

butterflies have been seen following the same route of migration, but never again the hummers.—W. E. SAUNDERS, *London, Ontario*.

Male Baldpate attending young.—On June 12, 1941, a male and female Baldpate (*Mareca americana*) accompanied by a brood of five young were seen on a large slough east of Amulet, Saskatchewan. Knowing that males of most ducks usually desert the females soon after incubation begins, a short notation was made of this unusual occurrence. Just west of Amulet, only enough time to eat lunch having elapsed, a brood of six young attended by both sexes was seen, the male definitely taking an interest in the care of the young.

A short distance westward, at the next slough, imagine my surprise at seeing a brood of eight Baldpates with only the male in charge. He led the young away, swimming slowly toward the opposite shore, but as I approached more closely, he seemed to desert the brood, flying toward a slough nearby; in flight he gave a series of trisyllabic, unmusical notes, best rendered as *tī-chück'-tück*. A few seconds later he returned with the female, and it was she who led the brood to safety. The male followed his family, but gave the impression that he was relieved at turning over the responsibility to the female.

West of Horizon, Saskatchewan, a brood of nine Baldpates was seen, and again both male and female were in attendance. In this case the male began to feign injury, splashing the water with drooping wings, while the female led the brood away.

These four broods were the first observed in the 1941 season. Although I was in the field nearly every day from May 26 to August 29, 1941, and from May 30 to August 25, 1940, these were the only broods of the Baldpate seen where the drake was assisting in the care of the brood. All of these observations were made on one day, June 12, 1941, and all within a radius of about eight miles. Previous to this time Baldpates were seen in pairs, or males were seen singly.

It may be that the male is more likely to assist the female in caring for early broods, since the sexual instinct would be then better developed than later in the season, and since the moulting of flight feathers would not yet have forced the males into hiding. Possibly this aberrant behavior pattern has been developed in this restricted area to meet, or as the result of, some localized environmental factors.—ROBERT C. McCLANAHAN, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C.*

Ruby-crowned Kinglet as host of Cowbird.—On July 22, 1941, quite near my house at Scarboro Beach, Me., I heard a young bird calling loudly for food, and soon saw a tiny bird, not half its size come and feed it. Closer observation made me certain that the foster parent was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, as it flashed its orange-red crown repeatedly; the dull brown, streaked young must have been a Cowbird. The kinglet was quite unable to satisfy the appetite of the huge fledgling, which kept after the tiny foster parent as though it would like to eat it, too. Dr. Herbert Friedmann in his 'The Cowbirds' (1929) states on page 256: "*Regulus calendula calendula*. A very rare victim [of *Molothrus ater*]. I have come across but one record. Davie writes that Mr. Montague Chamberlain records a nest taken at Lennoxville, Quebec, May 15, 1882 . . . It contained nine eggs, one of them a Cowbird's."—W. L. HOLT, *Scarboro, Maine*.

A probable case of parasitism in the Starling.—In May, 1940, I stopped at one of my many Bluebird boxes expecting to band young birds. When I lifted the hinged top, I was surprised to find a filthy nest with four half-grown Bluebird

babies (*Sialia sialis*) cuddled in the bottom. Above them was a two-thirds-grown Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), which was sitting complacently on the smaller birds below.

Normally a Bluebird box is immaculate, but in this case the droppings of the larger bird had soiled and in one case almost covered the head of one of the tiny birds below; one eye was entirely covered and there was a stench which is unusual about such a nest. I destroyed the Starling interloper, then removed the grass nest and the four immature Bluebirds. After cleansing the box, I rebuilt the nest out of clean dry bluegrass. The four baby birds were carried to a little creek where I washed them, thus removing the filth. After banding them they were returned to the newly made nest.

The female Bluebird soon returned, but was suspicious at first. Finally she accepted the altered nest and when I returned five days later the baby Bluebirds were ready to fly. Their bodies were well feathered and apparently they were well fed. I doubt if this Bluebird had laid her eggs in a nest that already contained a Starling egg, as normally such females construct a thin nest of grass over the eggs or nest of former occupants. I feel that the Starling egg must have been deposited during the process or after the full complement of Bluebird eggs was laid.

In the many years that I have carried on my Bluebird experiment, I have never before found a Starling roosting in or employing one of my boxes for a nest site. In fact, only upon three or four occasion have I found Cowbird eggs in the normal nest. Only when somebody has removed the top of a box thus allowing an approach of the female Cowbird through the aperture above has there been molestation on the part of the Cowbirds. Once under such conditions I found three Cowbird eggs associated with three Bluebird eggs. Never before has a Starling interfered with any of my five-hundred Bluebird boxes, although Starlings are commonly with us at all seasons.—T. E. MUSSELMAN, *Quincy, Illinois*.