

Mockingbird in Summer and Winter in Southwestern Pennsylvania.—During the summer of 1933, two pairs of Mockingbirds (*Mimus p. polyglottos*) built their nests at the farm of my son-in-law, Miner Cole, twelve miles southwest of Waynesburg, Greene County, Pennsylvania. Their efforts were very discouraging as three of their four nests were deserted. In one instance the nest with its four eggs was so close to a public road and passing automobiles that the sitting bird was continually frightened away. The birds rebuilt in a new place away from the road and this time succeeded in hatching three young.

The first effort of the other pair was broken up, probably by a snake which was seen in the hedge near the nest. In their second effort a severe wind and rain storm was supposed to be the cause of the desertion of the nest and its four eggs. After this failure, the birds stayed in the vicinity but did not nest.

Every year I either see or hear of Mockingbirds nesting here and there in Greene County, but usually at a different location each year. The following incident may explain this irregularity.

My son-in-law has just told me that on January 30, 1934, he found a Mockingbird seeking shelter in a brush-heap on top of a stone pile. The bird seemed much affected by the cold and he planned to capture it and keep it indoors until springtime. Twice he had his hands upon the bird but it finally eluded him and flew over a hill where he failed to re-locate it.

While this section is gradually losing the old-time winters of long drawn out severity, we have had this present season four short periods of zero weather with snow: once about the middle of November last, twice in December and once in January—the three or four days just past.

Since the Mockingbird is never an extensive migrant, it is possible that many of the birds that summer in my section, are non-migrants and die during the winter, thus accounting for the birds being found nesting in a certain place one year and being entirely lacking there the next.—J. WARREN JACOBS, *Waynesburg, Pa.*

The Starling and Mountain Bluebird in Kansas.—On a farm near Wellington, Kansas, where one European Starling was found dead following a storm March 4, 1933, the birds have returned this year and are seen almost daily. On December 6, 1933, eight were seen with several Meadowlarks along a hedge fence. Since February 11, 1934, Starlings in numbers of two to fifty or more have been about the farm. The largest flock was observed following cattle on wheat pasture. The smaller numbers are nearly always with Meadowlarks and come in around the buildings and feed-lots. In their association with the livestock the birds are losing much of their former wildness. The Starlings seem to prefer the company of the Larks to that of a large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds which has been about the place for sometime.

Another rare visitor this winter is the Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*). Early in February a single bird was at the farm house about

dusk for several evenings. Since then as many as a dozen have been seen early in the morning about the cedars in the yard where they probably spend the night. The recorded dates are February 9, 14, 20, and 22, 1934, at the farm. The birds have also been observed in the park and in the cemetery in town. There were about one hundred birds in the flock in the cemetery. There are a great many conifers in the cemetery which likely provide shelter and perhaps some food for them.—FRANK M. ALEXANDER, *Wellington, Kansas.*

Wilson's Warbler in Georgia.—On April 25, 1931, while out in a swamp on Brier Creek I was very much elated and surprised to see a Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla pusilla*). The bird was on the ground in plain view and though I approached within ten feet of him he was not frightened and continued to sit there. At last he flew to a nearby shrub and again I approached very near. This time I wrote a description of him as I did not have a gun to secure this rare visitor.—BERNARD H. STEVENSON, *Waynesboro, Ga.*

Iris Color in the Boat-tailed Grackle (*Cassidix mexicanus subspecies*).—These birds were not numerous on the Chenier au Tigre, Louisiana, this spring but several flocks composed of males, mostly, were observed daily. At the request of Dr. Francis Harper, I collected a few specimens and found that the eyes were greyish brown in males in first year and in full adult plumage. Females were not collected, but those observed with glasses seemed to have eyes of brown.—A. M. BAILEY, *Chicago Acad. of Sciences.*

Color of Iris in the Boat-tailed Grackle (*Cassidix mexicanus major*).—The comments in 'The Auk' caused me to make special investigations on the color of the iris of the Boat-tailed Grackle. I annually band quite a lot of these birds, and there are great numbers of them nesting in various localities about my place and as they are quite tame, the iris can easily be examined without killing them. When handling Boat-tails for banding in late March, 1934, I noticed that all of the males around the trap, although in full breeding plumage, had yellow eyes, but when in the trap and badly frightened, their eyes were brown. In late April I made a more careful investigation.

With my glasses I watched the birds around the nests, go through the courting antics, and at such times, when excited and making plumage display to attract the females, the iris is contracted to only a very small black point, and the balance of the eye is a brilliant golden yellow. When these same birds relax, the pupil expands and the iris is then partly brown or a dull golden brown, except the outside rim, which remains bright gold. These same birds when taken in the trap or observed through the glasses at a distance of fifty feet, have the iris brown, with the exception of the golden ring, but when taken in the hand, or when they are being caught, all of the yellow disappears and the iris is then brown. I made this test on