

Common Grackles anting with moth balls.—On June 27, 1960, at about 5:00 a.m. (CDT), I heard a great chatter of grackles in the front yard. There were about 25 or 30 Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*), and on the walk were about 10 more with moth balls in their bills. They would rub the moth balls under the wings, along the breast and belly, along the back between the wings, and in the anal area. They would drop the moth balls, shake and shiver, and some would drag themselves along on the walk and in the grass. Those doing this would definitely rub the area of the vent on the walk and in the grass. They would fluff their plumage, and run the bill down the wing quills without the moth ball. Even the young ones took it up, but many of them would fall over. Some rolled in the grass as they tried to rub the moth balls over their feathers. Their antics were so varied it would be hard to describe them all. (See Hill, 1946. *Wilson Bull.*, 58:112; Whitaker, 1957. *Wilson Bull.*, 69:195–262.)

On June 29, 1960, Frank Bellrose and I observed them again anting with the moth balls, this time at about 7:00 p.m.

My observations indicated that the grackles never anted with the moth balls during the middle of the day. They would sometimes pick them up, but never ant with them. The early morning hour and from one to two hours before dusk seemed to be the anting time for them.

On July 10, 1960, one large adult male anted from 4:54 p.m. to 5:23 p.m. He completely and systematically rubbed every feather he could reach on his body, then the wing and tail feathers, with a small moth ball. He knocked over two other adult males who apparently tried to get his moth ball away from him.

I found that I could get the grackles to ant sooner by placing moth flakes in the grass among the moth balls. Apparently the fumes from the flakes made some of the birds' ectoparasites move about, because the birds would immediately start to peck rapidly in first one place, then another, and then ant vigorously with a moth ball.



I observed one young bird chip a part of a moth ball and eat it. Later, I saw an adult bird do the same thing. In both cases, after anting awhile with a moth ball, they both acted like they were very sick. They both walked over by a rose bush and stood with drooping wings and a disinterested attitude. Within an hour they both flew away. On July 20, 1960, grackles were still anting with moth balls.

During my observations I have noted other birds in the area. A Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) took a moth ball from the ground and flew with it to his nest in a hole in a nearby tree. One Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) fluffed his feathers but did not ant. Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*), young and old, did not ant. Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) did not ant with the moth balls, but I observed an adult male Robin ant over a nest of very large ($\frac{3}{8}$ -inch) brownish-black ants.—LEO H. BOR-
GELT, 219 North Promenade Street, Havana, Illinois, July 22, 1960.

NEW LIFE MEMBER



Francis L. Jaques, bird artist and illustrator for thirty-five books on birds, mammals, and other outdoor subjects, is a new Life Member of the Wilson Ornithological Society. Mr. Jaques has painted some eighty backgrounds for exhibits in museums including the American Museum of Natural History, the Boston Museum of Science, the Peabody Museum of Yale, the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, the University of Nebraska State Museum, etc. His special interests in ornithology include studies of game and sea birds, and the conservation of their habitats.

Mr. Jaques has been a member of the Society since 1939, and is also a member of the A.O.U., the Linnaean Society of N.Y., and the Explorers' Club.