

it bred three times a year. He answered that it always ran, and that he had seen young birds in April, June, and August. I told him that it undoubtedly was the Horned Lark, which was getting to be quite common in this vicinity, and also added, "Have you ever found its nest?" He did not know with certainty, but thought he knew where there was one, and took me to it. The nest was built in the side of a manure heap in the field, and contained four fresh eggs. I secured the male bird only, not having time to secure the female. But I was content to get what I did; and I know that I am safe in saying it is the first nest and eggs of *E. alpestris* secured in Niagara County, and think I might also include Orleans County. A week later the young man sent me a young bird alive, just from a nest, which I killed and sent to Dr. A. K. Fisher, who pronounced it 'a jewel.' I secured a number of young birds in July, but did not succeed in finding any August broods; and but for the assertion of my young friend that he had seen them in that month, I should not have expected to find them; but I am quite certain that I saw birds after the 5th of July that were breeding.—J. L. DAVISON, *Lockport, N. Y.*

The Swallow-tailed Flycatcher in Manitoba and at York Factory.—The Swallow-tailed Flycatcher (*Milvulus forficatus*) is such a characteristically southern bird, that its accidental occurrence in Manitoba is worthy of note. Last January I was shown a splendid specimen taken at Portage la Prairie by Mr. Nash. He found it lying dead on the prairie in the October of 1884. In addition to this record I quote the following rather startling statement from the 'Report' on the Hudson's Bay by Professor Bell of the Canadian Geological Survey, 1882. "But the most singular discovery in regard to geographical distribution is the finding of the Scissors-tail or Swallow-tailed Flycatcher (*Milvulus forficatus* Sw.) at York Factory . . . The specimen in the Government Museum was shot at York Factory in the summer of 1880 and I have learned since that these remarkable birds were occasionally seen at the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, all the way west to the Valley of the Mackenzie River."

The once surprising New Jersey record is now somewhat eclipsed.—ERNEST E. T. SETON, *Toronto, Canada.*

Food of the Hummingbird (*Trochilus colubris*).—Somewhere it has been stated, that the Hummingbird derives the most of its nourishment from the minute insects which adhere to the nectar of flowers, and which are taken with the honey. Undoubtedly many insects are thus secured, and furnish their share of nutriment to the species, but in the following account of a Hummer in confinement, kindly furnished to me by Miss Hattie Brubaker, it will be seen that insects are not wholly essential to the maintenance of life, in *Trochiluscolubris* at least.

The bird, she writes, was taken September 1, near De Pere, Wis., and thrived nicely until October 28, when it met an untimely death. After

it had struggled in vain for nearly two days to escape from a room into which it had accidentally flown, it was picked up in an exhausted condition and carefully placed out of doors in an arbor, in hopes of its recovering sufficiently to fly away. A severe cold rain that night completely numbed it, so that it was again taken to the house a mere bunch of ruffled feathers—no life then being apparent. A slight warming quite unexpectedly revived it, and it was but a short time before it opened its eyes and flew to a nail, and then immediately began to rearrange its plumage. As flowers and sweetened water were offered to this captive before it was taken to the arbor, without its once noticing them, Miss Brubaker was rather at a loss to know how to feed it; but at last she conceived of placing some sugar and water in a conspicuous gladiolus blossom, which the Hummingbird soon discovered and visited, drinking greedily the honey that was in the blossom. After this it became quite lively, flying from its nail to some dried flowers and grasses in another room, where it had rested during the two days it had remained in the house without food or water.

With the aid of a petunia blossom as a decoy, this little bird was soon taught to drink from a small phial, holding about two teaspoonfuls of sugar and water (about one-third sugar), that was suspended by a string to the window casing. It was but a day or so before it seemed perfectly contented, not showing the least fear, but seemingly growing stronger as well as larger in its new home.

Miss Brubaker thinks the bird was not an old one, as its tail-feathers grew considerably after she had it. She says that at first they kept a variety of cut flowers in the room with it, but it barely alighted upon them, flying at once to the bottle which it had learned to appreciate. Somewhat after the manner of obtaining nectar from a flower, it would sip a moment at the bottle and then dart away; but it was not long in finding that the supply of sweetened water was inexhaustible, and that there was no necessity of hastening its meal. At times it would drink so much that its wings were unable to sustain the weight of the body, and a fall to the floor was the result of its excessive fondness for this artificial nectar. When left to itself and no check put upon its drinking, it would consume at least half the contents of the phial daily—at least one-half as much as its own bulk.

"We are certain," she writes, "that for at least a month the bird had access to no flowers whatever, thus making it certain that the sweetened water furnished it its sole nourishment, and during this captivity it did not show the first signs of diminishing strength."

At the approach of cold weather it was placed in a cage, in which its little history was brought to a close by its accidentally entangling one of its claws in a loose wire which secured a small perch in the cage, and thus suspended, with its head downward, it was found by Miss Brubaker the next morning — another 'bunch' of ruffled feathers. — SAMUEL WELLS WILLARD, *West De Pere, Wisc.*