

LITERATURE CITED

ARNOLD, W. W.

1919. Maggot infested birds. *The Auk*, 36: 147-148.

JELLISON, W. L. AND PHILIP, C. B.

1933. Faunae of nests of the magpie and crow in western Montana. *Can. Ent.*, 65: 26-31.

—D. D. PLETSCH, *Agricultural Experiment Station, Montana State College, Bozeman, Montana.*

A Contribution to the Food Habits of the European Magpie (*Pica p. pica*).—During the winter of 1946 I found a roosting place of Magpies near the village of Kovorce, Slovakia, in a thicket of blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and virgin's bower (*Clematis vitalba*) about 160 m. long and 20 m. wide. Some 50 birds roosted here in the winter and 11 pairs nested in 1946, the minimal distance between two nests being 3 m. In March I found 250 pellets, averaging 17 x 29 mm. in size and 1.1 grams in weight. They contained 254.16 g. of vegetable matter, 22.48 g. of animal matter, and 12.36 g. of mineral matter. The vegetable matter consisted of: weed seeds—smartweed (*Polygonum*), charlock (*Sinapis arvensis*), corn cockle (*Argostemma githago*), couch grass (*Agropyrum repens*), speedwell (*Veronica*), brome grass (*Bromus sterilis*), chess (*B. arvensis*), the last two most important; cultivated grain—maize (*Zea mays*), wheat (*Triticum*); seeds and haws—dog rose (*Rosa canina*), very abundant, blackthorn, English hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyantha*), black locust (*Robinia pseudacacia*). The animal food consisted of 8.29 grams of vertebrates: bones of house mouse (*Mus musculus*), harvest mouse (*Mus minutus*), field vole (*Microtus arvalis*), spermophile (*Citellus citellus*), common mole (*Talpa europea*), white-toothed shrew (*Crocidura leucodon*), pig (*Sus scrofa domestica*), dog (*Canis domesticus*), Yellow Bunting (*Emberiza citrinella*), Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), Partridge (*Perdix p. perdix*), an undetermined bird; 5.7 grams of mollusks: shells of snails (*Helicella obvia*, *Monacha incarnata*, *Era tridens*, *Abida frumentum*); 8.49 grams of arthropods: Coleoptera—weevil (*Otiiorhynchus*)—very abundant, dung beetles (*Geotrupes*), carrion beetles (*Silpha*, *Aphodius*); Dermoptera—earwig (*Forficula auricula*) 319 cerci. The mineral matter consisted of grit, fragments of brick and porcelain.

I think that much of the grit and seeds was taken incidentally with animal food. Particularly interesting is the relatively great number of earwigs eaten, about 160 individuals. This is the first paper based on pellet analysis of the Magpie in Slovakia. Further study and collecting of pellets were not possible because the roosting place was destroyed by men in the summer of 1946. I wish to thank Prof. Babor of Bratislava University for determination of the snails, Dr. Korbel, Curator of Zoology, Bratislava Museum, for determination of the arthropods, and Mr. W. L. McAtee and Mrs. Margaret M. Nice of Chicago for advice in writing this report.—FRANK TURČEK, *Forester, State Research Institute for Forest Protection and Wildlife, Banská Štiavnica, Czecho-Slovakia.*

Marsh Hawk kills Baldpate.—On September 21, 1943, at about 1:15 P. M., I observed a Marsh Hawk kill an apparently normal and healthy Baldpate. The method and proficiency with which the capture was made would lead one to believe that the procedure had been successfully tried before.

The hawk (a dark-colored bird, probably an adult female) was first seen hovering and diving over a small flock of Baldpates in a narrow slough about one mile south of Upham, North Dakota. Three or four ducks were diving as the hawk maneuvered over the water. One bird was apparently then singled out for attention and the others flew or swam a short distance away. As the individual reappeared at the surface the hawk dropped close with the legs carried away from the body. This caused

the duck to dive again. During possibly 10 to 15 repetitions the hawk struck the surface of the water with legs and body several times, but quickly recovered altitude in each instance. It then seemingly grasped the duck and rested on the water for four or five seconds, then flew up again. Soon the duck reappeared at the surface and was immediately seized by the hawk, which rested on the water for perhaps two minutes before attempting to fly and drag its prey shoreward into the wind. The duck gave no further sign of life and the hawk made five attempts to get it to land, flying about between attempts. The edge of the slough was choked with pondweeds and but little headway was made. While trying to move the duck, the hawk flew without touching the surface.

At this time I frightened the hawk away as I approached. I retrieved the duck about 25 feet from shore in 'kneedeep' water. It was an immature bird, fully feathered and, I am sure, capable of normal flight. It weighed 1003 grams. Autopsy disclosed a minor head wound extending into the flesh, with a small section of skin removed. Other wounds may have been present, but were not noticeable. The right auricle was ruptured and there was considerable blood in the thoracic cavity.

This episode was viewed at a distance of 100 yards or closer with 7 x 35 Bausch and Lomb binoculars and all participants were in full view from my car window. There was a strong northwest wind, which may have aided the hawk in its hovering attitudes.—MERRILL C. HAMMOND, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lower Souris Refuge, Upham, North Dakota.*

Cowbird tragedy at Prothonotary Warbler's nest.—On May 22 1941, I visited a small colony of Prothonotary Warblers in swampy woods on the south shore of the Grand Reservoir (Lake St. Marys) in Mercer County, Ohio. A dead female Cowbird was seen, lodged in the entrance to a cavity of a small willow stub. Although the body was badly decomposed, considerable force was necessary to dislodge it. The barbs of the primary feathers seemed to act as hooks. The nest held a single typical egg of the Prothonotary Warbler. I anticipated that the abdomen of the Cowbird would contain a perfect egg and upon opening it, I found this to be the case. I recall finding Cowbird eggs in two or three Prothonotary nests in this colony in previous years. The late Charles Dury of Cincinnati probably knew this colony many years previously.—HOMER F. PRICE, *Payne, Ohio.*

Red-winged Blackbird caught in a crotch.—When on a field trip on May 13, 1937, along Duck Creek, Davenport, Scott County, Iowa, I came upon a dead Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus*) that had garroted itself in a crotch of a small sapling. Evidently it had tried to alight on a small limb of the sapling, had slipped, and caught its neck in the crotch where it struggled to get free but only worked its neck down tighter into the crotch. The body was still warm when I found it and the plumage was in excellent condition except for the neck that was in the crotch. This area is unfrequented by people and I was near by all day and saw no one, so the evidence seems to indicate that it was one of those tragedies in the avian world.

Similar accidents have been recorded by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. (Auk, 63: 591, 1946) of a King Rail caught in a barbed-wire fence and by William P. Baldwin (Auk, 63: 96, 1946) of a cormorant that had been similarly caught in a split pole.—JAMES HODGES, *3132 Fair Avenue, Davenport, Iowa.*

Cooper's Hawk 'drowning' its prey.—The note by Frederick C. Schmid in *The Auk*, [64 (2): 307, April, 1947] entitled, 'Unusual behavior of a Cooper's Hawk,'