individuals congregated on a narrow spit of land bordering the bay and engaged in various maintenance activities. Fishing behavior was uncommon at this time, but as the flock of mergansers formed and began moving up the inlets, the egrets flew to the shorelines near or in front of the mergansers and actively followed the progression of the merganser flock. Additional egrets joined this progression, and not uncommonly as many as 20 egrets followed the feeding mergansers. When the mergansers swam in close to shore the egrets moved out to meet them (Figure 1). At these times the feeding activity of the egrets was intense, and individual capture rates of five to eight small fish per minute were not uncommon.

Although large numbers of egrets and herons were actively fishing in very close proximity, we noted few aggressive actions. Intense feeding frenzies of this type seldom lasted more than a few minutes because the mergansers normally changed course and moved toward another shore of the narrow bay. The egrets then also abandoned the area, flew across the bay, and waited as the mergansers approached the new shore.

These observations concur with reports of Christman (Condor, 59: 343, 1957) and Parks and Bressler (Auk, 80: 198, 1963) and seem to represent a clear-cut example of one species learning to exploit the normal feeding habits of a second, unrelated species. Unlike the situation with the Common Egret and Louisiana Heron, this feeding interaction surpasses the bounds of casual opportunism. The afternoon activity schedule of many Snowy Egrets appeared to be adjusted to the behavior of the mergansers. Not only was most of their afternoon feeding accomplished as described above, but they congregated in seeming anticipation of the merganser arrival. Although no complete quantitative data on feeding rates were obtained, the advantage of this feeding interaction to the Snowy Egret seems obvious.

Great Blue Herons never were noted to take part in these feeding assemblages. Whether this is because this species forages in deeper water where the fish concentrations would be less dramatic, because it selectively feeds on larger-sized fish than those chased by the mergansers, or for some other reason is unknown.

This study was made as part of a behavioral ecology field trip sponsored and funded by Cornell University. We thank the Mote Marine Laboratory for their hospitality and for the use of their facilities.—STEPHEN T. EMLEN and HARRISON W. AMBROSE, III, *Section of Neurobiology and Behavior, Division of Biological Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850*

Records of the Brambling in North America.—A Brambling, *Fringilla montifringilla*, was seen regularly in Portland, Oregon, from 22 November 1967 to 3 April 1968 and photographed by many people. First discovered at a feeder in the northeast section of the city by Jeff Gilligan and Ron Klein, from January on it was a daily visitor to the feeder of the Albert H. Praels in the same part of Portland. The bird, judged by plumage to be a male, fed regularly with House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) on sunflower seeds. The occurrence of this individual in Portland was recorded in Audubon Field Notes (22: 471, 1968) without detail.

The A.O.U. Check-List (1957) presents but a single North American record of the Brambling. A search of the ornithological literature since publication of that compendium reveals several additional records. Unfortunately none of the authors of these various records was apparently cognizant of all the other records; thus the status of this Eurasian species in North America has remained confused.

The first record was a specimen, a male lacking the tail feathers, obtained 25 October 1914, on St. Paul Island of the Pribilof group in the Bering Sea (Hanna,

1916) and deposited in the U. S. National Museum. The species was not reported again until 1959, when Audubon Field Notes (13: 280, 1959) carried an account of a bird that appeared on 15 December 1958 at Stanton, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. The bird, which "showed no signs of having been in captivity" and "consorted unamiably with House Sparrows" (*Passer domesticus*) was secured as a specimen (unsexed) and deposited in the Princeton University Museum.

An occurrence previous to that in New Jersey was not published until 1961. Kenyon (1961) saw two Bramblings on 14 October, three on 15 October, and eight on 17 October 1957, on Amchitka Island in the Rat Group of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska. A male specimen taken 15 October, in plumage virtually identical to that of Hanna's specimen, was deposited in the U. S. National Museum.

A second occurrence of the Brambling in eastern United States was reported in Audubon Field Notes (16: 14, 1962). A male bird fed with House Sparrows near Hadley, Massachusetts, from 29 November into December 1961. What was presumed to be the same bird was later seen near Florence, Massachusetts, approximately 5 miles from Hadley, and at Sunderland, some 10 miles away, where it remained until 18 March 1962 (A.F.N., 16: 315, 1962).

Another Brambling was seen in western Massachusetts during this same period. This individual was reported from the vicinity of Richmond from 18 February to April 1962, and was both photographed and banded during that time (A.F.N., 16: 315, 393, 1962). Borror (1963) mentions both these Massachusetts birds. A Brambling seen at Tupper Lake, New York, about 160 miles northwest of Hadley, on 6 April 1962 (A.F.N., 16: 393, 1962) could possibly have been the same individual that apparently left Hadley some 19 days earlier, although this is conjecture.

