Food of a Yellow-crowned Night Heron.—On May 6, 1943, I collected a set of six eggs of the Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea violacea*). The nest was on a horizontal branch of an oak tree in a small wood along Flatrock Creek southwest of Payne in Paulding County, Ohio. Five days later the birds were standing on another nest in the same wood. This nest appeared to be nearly completed. An unknown number of young were later reared in it. After the young had departed, I searched through the debris under the nest and secured a large number of otoliths of crayfish and a considerable number of elytra of the large scavenger water beetle (*Hydrophilus triangularis*) as well as one bone of a frog. These were sent to Dr. H. C. Oberholser of the Cleveland Museum, who identified the frog bone and verified my determinations of the elytra.

Late in May, 1944, I saw a Yellow-crown sitting on another nest in the same wood. Like the two previous nests it was about 45 feet above ground and well out on a horizontal branch of an oak. This nest was not approached until July 12 when five large young were observed standing on it. On that date three decomposed crayfish lay on the ground under the nest. The young were not disturbed. The leaves had fallen when I returned to search through the debris under the nest. A careful search produced 484 otoliths of crayfish and only one elytron of *Hydrophilus*. This represents at least 242 crayfish consumed by the five young and perhaps also by the adults. Since no remains of fish were observed during either year it seems unlikely that the herons consumed many of them.

Perhaps a careful study of the debris under Black-crowned Night Herons' nests would show that they, too, subsist largely on crayfish. I have heard fishermen at Indian Lake in Logan County, Ohio, refer to the Black-crowns as "Fish Hawks"—a name which I believe is neither appropriate nor deserved.—HOMER F. PRICE, *Payne, Ohio.*

Mallard nesting in tree cavity.—On May 10, 1944, at a large woodland pond south of Lake Loramie in Shelby County, Ohio, Ferd and Robert Brown secured the remains of a Mallard and a large fragment of an egg from a cavity of a willow stub standing in about two feet of water. The nesting cavity was about eight feet above ground. Many feathers were strewn about the entrance. I could not wade out to the nest because of knee-length boots and could not see the nest because of the dense growth of willows and buttonbush (*Cephalanthus*).

The Brown brothers stated that wild ducks had used this nesting site in previous years. They were of the opinion that the sitting bird had been killed on the nest by a mink. They insisted that a raccoon would not have done so. Mr. B. A. Magill, the experienced taxidermist of the fish hatchery at St. Marys, proved conclusively that the well-preserved wings were those of a common Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). The egg fragment is so large that the short diameter can be measured. It measures 1.68 inches.—HOMER F. PRICE, *Payne, Ohio.*

Under-wing fishing of the Black Heron, *Melanophoyx ardesiaca* (Plate 11). —This small heron, common in many parts of Africa and Madagascar, has a very peculiar way of catching fish, which I think is unique in the family. It has long been recorded in Africa, particularly by T. Ayres, and more recently in Madagascar by A. L. Rand who writes as follows [The Distribution and Habits of Madagascar Birds, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 77 (Art. 5): 331, 1936]:

"Near Marovoay, April 4, 1931, I had an opportunity to watch one of these birds feeding in the shallow water of a flooded rice field. It was shortly before dark and the bird was feeding actively. It would take a few rapid steps, apparently to over-

take prey it had sighted, then spread its wings, bringing them forward until they met, and with the tips of the quills in the water. The head was in the canopy formed by the wings and I could see the movements of the body as the bird apparently caught the fish bewildered by the darkness. Several times the bird raised its head from between its wings, ruffling its crest in so doing, to look about for possible danger, then ducked its head back into the shelter of its wings. Apparently it overtakes its prey and by making a canopy of its wings confuses them so that they are more easily caught. That its method was successful I found on collecting the bird and examining its stomach and gullet, which contained twelve fish from 15 to 30 mm. long."

Commandant Ph. Milon, now in Madagascar, where he spends his spare time bird watching and photographing, has just sent me the photographs here reproduced, which illustrate to perfection Rand's description of this remarkable habit of the Black Heron. These were taken on November 29, 1945, at Lake Anosy, Tananarive, in bright daylight. The birds appear to feed throughout the day.—J. DELACOUR, *American Museum of Natural History, New York 24, N. Y.*

White eggs of the Long-billed Marsh Wren.—In the course of ecological investigations in northern Ohio, in the summer of 1935, I visited a small marsh on the outer extremity of Bay Point, a large wave-formed sandspit which has appeared and disappeared and changed its position several times during the historical period of the Sandusky Bay area. Bay Point projects southward from the tip of the Marblehead Peninsula, appearing like a tooth on the upper jaw of Sandusky Bay, and is on its eastern flank, exposed to the full force of northeast storms which periodically, with great violence, sweep down Lake Erie. Bay Point has been established in its present position long enough for a number of large cottonwoods to have grown on it. At the time of my investigation there was on its outer extremity a small shallow pond, possibly two acres in extent, which changed from an open sheet of water almost without emergent vegetation in 1930 to a marsh of cattail and bulrushes with a few scattered buttonbushes in 1935.

On June 20, 1935, I examined the contents of several occupied nests of the Long-billed Marsh Wren (*Telmatodytes palustris*), some of which were sets of the normal brown-colored eggs and others were pure white or very faintly marked with a dark pattern. The following year this marsh wren colony was visited again, and again sets of white eggs were found. Unfortunately the numbers of sets were not recorded either year. Two of these sets were collected by Frank W. Braund, on May 13, 1936, one of which (containing six fresh eggs) is now in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. This apparent partial segregation of a latent hereditary character in a small newly formed colony is suggestive of the relationship of this species to the North American race of the Short-billed Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*), which habitually lays white eggs.

The egg collection of the U. S. National Museum contains 107 sets of the various races of *Telmatodytes palustris*, four of which have white shells. One, taken by E. J. Brown on the Potomac Flats, District of Columbia, on June 6, 1891, is a set of five pure white eggs. Another, containing two eggs, one white and one brown, was collected by C. W. Richmond, at Alexandria, Virginia, on July 9, 1897. A third is a set of six in which one white egg with an obscure dark pattern stands out among five normal chocolate ones. This was taken by Walter F. Webb, in Cayuga County, New York, on May 31, 1891. Still another set of four pure white eggs was collected by L. B. Bishop near Hamden, Connecticut, on June 24, 1893. Dr. Bishop describes this discovery in 'The Auk,' 11: 81, 1894. In fact, he records the taking of three sets of white eggs in the Quinnipiack Marshes at Hamden, on June 24, July 11, and July