

learned. My observations began early in February, and four or five afternoons a week I stationed myself at 4.00 P. M. where I could watch the trap area and the trees and shrubbery surrounding it. The first late afternoon about thirty individuals gathered in a plum tree some fifty feet from the traps. They were perhaps five minutes in gathering, during which time excited chips were uttered by many of the birds. From there they drifted into a maple that overshadowed the plum tree, and within two or three minutes, in which the call-notes became more frequent, an individual suddenly launched itself into the air to be followed by six or seven others. These in turn were followed several seconds afterward by another group of about the same number, and a third group perhaps twice the number of the two former followed after a similar interval. Their flight seemed directed toward a small pine-clad area, several acres in extent, a third of a mile away. Circumstances prevented my visiting this area more than three times, but each time call-notes were heard, and the last time I was able to follow a flock as it left the feeding station. A little search soon located it feeding on weed seeds that had fallen on a small place bare of snow. They soon flew in a body to a detached group of pines under a ledge that sheltered them from the north winds. The flock eventually gathered in one tree, moving about from limb to limb, preening feathers and cleaning bills. With the coming of twilight, these operations soon ceased and they would probably have spent the night there, but in my anxiety not to miss anything, I approached too close, whereupon the flock took alarm, flying to another tree near by, when darkness prevented further observation. I found from numerous observations that the birds left the feeding-grounds in groups of six or eight individuals. This continued until February 26th, when they began leaving in pairs, although the latter sometimes left in loose flock-like formation. Each flock seemed to follow a certain course to the roost, some being direct and others quite roundabout, the latter following trees. Not all the Sparrows coming to my station used the roost I have described, some apparently going to another stand of small pines, half a mile away, and lying in the opposite direction. Those flocks, using the first mentioned roosting-place, assembled in three different trees for departure, while those going in the opposite direction used an equal number but different trees. I wondered if each flock might not have a special tree, but as the number of birds varied so from day to day, I had no means of ascertaining this. The arrival of spring ended all opportunity for further observation, much to my regret. — WENDELL P. SMITH, Wells River, Vermont, June 8, 1925.

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**Note on the Cowbird (*Molothrus ater ater*).** — The following note may chronicle a little more interesting information regarding this species: On the 29th of April, 1924, I noted a male and female Cowbird moving about in the grass or weeds in our garden and close to my pull-string trap. Both birds were certainly adults. The male bird took the lead, and the female ran after him with quivering wings, begging to be fed, and finally he acquiesced and was seen to feed her several times. After this both entered the trap, but in my haste I was only able to capture one of them, the female, who now wears band No. 46866. It is a common sight at this season of the year to see male birds in general feeding their mates. Mr. Whittle tells me he has seen our common Chickadee often do so, as well as the White-breasted Nuthatch, so this eminently avian instinct on the part of this Cowbird has not been lost, although the kindred instincts, such as

nest-building and incubation, have become obsolete. — MRS. JEAN E. CARTH, Morse's Pond Grove, Wellesley, Mass.

**Nuptial Dance of the Purple Finch** (*Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*). — I agree with Mr. A. W. Higgins that the nuptial dance of this species is indeed a beautiful sight, as well as a most spirited one. As observed by me on June 11, 1925, the dance took place on the ground in front of a trap not ten feet away. The performance was somewhat different from that described by Mr. Higgins in that the male danced side-wise in semicircles about the female, back and forth, while standing very erect (perhaps twenty degrees from vertically) with the wings fully extended and vibrating rapidly, the crown feathers erect, and all the time singing most ecstatically. At one time his ecstasy was so intense that he was carried into the air, where he hovered directly above the female, singing as before. She seemed little interested, though she watched him all the time. The performance lasted nearly a minute, the male dancing within eight inches of the female and continually facing her, while her position remained the same. — CHARLES L. WHITTLE.

**Return Records of Native Wild Birds.** — Two Tree Sparrows, banded in January and February, 1923, returned in December, 1924, and again in December, 1925. These stayed all winter during the three seasons.

Five Tree Sparrows, banded during the winter of 1923-1924, were with me again during the season of 1924-1925.

Slate-colored Junco, No. 61464, banded December 12th, 1922, came back April 9th, 1925 after over 27 months' absence.

Catbird, No. 69450, banded May 31st, 1923, was recaptured June 21st, 1925, after two years' absence.

The only Cowbird, a female, banded in 1923 (June 29th), returned June 8th, 1924, and returned again April 25th, 1925; evidently this is her summer home.

One Song Sparrow, banded in 1923, and four marked in 1924, are noted again this season, and I expect more as one came in yesterday, July 3rd, 1925.

Brown Thrasher, No. 259183, banded June 7th, 1924, returned June 17th, 1925.

Two Robin returns were especially interesting. No. 112418, banded June 29th, 1923, had a small running sore on one side of its head below the eye. This bird was recaptured March 31st, 1925, in perfect health, and has repeated three times since.

Robin, No. 259181, banded June 5th, 1924, came back March 27th, 1925, and when he repeated March 29th his tail was missing, having been lost since he returned. He stayed around the yard and repeated several times, and on April 16th his new tail was one and one-half inches long, and on May 30th it was fully grown.

Bronzed Grackle, No. 218749, banded August 5th, 1923, at my station in Rochester, New York, was taken eighteen miles west of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, on May 16th, 1925, by W. Wellington Hunsberry, reported as shot. This is the first of my birds reported from outside of Rochester, and it shows that all banded birds do not return to the home station. However, Ontario may have been his home station and he wandered to Rochester after the nesting period was over. — STATION OF R. E. HORSEY, 440 Highland Ave., Rochester, N. Y. (P. O. Address,