

GENERAL NOTES

A Hybrid between the White-throated Sparrow and the Slate-colored Junco at Dalton, Georgia.—A hybrid *Zonotrichia albicollis* × *Junco hyemalis* was collected in our yard in Dalton, Georgia, on January 16, 1955, by William W. Griffin. It was sent to Dr. John W. Aldrich, United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. It was also studied by Dr. David W. Johnston, Department of Biology, Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and by Dr. Alden H. Miller, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, Calif. The specimen has been deposited in the latter museum.

Both species are common winter residents and regular visitors to our feeding station. The hybrid was first observed feeding with other birds in early November, and from then until mid-January we saw it almost daily at the feeding station, where it was aggressive toward both sparrows and juncos. Plainly evident was the White-throated Sparrow's striped back and white throat combined with the gray breast and white tail feathers of the Junco. The bill was shorter than that of either species and gave the appearance of being crossed. Later examination of the skin showed plain gray-brown crown with a slight streak of rusty-brown extending from each eye to nape; shoulders, back, and wings like the White-throat; breast and abdomen like the Junco; throat white with faint black streak on each side similar to the immature White-throat; and tail like the junco with two outer feathers white the last third of their length and edged with gray.

Dr. Aldrich concurred in our identification of the bird as a hybrid and pointed out other records in the literature of such a hybrid (Townsend, Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club, 8: 78–80, 1883; Stone, Auk, 10: 213–214, 1893; and Snyder, Auk, 71: 471, 1954).

Dr. Miller provided the following measurements of the hybrid: Wing, 77.1; tail, 68.7; tarsus, 23.1; middle toe, 16.9; and hind toe, 8.7 mm. He writes, "The intermediacy of color and pattern features is pretty evident . . . I feel no doubt in regarding the bird as a cross between these two species. . . . The wing and tail measurements of the two species overlap so much that there is not a great deal to be discerned from these dimensions of the hybrid. Note, however, that the tarsus is much larger than in the Slate-colored Junco and quite clearly shows the influence of the White-throated Sparrow. The toe measurements reflect this also, but in less clear-cut fashion."

Dr. Johnston pointed out that "in all probability this hybrid came from *Zonotrichia albicollis* × *Junco hyemalis hyemalis*, and not *J. h. carolinensis*, because the ranges of the White-throat and Carolina Junco do not overlap. Furthermore, the genetic combinations perhaps produced a less viable organism. Witness, for example, the parrot-like bill, abnormally small for both species." Also, William W. Griffin noticed that the bird had only one testis, the left. He stated by letter, "I found nothing that resembled a right testis. The left testis measured 1 mm. in length."—MR. AND MRS. R. E. HAMILTON, 704 Greenwood Drive, Dalton, Georgia.

Occurrence of Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmani*) in northern Mississippi in June.—In view of the present rarity of Bachman's Warbler throughout its known breeding range and of the very few records for its occurrence in recent years, it seems advisable to put on record at this time an almost overlooked note relative to its presence in northern Mississippi during the late spring of 1940. On June 11, while engaged in field work concerned with the breeding birds of the state, I spent the morning in the Trimcane Swamp, several miles northeast of Starkville. Possibly an hour after entering the Swamp I saw an adult male Bachman's Warbler. It attracted my attention by its characteristic song, and a short search soon revealed



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Nest of Robin Showing Extreme Wear after having been used three times in one season. Photograph by Walter P. Nickell.

its presence feeding in the upper branches of a large tupelo gum. As there was a very good possibility that there was a nest close by, it was carefully watched for some thirty minutes as it fed overhead. During this interval it occasionally approached close enough to permit me to follow its restless movements without using my binoculars and to note its distinctive plumage with the naked eye. Rather unexpectedly it suddenly flew some distance away, and although I followed the direction it had taken I was unable to locate it again. Still hoping to find a nest with either eggs or young I spent the rest of the morning searching the numerous cane thickets that were a prominent feature of this swamp, but with no success. I was equally unsuccessful in seeing a female Bachman's Warbler. However, although this species has not heretofore been known to nest in Mississippi I feel that under the circumstances it is not improbable that it did breed in the Trincane Swamp in 1940, and possibly in previous years as well.—THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Moscow, Idaho.*

Robins Use Same Nest for Three Sets of Eggs in One Season.—On the Cranbrook Estate, Bloomfield Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, May 16, 1955, I found the nest of a Robin (*Turdus migratorius*). This nest was in the vertical fork of an eight-foot Tartarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera Tatarica*) 69 inches from the ground. The female was sitting on four eggs. At the next observation on June 3, the nest was empty, but showed feather scales from fledglings and the normal wear of the grass nest-lining materials. This nest was observed again on June 18 at which time the female was incubating three more eggs. The lining of the nest showed no signs of repair. At a later observation on July 23, this nest held three eggs and one young to which the egg shells were still clinging. On July 27, three 4-day-old young and one not more than two days old were in the nest. On July 30, the small young, which was dead, was removed from the nest and the remaining three young were banded. These banded young were still in the nest on the late afternoon of August 5. The total time from the discovery of the nest until the last observation was 82 days. Probably, the first two sets of egg produced young, which left the nest successfully as, in my experience, destruction of eggs or young causes the adults to abandon the nest immediately. Plate 6 shows the extreme wear of the nest during a period of an estimated 100 days without shelter from the time of its construction and without any noticeable repair. However, the season was much drier than usual so that the nest's mud cup was subjected to less softening than during a rainy season. Another factor which may have strengthened the nest was the well-constructed nest of a Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) which served as its foundation.

The only other report of three nestings of a Robin in the same nest in one season I have found in the literature was by Edward A. Preble (MS) in Bent (*U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 196: 21). No details were given.—WALTER P. NICKELL, *Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.*

The Function of the Concealed Throat-patch in the White-necked Raven.—On 22 April 1955, while driving from Rio Grande City to Laredo in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, I first made the acquaintance of the White-necked Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*). It was the courting season, and the some 40 birds observed during the day were mostly in pairs or threes, and were generally seen perched on the cross bars of telephone poles. The first birds seen were a pair billing and "carking"—it could not be called cooing—on a telephone pole near Falcón. Every now and then the breast, and at times also the throat, of one bird would flash out brilliantly white, especially, it seemed, when the other bird caressed its beak with its own. Later, of three birds on top of a telephone post, only the middle one showed the white, and