

tion were Cedar Waxwings, Robins, Brown Thrashers, Catbirds, Baltimore Orioles, and a single Rose-breasted Grosbeak.—FLOYD B. CHAPMAN, *Division of Conservation, Columbus, Ohio.*

**Cowbird behavior.**—The usual pattern of behavior of the Cowbird in parasitizing the nests of other species, as described by Hanna (Wilson Bull., 53: 229–231, 1941), is occasionally varied, as the author points out. A case of such variation seems worth recording. On June 3, 1947, while at work near my lakeside cottage, I became aware that a female Cowbird had settled on a Yellow Warbler's nest, in process of building, two feet up in a small spirea and just twenty feet from where I sat. My immediate reaction—fatal, perhaps, to a more revealing observation—was to start protectively toward the nest whose construction I had been watching. Of course the Cowbird flew. On examination I found that the interloper had not dropped its egg—possibly, I considered, because the nest, as yet unlined, was too flimsy. However, next morning, there was a Cowbird's egg in the nest, embedded so deeply by its own weight as not to interfere with the placing of the lining. I removed it and, on the following day, the lining had been added, the nest was firm and the Yellow Warbler had laid an egg. Two days later the nest was empty. This observation gave me to reflect that perhaps some two-story nests are not so in fact but rather those in which the egg has become embedded in similar circumstances.—E. R. FORD, *Newaygo, Michigan.*

**Long-eared Owls and red foxes.**—While I was following a red fox (*Vulpes regalis*) trail in the snow on the Moingona Area south of Boone, Iowa, on January 7, 1947, my attention was attracted to two Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus wilsonianus*) that flushed from a large red cedar. The fox trail continued directly under the owls' roost where it was evident that the fox inspected the pellets and possibly searched for uneaten food remains. The fox defecated among the pellets and then continued on its way.

The opportunistic tendencies of red foxes in taking advantage of situations promising to yield food have been observed before. This visit to this Long-eared Owl roost by the red fox encouraged more than average interest in the possibility of such a relationship with the owls. The number and estimated age of the pellets beneath the tree indicated that the owls had probably not been using the roost in the red cedar for more than about two weeks. Wilson (Auk, 55: 189, 1938) found that these "— owls never used one roost more than two or three weeks . . ." Unfortunately, the owls continued to use the roost only until January 16, 1947, when they were last seen. No pellets were found beneath the roost after that date. Evidence that the foxes had visited the roost again during occupancy by the owls was not found; however, track 'sign' is quickly lost under new fallen or shifting snow such as occurred at this time.

A total of 55 owl pellets were collected from beneath the roost, and these provided data on the food habits of the owls. The bulk of the prey taken was mice (94.8%). By per cent of frequency of occurrences these were largely meadow mice (*Microtus* spp.) (51.6%) with equal representations of harvest mice (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*) (20.2%) and white-footed mice (*Peromyscus* spp.) (20.2%). Remains of the house mouse (*Mus musculus*) occurred once. A record was made of the numbers of individual mice represented in the pellets by teeth and skull fragments. A total of 105 mice were represented: 2 undetermined mice, 58 meadow mice, 24 harvest mice, 20 white-footed mice and 1 house mouse. Examination of the enamel outline of the molar teeth showed 26 of the 58 meadow mice were *Microtus pennsylvanicus* and 30 were *Microtus ochrogaster*. The remains of three perching birds were identified in

the owl pellets: One undetermined, one Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*), and one Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*).

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGES OF OCCURRENCES OF FOOD REMAINS IN PELLETS OF 55 LONG-EARED OWLS AND IN FECAL PASSAGES OF 21 RED FOXES, MOINGONA AREA, LATE DECEMBER TO EARLY JANUARY, 1946-1947.

	Long-eared Owls	Red Foxes
MAMMALS	94.8	90.0
RODENTS	94.8	38.7
Undetermined	1.7	8.9
Determined	93.1	29.8
Fox squirrel	0.0	8.1
Harvest mouse	20.2	5.4
White-footed mouse	20.2	5.4
Meadow mouse	51.6	10.8
House mouse	1.1	0.0
RABBITS	0.0	51.3
Cottontail	0.0	51.3
BIRDS	5.2	10.0
Undetermined	0.0	5.0
Determined	5.2	5.0
GALLIFORMES	0.0	5.0
Domestic Chicken	0.0	5.0
PASSERIFORMES	5.2	0.0
Undetermined	1.7	0.0
Determined	3.5	0.0
Tree Sparrow	1.8	0.0
Goldfinch	1.8	0.0

The basic dietary pattern of these Long-eared Owls did not differ from the findings of Wilson (*op. cit.*), Errington (Condor, 34: 176-186, 1932; and 35: 163, 1933) and Pearson (Journ. Mamm., 28: 137-147, 1947).

For purposes of comparing the diet of the red fox with that of these Long-eared Owls, 21 fecal passages of the foxes were collected during the period represented by the pellets (See Table 1). The principal difference in the kind and proportion of foods taken by the two predators seemed to have been brought about largely through a limitation as to size of prey captured. The owls did not feed on cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) while this prey species comprised the staple food for the fox. Inasmuch as remains of cottontails were left uneaten by the fox it seemed evident that the owl either did not find these remains or did not feed on them if found. Mice occurred with greater frequency in the diet of the owls; however, the relative proportions of specific mouse occurrences showed a tendency to be about the same for both predators.—THOMAS G. SCOTT, *Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Ames, Iowa.*

**Purple Martins killed on a bridge.**—In the July, 1947, issue of 'The Auk' a note by Dr. M. A. Jacobson is published on Purple Martins killed on a highway bridge across Albemarle Sound, N. C. The conclusion reached was that the birds were roosting on the railing and flew into the headlights of passing cars at night. I have observations which lead to a different conclusion for at least part of the mor-