

but with the first warm days of spring the majority disappeared and when they came back the next winter their ranks were reduced at least one-half.

Two pairs bred in 1925 under the eaves of the barn, the birds forcing an entrance through the wooden shingles of the roof. In 1926, the same nest sites were used again but as soon as the young were on the wing they left the vicinity and up to this writing (October 20, 1926) no Starlings except a stray bird or two have been seen.

When nesting I noticed the birds jerking living leaves from the trees and carrying them in apparently for building material, and birds nesting in old Woodpeckers' holes in a nearby orchard carried chips and whatnot out of the cavities and stowed them away in crevices in the trunk of a birch tree where branches forked from the main limbs, one such place held a quart of material. The hole which they were excavating was found later to be seventeen inches deep.—LEWIS O. SHELLEY, *East Westmoreland, N. H.*

**Grackles Killing Young Pheasants.**—At my Game Farm on the Pickering Creek, in Chester County, Pa., we lost, in the Pheasant field, almost three hundred little Pheasants (*Phasianus*), a few days old, which were destroyed by Purple Grackles (*Quiscalus q. quiscula*). The male Grackles were the ones that did the damage. They came into the enclosure and simply took the heads off the little birds, leaving the bodies.

This happened during the end of June and the first of July, when the Grackles were, apparently, nesting in old cherry trees fairly close to the Pheasant field. We actually shot some to these birds in the act of committing the murder, and, as I said before, when we stopped them, they had killed almost three hundred. My observation makes me believe these depredations were confined to a few pairs of Grackles, and that this is not, necessarily, a general characteristic of this bird. This is the first time I have had any experience with them that was anything but to their credit.

Since writing the above I chanced to be looking over the August (1926) number of the 'Game Breeder' and on page 170 in an article by Lillian E. Beyers is an account of a Magpie attacking a hen Pheasant and killing some of her young and also the following statement: "I have also seen Blackbirds carry off baby Pheasants in alarming numbers. I found that the Blackbirds would fly down, pick the young Pheasant violently upon the head and hurriedly dismember it and carry it off to the trees nearby to feed a hungry nest of young of their own." The "Blackbird" referred to is obviously the western representative of our Purple Grackle, the Bronzed Grackle.—FRANK B. FOSTER, *1800 Morris Building, Philadelphia, Pa.*

**A House Finch Infected by Fly Larvae.**—Once in a while one can catch a juvenile House Finch (*Carpodacus frontalis mexicanus*) which has left the nest, but is still not able to evade capture by hand. About

August 1, 1926, I caught one of these young Finches, which seemed unusually docile. An examination of the bird disclosed a good sized swelling in the cellular tissue just below the right eye, a swelling that proved to be an abscess containing three small living larvae which were removed by expression. Thereupon the bird was liberated, was seen about my premises all that day and was much more lively than before. The larvae were placed on fresh meat, and in a week pupated; in another week two of the pupae matured. I am indebted to Dr. A. K. Fisher and Mr. W. L. McAtee of the Biological Survey for their kindness in identifying the flies which came from the pupae, which proved to be *Protocalliphora splendida* Macq, which I am told is a well known parasite. In a study of the House Finch (Auk, January, 1913) I once found fly larvae in the raw wool foundation of one nest, but this is my first experience in detecting fly larvae in the body of a living House Finch.—W. H. BERGTOLD, Denver, Colo.

**The Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax n. nivalis*) taken near Charleston, S. C.**—On the morning of November 15, 1926, I had the pleasure of taking the first specimen of the Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax n. nivalis*) to be recorded from South Carolina.

On November 13, I had procured and framed Audubon's beautiful plate of this species, and on the 14th, I was driving my wife to McClellanville a little town on the coast, some 36 miles to the north of Charleston. When, about half way, as we were skirting a section of brushy land, a bird flew up from the roadside, in front of the car, and wheeled out into the bushes. Its appearance struck us both, it was as white a small bird as I had ever seen, and I immediately stopped, turned to my wife and asked, "What in the world was that bird?" She replied at once "it looks exactly like that bird in Audubon's plate."

I stepped out on the road, and at once saw the bird leave the bushes, and fly down into the road. I had a pair of 6x binoculars and as soon as I looked at the bird, I knew it was a Snow Bunting. Another car coming along at this moment scared it again, and it took to the bushes. I, of course, had no gun.

We kept on to our destination, and returned the same night. Upon arriving at the Charleston Museum the next morning, I related the experience to Mr. E. B. Chamberlain, and he agreed to return to the spot with me to see if the bird was still in evidence. This we did.

I stopped the car within five feet of the spot where I had seen the bird the previous afternoon, and had no sooner shut off the motor, than a flash of white was noted at the roadside and the bird flew into the road and was collected. It was flushed within ten feet of where it got up on the day before, and was shot within fifty feet of the spot where I had studied it through the glass.

Why the bird was present, who can say? There had been no cold weather, the mercury on the afternoon when the bird was seen stood at