

From William Brewster's Journal, June 1, 1885

"Left Asheville at 8 a.m. in a top buggy drawn by a pair of horses, my destination being the Black Mountain group. For the first twelve miles the road followed the course of the Swannanoa River, a beautiful stream averaging about thirty yards in width, for the most part shallow and rapid, its banks bordered by fine red birches (4 ft. in diameter), sycamores, red maples, black walnuts, red oaks, water oaks, etc. with an undergrowth of alders. The larger trees grew out over the water, their tops and branches often meeting and interlacing with those on the opposite banks forming an arch of foliage beneath which the river flowed smoothly and silently in places, in others rushed noisily over ledges or rippled musicly down the pebbly shallows. The river valley at large was mostly cleared and under cultivation; hence, with the exception of an occasional Quail whistling in the fields of tall oats or a Cat Bird or Maryland Yellow-throat singing in some fence corner, most of the birds were confined to the timber along the stream. In this cover they were numerous. The most abundant and characteristics species were Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo (dozens heard in the tops of the sycamores), Yellow Warbler, White-eyed Vireo (several), Yellow-breasted Chat, Orchard Oriole (abundant), Northern Oriole (a few), Wood Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher (abundant), Least Flycatcher (one singing on the banks of the river), Indigo Bunting, Cardinal, American Redstart (one only), Carolina Chickadee, Grey Catbird, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Chestnut-sided Warbler (one), Mourning Dove, Rough-winged Swallow, Common Crow, Field Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Wood Thrush."

Simpson, M.B. (ed.). 1980. William Brewster's Exploration of the Southern Appalachian Mountains: The Journal of 1885. The North Carolina Historical Review 57:43-77.