the nest tree the Cape Mays do not behave ^{as} ~~the way~~ most birds do by hopping and jumping but ~~rather they~~ walk on the branches very much after the manner of the Connecticut Warblers we had observed ^{the} ~~last~~ year ^{before} ~~in~~ Michigan. The female was much more timid than the male ~~taking much longer~~ ^{the way she approached} ~~than he did in her approach~~ to the nest -- hesitating and waiting often for many minutes only a few feet from ^{it} ~~the nest~~ before she got up courage to feed her young. Now we knew why they were so difficult to follow when we had found them before carrying food.

The ^{possible} only way we ^{saw} ~~could see~~ to photograph the birds was ^{ing} ~~to go~~ lower the tree. ^{When} I climbed ^{to the nest} ~~up~~ on a ladder I ~~brought into the~~ ^{I found it} ~~swamp to find out what the nest contained.~~ There were eight young birds ~~in it~~ about five days old with their eyes open, so we decided to start the lowering right away. The nest tree was fortunately rather thin with short weak branches and would therefore not be too ^{heavy} ~~difficult~~ to manage. We cut a ^{gin} ~~limb~~

pole which we lashed to the ^{bottom} ~~best~~ of the ~~nest~~ tree and ^{ran a rope} ~~attached~~ ^{at the top} through a pully ~~to its upper end with a rope through it~~ to the nest tree half way up. Then we sawed through the ~~nest~~ tree about four feet from the ground and lowered it this distance tying it firmly to its own stump and ^{to} the pole. Both birds were quite cautious in the way they responded to this maneuver. The female flew straight to the nest once and fed the young. After a long time she returned, landed in the nest tree below the nest, climbed up part way, and stayed motionless below the nest for many minutes before flying out again. The male came eventually with food, climbed the tree the usual way and stayed on the nest. We left for the day late in the afternoon hoping for the best.

The next morning both birds were actively feeding the young. We gradually lowered the nest ^{three feet at a time} by cutting ~~three foot~~ sections ~~at a time~~ off the lower end of the nest tree and ^{at simultaneous} ~~the same time~~ shortening ^{now} as necessary the pole to which it was tied. The parent birds ^{quite readily} ~~accepted~~ these changes ^{quite readily} with ~~apparently~~ ^{very} little disturbance to their feeding activities, and we were able to bring the nest down to six feet from the ground without mishap. The female ^{however somewhat} ~~reacted~~ ^{more} timidly to ~~these~~ ^{this} manipulations than the male who was quite fearless or more adaptable than she. They both were feeding budworms and the male brought dragonflies from time to time, but the former constituted by far the principal food item. They came with beaks full of worms, four to six at once, which they distributed among several of their offspring. With eight

mouths to feed the budworm infestation was a bonanza for the Cape Mays, ^{which} and as Kendeigh had observed in Canada was probably a factor in influencing breeding in this area. As the infestation is brought under control by the birds and dies down breeding success will gradually decline and fewer Cape Mays will return to these Minnesota bogs in the years to come. Where they will go will depend on the ^{development} building up of food supplies elsewhere, and if this fails to take place they should become more widely distributed or even diminish in numbers.

As ^{the Cape Mays} they approach the nest they both ^{ad} fly in low to ^{would} nearby trees, climb up ^{female} near the trunk to the higher branches, and walk out ^{onto} to the branch tips for a better view of the situation and a more convenient taking off place. With the nest in its new lowered position From these lookout points they dropped down directly to ^{at}, but after feeding, as ^{a continuation of} was their habit when we first found the nest, dive towards the ground ^{before} and fly away. ^{was} low. They were not difficult to photograph As they became accustomed first to the new position of their nest and later to all the photographic paraphernalia, In this respect they behaved in a manner no different from most kinds of passerine birds, and especially other wood warblers, demonstrating remarkable adaptability.

