

fluttering of a female Cardinal. She was in a squatting position with crest erect and wings and tail outspread with wings fluttering and beak raised. As we watched, the male flew up and alighted about two feet from her. She then stood upright and slowly swayed back and forth sideways, in the meantime displaying the red portions of her plumage. At the extremity of each sway, she would hold her pose for a moment. The latter part of the display was accompanied by a "whispered" song on her part. Although the song was very faint, her throat could be seen working. The song was a whistled 'chew-chew-chew.' The male in the meantime showed a lively interest and looked down into the feeder, as though possibly searching for a suitable seed to feed to her. He then flew off in the midst of her posturing, and she immediately followed.

Although the temperature was about 38° F., the day was cloudy and far from springlike which might otherwise account for this behavior.—F. J. FREEMAN, *Iasca, Illinois.*

First Winter Occurrence of Painted Bunting, *Passerina ciris*, in South Carolina.—Due to the extremely unseasonable warm weather of January in much of eastern United States, it is probable that extraordinary instances of avian occurrence will be reported. The writer has obtained, thus far, the first winter record of *Passerina ciris* for South Carolina.

On January 27, 1949, Mrs. Gertrude Miles and her husband, of Pineola Plantation, McClellanville, S. C., saw two males of this species about 15 miles north of Charleston on U. S. Highway 17. The birds were at the shoulder of the road, in bright sunlight at a range of a few yards. Mrs. Miles is a native of the Carolina low country and has been familiar with the "nonpareil" since childhood. The high temperature of the day was 78° F.

The Painted Bunting usually arrives in Charleston about April 16, and the earliest record, hitherto, was March 21. The writer is indebted to Mrs. Miles for making this occurrence known.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston, South Carolina.*

Carpodacus Finches Feeding on Nectar.—During the flowering season of the various domestic cherries in the Willamette Valley of western Oregon, the Purple Finch, *Carpodacus purpureus*, becomes an agricultural pest that at times assumes considerable importance. Flocks of these finches can destroy a large number of flowers in a few hours' feeding. Single trees about residences seem to suffer most severely, but extensive damage has been observed in several commercial orchards.

The birds pick a blossom from its peduncle, crush and maul it in their bill, and then drop it. Examination of many flowers has revealed a uniform pattern of feeding, there being no part of the flower missing, but rather the receptacle and base of the calyx and corolla are thoroughly crushed. Since there is no preliminary examination of the flowers, and a single bird will pick each flower within reach as it moves up or down a limb, it seems certain that these finches are extracting the small quantity of nectar present in the flower. When this behavior was first noticed I hoped to find that these finches were feeding upon small insects present in the flowers, but subsequent investigation did not substantiate this belief.

Beal (Yearbook U. S. Dept. Agr. for 1904: 247) noted that White-crowned Sparrows, *Zonotrichia leucophrys*, and House Finches, *Carpodacus mexicanus*, destroyed numerous blossom buds. Later, Beal (U. S. Biol. Surv. Bull. no. 30: 15, 1910) stated that both House Finches and Purple Finches destroyed "buds and blooms of fruit trees instead of the fruit itself." He further remarked (*op. cit.* 16) that he found