

the same flock came down to the West branch of the Brandywine, where several were shot and found to be in very poor flesh.

The older residents say that many years ago a flock of forty individuals settled in the valley, and having lost their leader, wandered about until all were shot, the last pair existing many months before finally falling victims to the gun.—F. L. BURNS, *Berwyn, Penn.*

RARE WINTER BIRDS AT MERIDIAN, WIS.—December 13, 1893, I shot a Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). There is another individual at the present time which makes its home in an old oak tree near a farm dwelling. It does not appear to move around much, securing its living from a crib of corn a few yards distant.

On January 20, 1894, a fine specimen of American Robin was brought me which was caught by a trapper in a steel trap set for mink. The bait of fresh beef probably lured the bird to the spot. This is the first instance of either of these birds being seen in this part of Wisconsin during mid-winter.—J. N. CLARK, *Meridian, Wis.*

QUEER ACTIONS OF GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKERS.—Mr. O. A. Pfeifer, of this city [San Antonio, Texas], tells me that a pair of Golden-fronted Woodpeckers wanted to make a nest in one of the gallery posts of his house. The birds worked through the pine board and were surprised, doubtless, at finding a ready-made cavity five feet deep. These birds do a house no good, so Mr. P. determined to stop them. He first stuffed some rags in the hole made by the birds, but they pulled them out as fast as he could put them in. Now comes the queer part of it. After pulling out the rags, the birds brought some week-old Mockingbirds from a nest near by, and dropped them into the cavity. Mr. P. heard the young birds crying in the cavity, and saw the Woodpeckers drop one young bird in. The young birds soon died, when the Woodpeckers drew them out and laid them on the gallery. Did the Woodpeckers put the young birds in the hole so that Mr. P. would not close up the entrance and so smother them?—A. H. W. NORTON, *San Antonio, Texas.*

NOTES FROM MICHIGAN.—THE WOODPECKER AS A FLYCATCHER.—I would like to know if catching insects on the wing is a common habit of Woodpeckers. On the evening of July 2, 1894, I was closing a day's observations at the summit of one of the sand dunes by Lake Michigan, when a Woodpecker of the species *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* darted

from a perch near by, paused a moment overhead to seize an insect, and returned to the tree. In a few moments it repeated the manœuvre, then flew into a hole in a pine stub near by, where it evidently had a nest of young. Soon it was out again making other captures with which it returned to the nest, stopping only long enough to deliver the morsels. I watched the entire performance repeated at least a half-dozen times. Whether the bird impaled the insects with its tongue I was unable to determine, but was led to think that it did so from the fact that it invariably caught two insects before returning to the nest, holding the first while watching for and while catching the second. I can best describe the motions of this bird by comparing with *Tyrannus tyrannus* in the same act. Anyone who has closely watched the latter bird knows the peculiar upward turn and the deliberate extension of the head and neck as it takes an insect. The insects caught by the Woodpecker were rather large and appeared to belong to the order *Trichoptera*.

[This habit is mentioned on page 22, BULLETIN No. 7, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Preliminary Report on the *Food of Woodpeckers*, by F. E. L. Beal, Assistant Ornithologist. The credit of the observation is given to Dr. C. Hart Merriam. I also have seen the Red-heads make sallies from some high perch after insects, but never noticed it except in the fall.—LYNDS JONES.]

EFFECT OF A STORM ON HUMMINGBIRDS.—One result of the extreme cold just after the middle of May, 1894, was a terrible slaughter of Hummingbirds. On the eighteenth of that month snow fell rapidly here for about an hour, the flakes being very large, wet and heavy. During this storm a Hummingbird flew into one of our school rooms and remained till the storm had passed. Within the following week the bodies of nine dead Hummingbirds were brought to me, all evidently killed by the storm or the cold weather following. I was told of several more being found dead or stupid with cold during that period. Previous to the storm the month had been unusually warm and pleasant. As eight of the nine birds brought me were males, I infer that migrations were then in progress and that few females had arrived. Basing an estimate on the territory from which these nine birds were gathered, and assuming that Muskegon represented an average of the state in advancement of the season and in storm conditions, at least 100,000 Hummingbirds were destroyed in Michigan by that storm. But it seems improbable that more than one in ten of those destroyed was discovered, and the actual number of these beautiful and tender creatures that perished must have been much greater than the above estimate.—C. D. McLOUTH, *Muskegon, Mich.*