

extensive territory but I find more records for Illinois than in previous years. I have examined twenty-eight specimens so far (Dec. 9) received by two of our Chicago taxidermists, the earliest record being Oct. 31. Some of these specimens came from Cook and Lake Counties, Ill., Ironwood, Mich., and from a few localities in Wisconsin. On Nov. 17 I saw a specimen on the "Skokie" marsh, near Highland Park, Ill. After flying a few hundred yards, it alighted on the top of a large haycock where it remained for an hour. In Maine several have been taken near Bangor, and five were sent in to Portland Nov. 14, all taken on Richmond Island, off Scarborough Beach. Mr. M. Abbott Frazar of Boston, writes me under date of Dec. 2, that his establishment had received about twenty specimens, the earliest date being about Nov. 20. They came from different localities on Cape Cod. Mr. H. S. Hathaway of Providence, R. I., reports five as taken in that State on Nov. 16 and 18. About two thirds of the owls which I have examined were large dark females. Some of the males were in fairly light plumage, but none approached the pure white dress in which they are sometimes found.—RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

**The Downy Woodpecker.**—For more than a year past a Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*) has made his home in the backyard of the house where I live. He was induced to stay last winter by a piece of fat meat which was nailed to one of the trees. In the early winter he drilled a hole in a dead cherry limb about six feet from the ground, and I believe used it all winter as a night refuge. During the past summer it was used occasionally by the same bird, though not with any regularity. About sunset he flies into the hole, which is only four inches deep, and sits there with his head out watching the surroundings until dark. The hole is only about twenty feet away from a back porch of the house that is in constant use, and the bird does not seem to be annoyed by his proximity to the persons sitting there.

On my walks through the woods this fall I have noticed a number of newly drilled holes in dead stumps which look as if they had been made by the woodpeckers for winter refuges. This is a habit of the bird which does not seem to have been noted in the natural histories.—R. P. SHARPLES, *West Chester, Pa.*

**Breeding of the Prairie Horned Lark in Eastern Massachusetts.**—As a supplement to Dr. C. W. Townsend's note on the discovery in August, 1903, of young *Otocoris alpestris praticola* at Ipswich, Mass., where they had undoubtedly been bred (Auk, XXI, p. 81, Jan., 1904), it may be worth while to record that on Sept. 4, 1905, I obtained two birds of this subspecies, shot in my presence by a gunner (who mistook them for plover!) out of three which were flitting about a stony beach and a grassy hillside at Ipswich. One of these birds is apparently an adult, but the other is a young bird in juvenal plumage just moulting into the first