

GENERAL NOTES

Large Flocks of Wintering Blackbirds at Gate, Oklahoma.—A very spectacular feature in the bird line in this locality during the past February (1925) was the large flights of blackbirds. These were practically all Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus* subsp.), but there were also a few Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) and Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*). They roosted about five miles northwest of here in some rushes and cat-tails, and seemed to do most of their feeding to the southeast of this place. Their food consisted chiefly of milo, kaffir, cane and waste grain. At times these birds do a great deal of damage, pecking the seed out of ripening heads and attacking the shocked and stacked grain.

They passed this locality in the morning, a little before sunrise, and returned in the evening, from about a half hour before sunset until some time after sunset. They could be seen coming for three or four miles, in a column that resembled at that distance the line of smoke given off by a distant locomotive, except that it was constantly writhing and twisting like a sinuous serpent. As the dark band approached, the individual birds could be distinguished. The band was perhaps thirty feet across and there were usually about ten to fifteen birds to the rod of cross section. Sometimes there are fewer than this, but sometimes many more. The column was not continuous. Possibly there would be a mile or two of blackbird ribbon, then a gap of a half mile, then a longer section. On February 13, I saw a practically continuous stream about seven miles long. It is hard to accurately estimate the total number of individuals, but I think thirty thousand would be conservative.—WALTER E. LEWIS, *Gate, Okla.*

The Robin Nesting on the Ground.—In the WILSON BULLETIN for September, 1924, pp. 136-137, Mr. Ben J. Blincoe, after giving two instances of the Robin nesting on the ground, goes on to say that he is not aware of any other similar records. Regarding this matter, may I be allowed to draw attention to the fact that in the *Auk*, Vol. xxxiii, No. 2, p. 185, 1916, I gave an instance of a Robin nesting on the ground, under a projecting ledge of rock on a sloping hill-side, near my house at Hatley, Stanstead County, Quebec. The rarity of the Robin nesting absolutely on the ground, is about on a par with the finding of nests containing sets of five eggs, the latter never having come under my notice, although I have examined hundreds of nests with this object in view.—HENRY MOUSLEY, *Montreal, Que.*

The Cedar Waxwing Feeding on Apple Petals.—On the first of May, when the apple trees in my orchard were in full bloom, a flock of about thirty Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) made their appearance, and fed on the apple petals as long as they lasted, or until the seventh of May, when they left as suddenly as they came. I watched them a number of times with a six power glass at a distance of about forty feet while they pulled off and swallowed the petals. After feeding until satisfied they would fly to the tops of some large forest trees near by, and rest until they had room for more apple petals, and then would take wing in a body and descend on the orchard. I do not think any harm was done to the fruit crop, as they never, so far as I could see, harmed any part of the flower except the petals.—JOHN B. LEWIS, *Lawrenceville, Va.*