

that the common snipe of Europe produces its so-called bleating by means of the two outer tail feathers which stand out clearly from the others during the downward plunge." Forbush himself possibly doubts whether the "bleat" is produced by the plumage. So do I, if it is the same note as I heard. It is hard to see how the plumage can produce any sound which is timed differently from the wing beats or independently of changes in the velocity or direction of the flight. For the tail to produce such a sound, one would have to assume an independent muscular impulse transmitted to the tail feathers.

However, since I have never before seen the song-flight, I am hardly competent to challenge the accepted theory as to its origin. Even if it be produced by the plumage, this instance of its occurrence in September seems worth recording. I believe that the snipe which I heard was not a migrant. The number of birds at Crane Lake remained stationary (about a dozen) from September 18 to October 9. On October 9 there was a noticeable accession of migrants, both at Crane Lake and at a number of nearby marshes.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin, October 11, 1926.*

Rapid Decomposition in some Species of the Genus *Saltator*.—*Saltator* is a genus of finches occurring in tropical America. It is made up of quite an array of medium sized to very large forms. Within Costa Rica the genus is represented by at least five distinct species. It is brought to notice here because all these species seem prone to unusually quick decay after being killed, seemingly more rapid than in the case of any other land bird of approximately the same size with which I am acquainted. Temperature does not appear to be the controlling factor in this, for I have observed that *Saltator grandis* of the central tableland, and well within the temperate zone, can "ripen up" wonderfully within three or four hours after death; when species such as Solitary Sandpiper, Wilson Snipe, Texas Kingfisher and Parauque, killed within the same hour, will be wholly inoffensive. And it is well not to omit the fact that all these species of *Saltator* feed largely on fruit, at times on nothing else, occasionally gorging to the extent of the bill and portions of the head becoming discolored by the fruit juice.—AUSTIN SMITH, *San José, Costa Rica, September 6, 1926.*

The Blue Jay at Boulder, Colorado.—The Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata cristata*, or *C. c. bromia*, if Dr. Oberholser's new name for the northern form is to be accepted) is a rather rare visitor to the western edge of the plains in Colorado. It is now added to the Boulder County list upon acceptable evidence. Clint O. Dumm reports having seen one on October 11, 1925, under excellent conditions for observation, positively identified by both himself and a man recently from the eastern states who knew the Blue Jay well. Mr. Dumm has himself long been familiar with our common Long-crested Jay (*C. stelleri diademata*), so often miscalled Blue Jay by non-critical observers. Furthermore, I have just received from School Superintendent William V. Casey, of Boulder, an excellent colored sketch, which he says was made from memory, of a Blue Jay in a flock of four that visited his home "about two years ago". He adds: "We fed them during the snowy weather, and they grew so tame that they did not fly away in alarm when I passed under the branch where they perched, eight or ten feet above my head." His description accompanying the sketch leaves no doubt that they were Blue Jays.—JUNIUS HENDERSON, *University of Colorado, Boulder, October 16, 1926.*

Notes on the Black Oystercatcher.—At Point Lobos, Monterey County, California, Black Oystercatchers (*Haematopus bachmani*) have been observed procuring food for their young as late in the season as the date of this writing (November 3). Four of these birds, two adults and two full-grown young, apparently constituting a family, were seen on repeated occasions among a group of flat rocks exposed at ebb-tide and partially covered by weeds. On each occasion one adult was observed to be followed by one or two immatures.

When the old bird comes upon a limpet fastened to the rock, the crustacean is dislodged with considerable effort. By inserting the flat vertical surface of the bill underneath, the Oystercatcher loosens the animal by repeated jabs and steady prying, backed by its whole body and braced feet. The bivalve is then seized and carried to a suitable position, usually at some higher place on the rock. At this moment the immature bird comes close to the adult and waits patiently while the body of the limpet is