

COWBIRDS FEEDING COWBIRDS

Dr. Harold B. Wood of 3016 N. Second St., Harrisburg, Pa. sends in this note:

"Laurence B. Fletcher reported watching a male Cowbird feed a young Cowbird with bread crumbs, in 1924. Walter I. Allen of Altedena, California, reported in the Western Bird-Panding News that he watched a pair of adult Cowbirds with a young one, saying, 'When the three were together the young bird was fed by the female after much begging'. Harold B. Wood on July 1, 1950 watched a male Cowbird on a lawn with two young Cowbirds. The adult tried to teach the young ones how to search on the ground for food, as a hen will show her chicks, but without any scratching. He would peck into the grass, then look at the two fledglings about a yard away, and repeat that act, gradually moving closer to them. He did not pick up any food as there was none there. Finally, the young Cowbirds flew away followed by the adult.

"More observations are needed as it is a debatable activity - much so. I stood about 20 feet away."

ODDITIES

On June 4 Jeff Gill was called to evict a nest of Common Terns from a small cabin cruiser in Huntington Harbor, N. Y. Since there is no known colony of these birds nesting on the North shore of Long Island and since these birds seldom nest in single pairs, Jeff bet the owner of the boat that the birds were not terns. A fleet of three boats went out to the anchorage complete with news-camera men and motion-picture cameras. Jeff lost the bet.

A week before he received a call from a lady who claimed her children had found a three-legged bird. Impossible. That is what Jeff thought. However, the three legged young Starling is now a speciman in the American Museum of Natural History. When Gill had it the bird was alive, but badly man-handled by the children. It definitely had three legs, the extra limb growing from the hip and

of about the same length as the others but having only two toes. When last heard from Gill was out looking for Passenger Pigeons and Auks.

FROM NEBBA

Merrill Wood calls our attention to a change in NEBBA as follows:

Mr. Richard M. Hinchman, 75 Fairbanks Rd., Milton 86, Mass., is now the Secretary-Treasurer of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association. Mr. Charles B. Floyd recently resigned because he was called to Washington for special work in connection with leather production.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Dr. Harold B. Wood has given us (at the Editor's request) the following biography:

"My first bird book was a personal drawing and coloring of birds copied from library books, with the sheets sewed together. In 1927 I accepted an invitation to become a federal bird bander. The first bird banded was a Sparrow Hawk which was found dead a mile away four months later. This was followed by just 5000 birds banded, of 85 species. These birds varied in size from a hand-caught humming bird to a loon, a turkey vulture and two of Broley's Bald Eagles. Homing experiments were carried on with female Cowbirds, one returning 100 miles in exactly four days. Not one bird banded elsewhere has entered our traps.

"My contributions to banding include getting the classification of 'recoveries' universally accepted; subdividing the reported young birds into 'nestlings' and 'juveniles', with 'young' omitted; getting traps painted black; suggesting plumage studies to determine age of birds; encourage museum exhibitions of banded birds; and suggesting more publicity of banding and various studies of bird life.