

White Warblers (*Mniotilta varia*) by the actions of the old birds. A short time after taking up my position a female Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) came flying through the trees and lit but a short distance away. From time to time I glanced at her to see what she was up to but was unable to see that she had moved a muscle for some twenty minutes, for which time she remained hunched up as if asleep. Then she flew straight to the nest of a Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireosylva olivacea*) which though but ten feet from my hiding place, was so well concealed that it had escaped my attention. After remaining on the nest about two minutes she flew out of sight among the trees. Upon investigation I found the nest to contain two eggs of the rightful owner and one of the Cowbird.— A. BRAZIER HOWELL, *Covina, Cal.*

Evening Grosbeak (*Hesperiphona vespertina vespertina*) **at Boston, Mass.**— On December 29, 1913, while going through the Arnold Arboretum looking for birds, a friend and I saw one which we took to be a female Evening Grosbeak, although we failed to get a good view of it. The next day I went alone to the same spot and found the bird feeding on the ground near a hop-hornbeam tree. I approached slowly within two rods of it and watched it for nearly half an hour. The markings were very distinct in the bright sunshine and there was no doubt about its identity. I could not make out whether it was feeding on grass and weed seeds or something else. At length on the approach of a man from the opposite direction it flew up into the hornbeam and from there to the big oak, where I left it. I saw it again on January 1 and 2 and was told that it was seen in the same spot December 31. That makes in all five successive days and would seem to indicate that it intended to stay there for some time.— EDWARD H. ATHERTON, *Roxbury, Mass.*

The White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*) **in the District of Columbia.**— Within the close of the rectory of Trinity Episcopal Church at Takoma Park, D. C., are three scrub pines, *Pinus virginiana*, of medium size, densely laden with cones. Two of these, one on each side of the walk leading to the steps, extend their branches within ten feet of the front porch where, alone, I was quietly sitting in a rocking chair about 3 P. M. October 23, 1913, literally basking in the hospitable rays of the sun rapidly declining after a bright, but rather brisk, wintry day. I had been on the porch but a few minutes when I discovered several birds assiduously searching the cones in the further one of these two trees. Their movements strangely suggested paroquets and were accentuated by plaintive notes constantly emitted. They were White-winged Crossbills, eight in number. They gradually worked their way to the tree directly in front of which I was sitting, and ultimately reached the very ends of the branches within ten feet of me. I followed their every movement for upwards of fifteen minutes. They left the tree precipitately in a body. About three quarters of an hour later I saw and heard them in a grove of larger pines two squares distant.

This is the first definite published notice of the White-winged Crossbill in the District of Columbia, and the only other satisfactory record of the species in the District is that of Mr. James H. Fleming, of Toronto, Canada, who saw one in the grounds of the Department of Agriculture in November, 1906 (Richmond MSS).

Mr. Jouy included the species in his 'Catalogue of the Birds of the District of Columbia'¹ but this was nothing more than a nominal list and the basis for the inclusion of the bird does not appear.

There are other records of the species in papers on the ornithology of the District and vicinity, but they are all of birds seen or taken in adjacent portions of Maryland. The authors of 'Avifauna Columbiana'² say: "We said of these species (*Loxia curvirostra minor* and *Loxia leucoptera*) in the original edition that both undoubtedly sometimes make their appearance in severe winters, though we had not been able to ascertain the fact with certainty. It has since been established, and both the Crossbills have been introduced as stragglers in Mr. Jouy's catalogue. Mr. William Palmer states in a note addressed to us: . . . 'I have myself never seen the White-winged Crossbill here, but Mr. Henry Marshall has specimens which he shot at Laurel, Md., about eight years ago, probably 1874, since which time he has seen none.'"

One is said to have been taken about 1864 by Mr. Drexler, but there is no certainty that this was in the District. Mr. Oldys' records one as having been accidentally killed on August 12, 1907, at Oxon Hill, Md., about four or five miles southeast of Washington.³ Prof. Cooke adds nothing to the foregoing in his 'Bird Migration in the District of Columbia,'⁴ and Dr. Richmond's inclusion of the species in his 'List of Birds Found in the District of Columbia,' published in Mrs. Maynard's 'Birds of Washington' is based upon no additional records.—R. W. WILLIAMS, *Takoma Park, Md.*

Unusual Nesting Site of the English Sparrow.—As the English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) will cheerfully nest in almost any situation, unusual nesting sites would seem to be almost an impossibility, but nevertheless I think that the following should be put in that class. Near my home during the summer of 1909, between Westerly and Watch Hill, R. I., there was an artificial ice plant. In the outside sheathing of this building was cut an opening through which ran a steam exhaust pipe, and as the hole was cut a little large, there was a handy entrance to the interstices of the wall, about an inch and a half square. On July tenth I discovered that a pair of English Sparrows had a nest full of large young in this retreat. Upon investigation I found that the pipe was hot enough to blister one's

¹ Field and Forest, II, 155, March 1877.

² Bulletin No. 26, U. S. Nat. Museum, 2nd. Ed., 1883.

³ Auk, XXIV, 442.

⁴ Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington, XXI, 115, April, 1918.