John Bull (pers. comm.) informed me of an unpublished report of a male Brambling seen 11 February 1965 at Kennedy Airport, New York, by Richard Ryan. Bull added that this individual was almost certainly an escape from an air shipment.

The next published report of the Brambling was again in New Jersey; a male bird visited a feeding station and was photographed at Branchville 20–22 April 1965 (A.F.N., 19: 457, 1965). The bird showed no frayed tail feathers, which would have suggested that it had been a captive.

Springer (1966) reported a spring record from Hooper Bay, Alaska, the first in that season in the western portion of North America. A bird, either a female or an immature male, was seen on 22 May 1964. This record was actually the eighth published for North America, and the bird seen in Portland, Oregon in 1968 is the ninth recorded for North America, and the first seen in the west south of Alaska.

The reports of some of the eastern birds raise the question as to whether the birds were wild or escapes from captivity. The possibility of fortuitous transport by ocean liner is also suggested. Bull (1964: 474) considered the Stanton, New Jersey, bird to be a possible escape from captivity, and states that "two Bramblings captured in western Massachusetts in March 1962 were suspected of being escapes" although no such suspicion was indicated in the Audubon Field Notes accounts. Conflicting reports are available (cf. Bull, op. cit. and A.F.N., 16: 14, 1962) on the frequency with which the Brambling is kept in captivity.

The wandering proclivity of the Brambling is evidenced by at least three occurrences in Alaska. No details indicating "cage wear" were given with the accounts reporting the eastern birds; on the contrary, some reports specifically note the lack of such wear. The multiple records in the eastern United States in the winter of 1961–1962 coincide with a season documented by Borror (1963) to have been one of wandering by several European species. All these factors suggest to me that most,

and perhaps all, of the published eastern United States records of Bramblings should be assumed to be wild birds rather than escapes.

To summarize, there have been four reports of occurrence of the Brambling in western North America, two documented by specimens: St. Paul Island, 1914; Amchitka Island, 1957; Hooper Bay, 1964; and Portland, Oregon, 1968. Of five reports in the eastern United States, one is documented by a specimen: Stanton, New Jersey, 1958; Hadley, Massachusetts, 1961–1962; Richmond, Massachusetts, 1962; Tupper Lake, New York, 1962; and Branchville, New Jersey, 1965. Hence the status of the Brambling in North America is probably best regarded as casual in northeastern United States and Alaska, and accidental in Oregon.

I wish to thank David B. Marshall of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for providing the details of the Portland Brambling record and for instigating the literature search from which this note results. Ruth P. Emery and Geoffrey Carleton added information clarifying the eastern records. John Bull gave further information and stimulating discussion.

LITERATURE CITED

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION. 1957. Check-list of North American birds, fifth Ed. Baltimore, Amer. Ornithol. Union.

BORROR, A. C. 1963. European siskin (*Carduelis spinus*) in Maine. Auk, 80: 201.

BULL, J. 1964. Birds of the New York area. New York, Harper & Row.

HANNA, G. D. 1916. Records of birds new to the Pribilof Islands including two new to North America. Auk, 33: 400–403.

KENYON, K. W. 1961. Birds of Amchitka Island, Alaska. Auk, 78: 305–326.

SPRINGER, H. K. 1966. Unusual bird records from Hooper Bay, Alaska. Condor, 68: 600–601.

RICHARD C. BANKS, *Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife; U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C. 20560.*

The nest of the Red-breasted Blackbird.—Short (Amer. Mus. Novitates, no. 2349: 24, 1968), in discussing the taxonomy of the icterids usually placed in the genera *Pezites, Leistes,* and *Sturnella,* states that all these "build a ground nest that is characteristically domed or semidomed, with a side entrance." His authority for including *Leistes* is Herklots (The birds of Trinidad and Tobago, London, Collins, 1961, p. 250), who states "nest a deep cup built of grass stems and lined with finer grass and sometimes with plant-down placed at the base of a clump of grass; the entrance may be through a tunnel on one side formed by the birds pushing through the grass." It is clear from this description that the tunnel leading to the nest is outside it and is not part of the nest itself.

My own records from Surinam corroborate Herklots' statement that the nest is an open cup. Those I found were amidst low grass and had no tunnel leading toward them, as stated in my recently published "Birds of Surinam" (Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1968, p. 386). Two photographs of nests of *L. militaris* from Surinam have been published: the first in Penard and Penard (De Vogels van Guyana, vol. 2, Paramaribo, Martinus Nijhoff, 1910, p. 372) and the second taken by me for Plate 25 in my above-mentioned book. Both of these show the nest quite open.

In Surinam *L. militaris* is a bird of open fields such as pastures, rice fields, and wet savannas. Only on the savannas does its habitat overlap with that of *Sturnella magna,* which lives in the drier parts.—F. HAVERSCHMIDT, *Wolfskuilstraat 16, Ommen, Holland.*