This Minnesota expedition, which began so unpromisingly in Canada, turned out to be such a great success with the photography of two new warblers -- the Cape May and the Tennessee -- as well as several other species photographed not for the first time, and with the discovery that Connecticut,

Bay-breasted, and Morning Warblers were also ^{not uncommon} breeding species ~~in this and other areas surrounding area~~ in the same bog as well as in the general surrounding region which we had not had time to ^{explore} ~~work on~~, we determined to return the following year.

This time we agreed to meet in Ely instead of Jackson and by ~~so doing~~ ^{to} shorten (driving distance for me) by more than a thousand miles. ^{He} I arrived on June 15th and by the time the Cottrilles came on the 17th, I had already found a Tennessee's and a Canada's nest. In two days we had found four more Tennessee Warbler nests, two of them in the same sites as the year before, presumptive evidence that they were the same pairs. This year we found more nests than in 61 and very soon had a larger backlog than we could ever hope to photograph, which included more Tennessees, Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Cedar Waxwings, White-throated Sparrows, Nashville Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Magnolias, Least Flycatchers, Red-eyed Vireos, Cape Mays building, and several others. Some of these we were able to work on, such as the Yellow-bellied and Least Flycatchers. But still our primary quests of the year, for the Bay-breasted and Connecticut warblers, remained unrewarded. We explored much farther afield this year than last, and not only became better acquainted with the country around Ely but even more cognizant of the richness of its bird population. We began to appreciate that the elusive Connecticut Warbler was a much more common bird than we would have suspected from the paucity of published sight and nesting records. In almost

every black-spruce tamarack bog we visited after mid-June we would hear its characteristic ~~loud~~ song, which in some ^{respects} ~~aspects~~ ^{or to} ~~loudness~~ ^{and at times is} of its ~~quality~~ ^{was} not unlike the song of the Ovenbird and its sympatric relative the Morning Warbler. The apparent preferred habitat of the Connecticut in Minnesota ^{is} ~~was~~ quite different from the kind of terrain where we found the bird two years ago near Marquette, Michigan, ^{from} ~~at~~ the dry poplar ridges on which in southwestern Alberta Taverner in 1926 found them to be a common nesting species.

A week after our arrival in Minnesota we were back in our favorite spruce and tamarack bog, where we had photographed the Cape May the year before, trying to delimit the territory of a Connecticut which we had heard singing ^{last} ~~last~~ year and again intermittently this year, when our attention was drawn to the high sybilant buzz of a Bay-breasted. The bird was not far from where I stood and we all saw him. Something about his behavior gave me the strong impression that he was especially interested in a clump of medium height black spruces near where he sang, but since at the moment I was intent on following a Cape May, I suggested to Powell, who seemed less occupied, that he go over and examine the grove of spruces from the other side, which he did and immediately announced that he had found the nest. The nest was ten feet high in a twelve foot tall spruce and contained 5 eggs. ^{so} ~~so~~ we had ^{already} ~~found~~ one of the two birds we sought and only had to worry about predators ^{destroying} ~~finding~~ the nest before the eggs hatched and we could get our photographs.

The only top priority bird ^{remained} ~~left to find~~ now ^{was} ~~our~~ ^{Connecticut}, but ^{however} ~~In~~ the mean time we had become almost as anxious to find and photograph the other equally ^{furtive} ~~secretive~~, but less rare, member of the *oposornis* genus the Morning Warbler. Morning Warblers have a disquieting habit of deserting their nests if they are disturbed during the building stage or before the eggs are laid. We had already found two nests under construction and both were ^{subsequently} ~~were~~ deserted, so when Betty found ^{a third} ~~another~~ just finished, we ^{stayed} ~~kept~~ strictly away, keeping track of it only from as far away as possible with field glasses. The prospect for finding a Connecticut nest became increasingly remote as the days passed, but we returned to the search daily in the ^{place} ~~log~~ where we had repeatedly ^{seen} ~~found~~ ^{and heard} ~~and heard~~ the birds. Then on July 4th Powell, who was working alone, whistled for help -- we carried police whistles for this purpose -- and Betty and I converged on the area. He had stirred up a Connecticut which was uttering its loud whip or whik ^{scolding} ~~protest~~ note that we had ^{become familiar with} ~~heard before~~ ~~only~~ in Michigan. Soon we saw both birds and one was carrying food. The male has a slightly darker gray, cape-like hood than the female but the difference is not as distinctive as with the Morning Warbler. An unbroken white eye-ring is the characteristic mark of the Connecticut, whereas only the male Morning Warbler has white on his eye lids but no ring.

