

An injured Meadowlark.—The actions of a Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) at Mount Shasta, Siskiyou County, California, have demonstrated the remarkable ability of some birds to survive seemingly fatal handicaps. This bird had in some way suffered the loss of all toes and portions of both tarsi. The right tarsus ended in a knob-like stump at about the point where the toes should have been, while about two-thirds of the left tarsus was missing, leaving a stump about one-half inch long. This bird was totally without any means of grasping a perch, yet was apparently vigorous and healthy. It could alight or take flight from the ground with no apparent difficulty, although its handicap was evident during feeding. The bird walked upon the stumps of the tarsi, and was abnormally low to the ground. The wings were occasionally used to aid balance, but the progress in walking and feeding was nearly as rapid and efficient as that of a normal individual.

The lark was seen almost daily between Christmas, 1940, and February 15, 1941. Probably the melting snows then allowed it to return to its former feeding grounds outside of town. It fed in the short lawn grass nearly every afternoon within five or six feet of the writer's window, and ample opportunity was afforded for close observation both with the naked eye and with 8-power binoculars. The injuries were completely healed when the bird was first seen, and whether frost, a trap, or some other agency was responsible for them can be no more than conjecture.—CLARENCE F. SMITH, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Mount Shasta, California.*

Calcium chloride—a death lure for crossbills.—The crossbills' appetite for salt is well known. That this liking may result in the death of large numbers of the birds is fortunately not a frequent observation. The present report of such a sequela of events was sent to me by an eyewitness, Mrs. Fred Heise of Trudeau, New York. It seems worthy of record as an unusual cause of avian mortality.

During the first two weeks of March, 1941, reports were received by Mrs. Heise that large numbers of birds were being crushed by automobiles on the road between Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake, New York. Upon investigation she found that the road had been covered with a mixture of sand and calcium chloride. The chloride was apparently added as a binder for the sand to prevent its scattering by cars.

She says, "For several days great numbers of White-winged Crossbills and small numbers of Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins settled on the road to eat the salt. The roadbed was covered with them and it was almost impossible to scare them away even by using the horn. They appeared to be too sick to rise and even though motorists drove slowly they were killed in great numbers. The surface of the snow-covered road was actually reddened by the blood and feathers of the birds. My estimate is that there were at least a thousand birds killed."

Whether these birds were actually made ill by the salt ingestion or whether their sloth can be accounted for by eagerness for this material and their well known lack of fear cannot be decided from the facts available. This question might well be investigated by other observers if the opportunity occurs.—GORDON M. MEADE, M.D., *Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, New York.*

[The foregoing account coincides with information received from another source. In February, 1941, Mr. William A. Rockefeller of New York brought me a number of dead White-winged and Red Crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks from near Saranac where he reported that they were suffering exactly as described by Dr. Meade, commenting also on the local use of calcium chloride on the roadways. Some of the birds showed no obvious outward signs of injury but most of them had been