

stant attention would soon freeze over, and their only supply cut off, as the rivers as well as lakes are then closed up.

On this lake they are well protected and a shot-gun quarantine is rigidly kept up to keep off hunters ; but numbers are killed while passing to and from their feeding ground.

[Mr. Smith writes that he is not familiar with the breeding habits of the Canada Goose and therefore cannot give a description of its nest and eggs. We have tried to get an authentic account of its nesting habits, but have failed to do so, but we will furnish a full account in next issue from a collector who is familiar with its nesting and has collected several sets of its eggs. Ed.]

NOTES ON SOME OF THE WINTER BIRDS OF CHESTER COUNTY, PA.

BY W. L. MARIS, WEST CHESTER, PA.

One of the prettiest little birds, which braves the snow and rain of our ever-changing winters is the Chickadee, *Parus atricapillus*. Common as this bird is, yet how glad is the Oologist who has had the fortune to secure a set of its eggs himself, and how many are the weary although pleasant hours I have searched for them.

A few years ago, a row of evergreen trees, in a property adjacent to my home, were constantly occupied by a flock of Chickadees, and one would forget how cold it was, watching them playing with each other what seemed to be merry games. A beautiful set of six eggs of this bird, which I have in my collection average .60x.47 inches.

Among the foremost of our winter birds is the American Crow *Corvus americanus*, and a very noticeable one in our winter landscape. During the present winter, they have been very tame, often venturing within thirty feet of the house.

The Downy Woodpecker, *Dryobates pubescens* commonly called "Sap sucker," I often see pecking away at an old willow tree out in the yard. He is the dwarf of his family and may be distinguished by his size from all the other Woodpeckers in this locality. He is often disappointed as to his home, for frequently does an impudent House Wren, having watched the process of house making or rather excav-

ating, drive him away and take possession of the place in his own name ; and I also was disappointed in a case of this kind. I had for several days been watching the excavation of a nest by a Downy Woodpecker, and had already imagined five or six beautiful white eggs lying snugly packed away in my collection, when one morning on visiting the nest, you may imagine my surprise and vexation at finding a plucky House Wren now occupying the home of my Downy Woodpecker.

The Owl line is represented in winter by the Long-eared Owl, the Great Horned Owl and the Little Screech Owl. Concerning the latter bird, a peculiar instance of its unwillingness to leave a spot which it has chosen for its home, returns to my mind. A pair of these birds have for at least four years had the same nest in the hollow of an old apple tree, and just as regularly as the female would lay a set of eggs, they were always taken by a person in the neighborhood. Does it not seem strange that a bird should continue to lay eggs in the same nest so many years, after having been continually robbed of its eggs? And it certainly must have been the same bird, for surely three or four different pairs would not select the same place in successive years for breeding purposes.

The Slate-colored Junco *Junco hyemalis*, is generally quite abundant during the winter. This little bird is a favorite with everyone, and deservedly so. We all enjoy its pleasant chatter and pleasing ways as it hops about in search of food.

The noisy English Sparrows, of whom we all know a great deal, are always with us. Several pairs annually build about our stable, and I destroy, on an average, seventy-five eggs a year from these nests. If all our Oologists do their part, we can certainly do something to prevent the rapid increase of this little pest.

Hawks are abundant, although perhaps not so much so as before our state legislators passed our famous "bounty law." During the two or three years of its existence, Pennsylvania paid as bounties for the slaughter of Hawks and Owls almost one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00), besides suffering untold injury from their destruction.

The White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*, is another very interesting resident but, as in the case of the Chickadee, its nest is seldom found here. Last year one was discovered, but upon being opened it was found to contain but two eggs. It was in a tree along the border of the woods and was about twenty feet from the ground.

[B. S. O.]