

that further research may disclose conditions which have a direct bearing on questions heretofore considered purely ornithological (cf., *Avian Gonads and Migration*, Condor, July, 1926).

Unfortunately for bird students, many investigations already made relating to bird physiology have been published in journals rarely or never seen by ornithologists. Because of this fact attention is here directed to some data recently published in the 'Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift' (Basel), April 17, 1926. In this article it is reported that the thyroids of male Crows shot in the fall and winter are larger than those of Crows shot in spring and summer. This thyroid enlargement and shrinkage is comparable to that of the gonads of birds, with however a reversed curve. There is definite evidence in mammalian physiology that the ovary and thyroid are mutually regulative; this recent publication on bird thyroids tends to show that this thyroid-ovary interaction obtains also with birds. It would be of much interest and value to determine if physiological thyroid hypertrophy and atrophy in migrating birds has a larger swing between extremes than in non-migrating birds.—W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*

Passerine Birds Eating Trout Fry.—Mr. F. G. Bonfils of Denver has given me the following information, some of which is, to me, strange and entirely new:—At several places along the South Fork of the South Platte River in Colorado there are fishing clubs, which maintain ponds for the propagation of trout, which are later liberated in the main stream. Mr. Bonfils, while at the Wigwam Fishing Club in July, 1926, noticed a Robin picking food out of the shallow waters of the Club pond; to his amazement, on close examination he discovered that the bird was catching and eating small trout fry. This seemed so extraordinary that he took time to verify his discovery by a prolonged surveillance of the pond. Careful inquiry amongst the caretakers of the Club grounds disclosed the fact that they had been aware, for some time, of this fish-fry-eating habit of Robins, and also, that Brewer's Blackbirds and Magpies too, had the same habit. They reported the Spotted Sandpiper as also catching trout fry.

Mr. Bonfils learned that members and attendants of the Rainbow Fish Club, on the South Platte, above Deckers, had also noticed this habit in the Robins, Blackbirds and Magpies about the Rainbow Club, and had carefully verified it.

I have frequently seen Brewer's Blackbirds wading in the shallow waters of creeks and sloughs catching fresh water shrimps, and water insects, but never small fish. Such unusual habits give rise to interesting speculations as to the beginnings of avian differentiation.—W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*

Effect of Fires on Pine Barren Bird Life.—The writer spent part of the month of June, 1926, in making a survey of the breeding birds of Ocean County. During the late winter and early spring large areas of the pine

barrens had been burned, and over wide sections much of the vegetation was destroyed. I was especially interested in noting the effects these fires had had upon the distribution of breeding birds, but it was not as marked as I had anticipated. On the dry barrens, covered before the fire by scrub oak, other low growths and pitch pine, the fires had reduced to some extent the numbers of nesting Brown Thrashers, and in a few cases Towhees, and resulted in a concentration of these two species in suitable cover about the fire district. Where the areas were burned quite clear, Nighthawks had come in to nest. But the distribution of Pine and Prairie Warblers seemed to be little affected except in areas where the flames had swept through after the nesting season had started. There was an increase in the number of Bluebirds in the burned areas and I believe some increase in Chipping Sparrows. I noted little effect upon numbers of Woodpeckers or Catbirds, and where the damage was slight and new growths of ferns, etc. gave cover, the number of Towhees was not reduced.—CHARLES A. URNER, *Elizabeth, N. J.*