As we watched the birds one or the other carrying a caterpillar would fly to a small larch, of which several were ^{growing} ~~distributed~~ ^{about widely spaced} ~~about~~ in loose formation. Sometimes a bird ~~simply would~~

appeared ^{simply} unexpectedly ^{constantly} because we were unable ^{to keep} them both
~~constantly~~ in view. It would walk to the end of a branch
where it would stand often for many minutes looking down as
birds do when they are getting ready to drop off from a
perch. Eventually it would either fly to the ground where
it ~~disappeared~~ ^{vanished} into the ~~Labrador~~ ^{bog} tea, or with an apparent
change of mind fly to another ~~larch~~ ^{perch} and repeat the per-
formance. After the bird ~~alighted~~ ^{had} on the ground ~~and vanished~~ ^{disappeared}
we never saw it ~~fly up~~ ^{until} again, ~~but~~ ^{it would reappear} ultimately
in one of the trees scolding or with more food. We searched
carefully all the places -- they were ~~not always the same~~ ^{many} ---
and for several yards around in all directions where the bird
had ~~disappeared~~ ^{alighted} in the bog, and found nothing.

We knew ~~perfectly~~ ^{very} well a nest or fledgelings were hidden
somewhere in the vicinity, and were beginning to suspect that
the peculiar behavior of the birds of disappearing in
different places indicated more strongly young birds scattered
through the bog vegetation than it did a nest. As the morning
wore on we became more and more discouraged and finally decided
to knock off and eat our lunch. Besides it was beginning to
~~rain~~ ^{and we were cold}. While Powell and I stayed to watch the Connecticuts,
Betty went back to the cars to fetch our sandwiches and
coffee. On her return we sat down each on his own hummock to
eat. Hardly had we started when Powell stood up without
saying ~~anything~~ ^{a word}, walked about fifty feet over to another
hummock, separated the ~~cover of~~ ^{covering} leaves and grass, and with
calculated indifference said, "You don't have to look any

further, here it is." He had seen a slight movement down among some blueberry leaves, but he never saw a bird enter or leave the ~~nest~~ site. The nest contained four well feathered-out young. They looked as though they might jump out any minute. When we stood back to observe how the adults could approach their nest unseen, we saw them creep through the tangled ^{plants} ~~vegetation~~ for a distance of many yards from the place where they dropped to the ground, and after feeding their young stealthily walk away again, sometimes as far as to one of the tamaracks into which they would then climb.

The nest was beautifully concealed in a hollow in a hummock, visible only by parting the vegetation that completely covered it. A miniature blueberry bush grew above the hollow, leather leaf enclosed one side, and the long thin ribbons of sedge and marsh grass hung down on the other. From under the nest a mound of mixed sphagnum and cranebill moss ^{curved} ~~bulged~~ out in front to afford further protection and concealment, and through the moss laced ~~the~~ tiny flat-leaved vines of snow berry and the tough long stems of lycopodium. More grasses trailed out from the clump of moss, ~~old~~ brown blades together with the new year's growth. The nest embedded in moss was made entirely of dry grass. When the birds approached the nest they came to it through a tunnel of leather leaf, grass, and Labrador tea.

The rain had settled down to a steady drizzle. Despite the inclemency of the weather I decided to attempt photography, the determining consideration being that the advanced stage of