

I found that it was composed of hog hair, grass, feathers, and six strips of transparent celluloid in addition to many smaller pieces of the same material. The strips of celluloid were from one-half to three inches in width and from five to six and one-half inches in length. In the same box just previously I had found a nest of *Thryothorus l. ludovicianus* (Carolina Wren) which did not contain any of the celluloid.

Transparent celluloid resembles snakeskin very much except in odor. Celluloid has a slight odor, especially noticeable when heated, whereas snake skins do not. I examined fifty snake exuviae and failed to detect any odor whether the skins were cold or heated.

Birds as a rule are attracted to shining objects and deport these objects whenever possible, as in the case of the common pet Crow. I have observed *Pici* (Woodpeckers), *Baeolophus b. bicolor* (Tufted Titmouse) and *Penthestes c. carolinensis* (Carolina Chickadee) investigating pieces of bright metal or glass hung in the sun.

Herein lies a possible explanation of birds' usage of snake skins. My experiment leads to the assumption that it is not because they have an offensive odor that would protect the nest, for snakeskins have none, but because birds are naturally attracted to shining objects.

Crested Flycatchers are very inquisitive birds, as most any oölogist has observed. If, then, birds act in accordance with neural impulses, why should this species, high in the plane of avian evolution, err so in mistaking celluloids for snake skin? If the odor theory were correct, the difference between the odors of snake skin and celluloid would certainly be perceptible if the avian olfactory nerves were sensible to either.

A possible experiment on this line which I have not been able, thus far, to conduct, would be to determine whether there is any choice between celluloid, or other shiny material with more or less odor, and snake skin when both are readily accessible. The relative attractiveness of shiny objects for different species should also be a stimulating and fruitful field for research.

Though I realize that a decision cannot be made scientifically on one case of behavior, yet I believe that the theory that birds use snake skin as a nesting material because of its shiny, attractive appearance is more logical than the theory of offensive odor. I hope at least, that my observations may open new channels of thought on this peculiar avian habit that may lead to more exhaustive research.—JAMES SUTHARD, 5515 Kimbark Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Birds and Motor Cars.—In connection with reports on the killing of birds by motor cars, particularly in the West, I took note when driving some twenty-five hundred miles, on highways and back roads in New Hampshire, June 21 to July 21, 1926, and noted the crushed bodies of only two birds.

The speed of flight of a few birds, as noted from my speedometer, may be worth adding to our rather meagre records; it is rarely that the three

necessary factors coincide: courses parallel, duration adequate, speed of car unvarying. Northern Flicker, rate twenty-five miles per hour; Baltimore Oriole, twenty-six; Bronzed Grackle, twenty-seven; Song Sparrow, seventeen; four Robins, respectively twenty-two, twenty-five, twenty-seven, thirty-two.—F. B. WHITE, *Concord, N. H.*

In re a Colorado Collector.—There is, so far as I can learn, but one record of the occurrence of the Black Rail (*C. jamaicensis*) in Colorado, a record made on the authority of David Bruce, and published in the First Supplement to Cooke's 'List of Colorado Birds'.

Future workers in Colorado ornithology may wish to compile data relative to the early collectors of birds in this State. To facilitate the collection of such data the following quotation from the late Carl E. Akeley's 'In Brightest Africa' (p. 2) is given below:—

"There was at that time in the neighboring town of Brockport (N. Y.) an Englishman named David Bruce, whose hobby was taxidermy. By calling he was a painter and interior decorator—a very skillful craftsman, who did special work far and wide through the country. As a recreation he mounted birds and animals for sportsmen. His office was filled with birds in cases, and he was surrounded with other evidences of his hobby."—W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*