

up almost at once, with ascending and descending birds in the air constantly. Such a scene was presented off and on during the entire two months.

It would seem that the ibises could easily have swallowed their catch on the ground, but they would apparently always leap upward as soon as they withdrew the crayfish, and this was the signal for the grackles to attack. That the latter were highly successful was evident. It seems strange that this habit has not been noted before in many investigation trips in that area, and it is too much to suppose that it is of immediately recent development. One of the writer's visitors suggested that here was a factor in the general rarity of this species.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *National Audubon Soc., Charleston, South Carolina.*

Birds imprisoned by a snowstorm.—An unusually severe and unseasonal snowstorm swept across the north-central States on November 11, 1940, to terminate a mild fall season. The storm commenced with a drizzling rain which changed in turn to sleet and snow with the falling temperature which reached a minimum of 10° F. during the night. The 42-mile wind accompanying the snow produced a blinding blizzard. Wildlife in general suffered a heavy mortality in many sections of the State.

Near the town of St. Peter, Nicollet County, Minnesota, there are seven caves excavated in the sandstone bluffs along the Minnesota River. To escape the storm, many birds of different species resorted to one of these caves for shelter. During the course of the storm, the cave entrance was blocked by drifting snow, imprisoning the birds. Immediately following the storm, Mr. Charles Meyer, who operates the caves as a tourist attraction, removed the snow barrier; and, upon entering the cave was confronted by these many birds flying about excitedly in their confine. He stepped out and to one side of the cave and allowed the birds to escape, attempting to identify and count them as they left. He noted thirteen Ring-necked Pheasants, nearly two dozen Bob-white, three Cardinals, two Robins, a number of Chickadees, several Downy Woodpeckers, and what he called "small woodpeckers" which may well have been White-breasted Nuthatches which were common in the vicinity.

The aggregate of different species in one cave would lead one to believe that the birds were thoroughly familiar with the cave and its protective potentialities.—G. N. RYSGAARD, *Minnesota Museum of Natural History, Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

A noteworthy concentration of birds.—The responses which animals sometimes make to conditions or situations affecting their well-being are sometimes striking, occasionally abrupt and frequently transitory. Recently I encountered such a response as represented by the group-feeding of several species of birds. The celerity of the response, the degree of participation therein and the sudden cessation thereof by these birds in the locality concerned was so conspicuous that the facts pertaining thereto may well be made a matter of record.

About 4.00 p. m. on March 14, 1941, while looking for early-spring birds some fifteen miles northeast of Albany, New York, I noted a conspicuous dark-colored patch on a nearby, open, snow-covered hillside. Inspection at closer range indicated that earlier the same day, several loads of stable manure had been thickly distributed over an area approximately 30 feet wide by 250 feet long. Detailed examination with binoculars revealed the presence of a considerable assemblage of birds that had been attracted to this place on account of food, principally in the way of waste grain, thus suddenly rendered available in a region still covered with

an average of six to eight inches of snow. A strong northwest wind was blowing and it was possible to approach within a few feet of most of the birds as I walked slowly from one end of the manured area to the other. The seven species present and my combined counts and estimates of the number of each follow: Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus torquatus*), 1 ♂; Northern Horned Lark (*Otocoris a. alpestris*), 100±; Prairie Horned Lark (*Otocoris alpestris praticola*), 20±; Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna magna*), 4; Eastern Red-wing (*Agelaius p. phoeniceus*), 2 ♂'s and 1 ♀; Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*), 3; Eastern Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax n. nivalis*), 150+.

Seldom is it possible in this territory to see at one time, on such a small area so many individuals of so many species of birds. The early local spring occurrence of the Eastern Meadowlark and the Eastern Red-wing, particularly the female, also is noteworthy.

The temperature at the time of my observations was 35 degrees Fahrenheit, with a maximum of 37 and a minimum of 18 degrees for the day. Maximal and minimal temperatures for the five preceding days had been close to these ranges. Precipitation had not occurred during the 36 hours immediately preceding these observations. However, between March 7 and 12, inclusive, a little more than 17 inches of snow had fallen. As a consequence, most of the food that was available on the ground for the bird species indicated was completely covered and had remained so despite some reduction in the amount of snow through melting.

For most of the weeks preceding the series of snowstorms, the ground had been largely bare and the available food supply for birds exposed. As a consequence, such ordinarily gregarious species as Horned Larks, Snow Buntings and Longspurs had been more or less generally dispersed throughout the local territory. But, with a heavy snowfall distributed over five successive days, that food supply was no longer accessible. Probably in their food-searching wanderings the birds were first attracted to the manured area by its dark appearance against the expansive white background. Having stopped to investigate, they found both food and shelter; and, by accretions from similar exploring groups or individuals the assemblage grew until it attained the unusual proportions just described.

A visit to the same spot the next day revealed a much diminished bird population on the area now considerably increased in size by the further distribution of manure. On this occasion the temperature was 42 degrees Fahrenheit, with maximum for the preceding 24 hours, 45 degrees, minimum 24 degrees. The snow on many of the exposed slopes had now melted, again revealing expansive though still restricted feeding areas. Evidently the diminution in the bird population on the fertilized tract had been associated in turn with the birds' response to the now more generally available food supply.—DAYTON STONER, *New York State Museum, Albany, New York.*

Banded birds recovered in El Salvador.—Three records of birds banded in the United States and recovered in El Salvador have recently been received and seem of sufficient importance to warrant immediate publication.

DUCK HAWK, *Falco peregrinus anatum.*—Duck Hawk 38-646340, an immature female banded September 27, 1940, at Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, by Owen J. Gromme, was shot January 21, 1941, at Acajutla, El Salvador. This seems to be the first specimen taken in the country and it is interesting that it was at the same locality as the bird recorded by Salvin in the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana.'