

The principal object of the expedition was the study of migratory water birds on their summer pastures. Many of these species are important game and economic species whose habits are of considerable practical interest. However, some observations were made on the few species of birds that live in the interior, during the long sledge journey. Perhaps the most interesting of these is the Alaskan blue-jay, which lays and hatches its eggs during March, when the mercury frequently drops to 40 or 50 degrees below zero.

The country along the seashore consists largely of low sand dunes and tundra where the birds are literally countless. Why they go so far north is no mystery, for during the crowded days of the short Arctic summer the tundra is spread with food like a table. Mr. Brandt stated that birds feeding on these northern plains pick up seed, berries and insects just as rapidly as hens in a prosperous farm-yard pick up grains at feeding time; and that all the birds he killed for food or specimens were heavy and fat.

The tundra also supports a large population of small animals allied to the field mice, which supply provender for snowy owls and other flesh-eating birds.

The expedition enlisted the services of the primitive Eskimos of the region. Part of them located the nests of desired species, and showed themselves to be patient and skilled searchers, finding nests that eluded even the eyes of the scientists. Others were taught to blow eggs and to prepare bird skins. In this latter work the girls were especially successful, for they have had much practice in making birdskin garments for themselves.

Among the most abundant of the birds of the region is the eider duck. Flocks averaging over a thousand specimens flew over, twelve or fifteen of them in succession. Ducks of other species, four kinds of geese, and numerous wading birds, also abounded.

One of the most difficult of the birds, from a collector's standpoint, was the snowy owl. It lays from nine to a dozen eggs, but begins sitting from the first. Consequently when the collector undertakes to blow a nest of eggs, he finds them in all conditions, from quite fresh to nearly ready to hatch. Mr. Brandt added that he did not undertake the preparation of more owls' eggs than were really needed.

-----

#### CANADIANS TO EXPLORE BAFFIN LAND INTERIOR

The vast expanse of Baffin Land, north of Labrador, 200,000 square miles of icy desolation, is about to yield its secrets. The Canadian government steamer "Artic" has landed a party of engineers in command of J. D. Soper with the object of making a complete survey of the mineral resources of this practically unknown interior. They will remain eighteen months.

F. D. Henderson of the Canadian Department of the Interior, who has returned after leaving the party, says there are indications that vast amounts of coal, iron and possibly other valuable minerals will be found.

-----

The rainfall of the south and middle west consists of water from the Gulf of Mexico.

-----