

time over Grandfather Mountain, N. C. The section of the mountain where this occurred lies in Avery Co. We had been on "The Nose," one of the higher peaks of the mountain, and an hour or so earlier had seen one adult Duck Hawk fly past at high speed and disappear toward the Tennessee line. As we started down the trail over "The Nose" and rounded a small shoulder of the peak a high-pitched scream greeted us, and, looking up, we got a beautiful view of an adult Duck Hawk at a range of not over two hundred yards. The bird was in such good light that we could easily get the black "moustache" markings and distinguish the various other color markings of a mature bird, even the pinkish suffusion on the breast showing distinctly. But we could not spare many minutes for this bird, for just behind it was another, and then another, and still another, and then three more following these at a short distance, making seven Duck Hawks in plain view at once. It was not a strung out flight; all seven were more or less together, and once four of them were in the field of the glasses at the same time. There were both adult and immature birds in the group. They passed in a generally southerly direction parallel with the line of the mountain, most of the time high in the air but at times coming quite low and close to the peak on which we stood. After a scream or two from the first bird, none of them made any further sound. Even our wonder at the sight of so many individuals of this rather rare Hawk was forgotten at the remarkable aerial maneuvers which some of them then performed. Every now and then two of the birds separated from the general group to indulge in acrobatics. One circled higher and higher until almost out of sight and then, with wings half closed and set, dropped for half a mile with terrific speed at the other bird, banking with a lightning-like turn just in time to avoid a collision, and pulling the other bird over and over with the rush of air. Again and again this happened, several couples performing this feat, until finally the whole group passed out of sight, leaving us almost breathless at the sight that we had witnessed. Mr. Forbush, in his 'Birds of Massachusetts,' calls attention to the fact that often a family of Duck Hawks will linger together about an aery long after the young are grown. It seemed to us rather likely that these seven birds belonged to two such family groups. He also says, "When the fledglings have become skilful in flight, both young and adults in practice or in play often strike at birds which apparently they have no intention of capturing." The performance that we witnessed seems to have been a variation of this habit in that the Duck Hawks were striking at one another in play rather than at other birds.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Charleston, S. C.*, JAMES J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Va.*

Urban Burrowing Owls.—When I first came to San Diego from New York State in 1921, a surprising discovery, among many interesting new bird experiences, was the occurrence of Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto cunicularia hypogaea*) in well-settled parts of the city. A certain individual roosted daily in a pepper tree in front of the Central Y. M. C. A., almost

in the heart of the business district. On El Cajon Boulevard, which was a well-traveled thoroughfare even in those days, Burrowing Owls could often be seen perched on the side-walk curb. They lived in the culvert drains under the intersecting streets.

The paving of this boulevard has driven these birds away, and the Y. M. C. A. "Billy" has gone, yet in spite of San Diego's present 150,000 population Burrowing Owls still subsist wherever there is any extent of vacant land. In quiet streets they can sometimes be seen hawking about the arc-lights at night and settling on the pavement below—probably in pursuit of moths. On Reynard Way, which is a short-cut between down town and the Mission Hills residential district, these Owls are common, because many of the sloping lots on each side have not yet been built upon. Even in broad daylight a "Ground Owl" may often be seen standing upon some advertising sign, apparently unconcerned at the passing stream of automobiles. On the other hand, I have more than once seen the flattened body of one of these Owls on the cement roadway (perhaps the remains of an inexperienced youngster)—evidence of bewilderment and tragedy.

On May 20, 1930, I happened to be driving up Reynard Way and passed directly under a Burrowing Owl which was perched on a wire stretched across the street. It was the hour in the afternoon when business men were returning to their homes, and the little Owl seemed to be bending forward and surveying the stream of cars with the calm and judicial air which is supposed to be typical of the Owl family. I was somewhat surprised to see one of these birds on a wire, especially in that rather lofty situation. I also noticed that it was squatting on the wire with the feet covered, instead of in the erect attitude one usually associates with the Burrowing Owl.

Whereas such observations seem common-place and trivial, it may not be amiss to place them on record. At the speed with which some western cities are growing, present-day remnants of primitive conditions are bound to disappear completely before long.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California.*

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo v. virginianus*) Breeding in the District of Columbia.—It is with great pleasure that I record the taking of a fresh set of two eggs of the Great Horned Owl by my friend Edward J. Court at Washington, D. C., March 5, 1930. The nest was situated fifty feet from the ground in a dead chestnut tree, in a section of mixed oak and pine trees, west of Rock Creek, near the Military Road. The eggs were laid on rotten wood and a few feathers from the incubating bird. Both adults were present, one being flushed from the nest. This species has long been known as a permanent resident, but this is believed to be the first breeding record for the District of Columbia.—WILLIAM HOWARD BALL, 1861 *Ingleside Terrace, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

Breeding of Brewer's Blackbird East of its Normal Summer Range.—Kumlien and Hollister say that the only known nesting of this species in Wisconsin was on June 14, 1862, at Lake Koshkonong.