

always by a single observer, never previously acquainted with this species in life in its proper range. Of the reports given by Forbush, the first two can scarcely be questioned, as the observations are recorded in detail and were made by observers of known competence and experience. Messrs. Bagg and Eliot publish another (Birds of Connecticut Valley, p. 525, 1937) from Northampton, May 17, 1936, where the detailed account with a drawing was even more convincing than their summary of it. The other reports in both books can scarcely be regarded as certainties or real additions to scientific knowledge. One or more may be possible or even probable, but this is a matter for speculation only. At present the Kentucky Warbler is proved to be a very rare spring vagrant north of its breeding range. Sight records in New England by inexperienced observers in midsummer and fall require confirmation.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

Hooded Warbler flying backward.—In view of meager data hitherto presented regarding backward flight in birds, the fact is considered noteworthy that late in August 1940, the writer watched a male Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) in an act resorted to by very few avian species. The bird under observation, in a damp, shady thicket, was accompanied by a Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*), the latter being extremely sedentary in comparison. With tremulous wings and "flashing" tail-feathers, the hooded creature moved about restlessly. Presently, at a height of five or six feet, it was momentarily seen to float downward and backward at an approximate 50° angle, fluttering tail-first with its body parallel to the oblique direction of flight. It has not been determined whether a desired insect, an aberrant impulse, or merely pent-up energy was responsible for this unusual feat. The lighting and distance were favorable, and the only obstruction was a slight wisp of hanging vine.

Although this individual scarcely suggested the dexterity of a hummingbird, it is believed that the radical ability is there but is not realized since the warbler seldom has occasion to exercise it. Apparently, but one other recently published account has disproved the general belief of the hummingbird's sole ability in this respect (cf. Williams, Auk, 57: 255, 1940).—ROBERT NORRIS, *Fitzgerald, Georgia.*

Hooded Oriole again recorded in the United States.—During the course of field work in Texas this past spring (1939) a limited amount of collecting was carried on at the mouth of the Pecos River, approximately forty miles northwest of Del Rio, Val Verde County. Among the birds taken there on April 25 was a male Hooded Oriole, that was later found to represent the Mexican race, *Icterus cucullatus cucullatus* Swainson. Until taken by Dr. George M. Sutton near Marathon, Brewster County, Texas, on April 17, 1935 (J. Van Tyne and G. M. Sutton, *Miscell. Publ. Mus. Zool., Univ. Michigan*, no. 37: 92, 1937) this race had not heretofore been recorded from the United States. This appears, therefore, to be the second record for this subspecies north of the Rio Grande. It is possible that further field work will reveal this oriole as of more than casual occurrence within the United States.—THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, *Bureau of Biological Survey*, and GEORGE H. LOWERY, JR., *Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*

Cowbird on the Virginia and North Carolina coasts.—The breeding range of the Eastern Cowbird (*Molothrus ater ater*) as usually given does not include eastern