

thoughtful brotherly kindness, a morsel of food and hop over toward the clamoring stranger and drop it in his mouth—after this to stand back and say : “There baby, how did you like that ?” This trait was not shown by a chance exhibition but became a regular habit and was still followed when the older bird had attained to fly-catching. It upset all ones notions about instinct and made one think of a Golden Rule for birds.—W. L. DAWSON, *Oberlin, O.*

NOTES FROM OBERLIN, OHIO.—The summer which has just gone has been a profitable one from an ornithological standpoint. Many things of special interest have been noticed, some of which may go into a special bulletin.

FLIGHTS OF BIRDS.—NIGHTHAWK.—From August 22 until September 16, Nighthawks passed over Oberlin in a southerly direction in companies of six to ten, every evening about an hour before sunset. They flew low over the fields and meadows, but rose to several hundred feet when passing over the village. There was an interval of about four minutes between the appearance of each of the several companies. The largest number of birds counted on any one evening was 150. There were usually about 100. In no case was the flight direct, but the birds were feeding as they traveled.

CROW.—Throughout the summer crows were seen in the usual numbers singly, in pairs or small companies during the day. On September 7, at 5 o'clock in the evening, 398 were seen, flying in a north-westerly direction. They were in two companies, with an interval of eight minutes between the two. Each company was first noticed in a field of corn, feeding on the green kernels. The flight took the form of a line of march fully two miles long and an average of four abreast, with skirmishers far out on each side. These skirmishers were the only individuals to stop as long as the birds were in sight. The line of march presented a ragged appearance, and sometimes broken, when the birds in front of the break in the line would be gathered into a small company. I have no doubt that the birds were on their way to a roost for the night. On the succeeding night about the same number were seen going in the same direction, but all in one company. On several different occasions and at as many different points numbers of crows were seen flying in a westerly direction. By tracing these several lines of flight it is found that they converge at a point about eight miles west of Oberlin, on a wooded river bottom. It has been impossible to visit the spot to determine if the surmise that the birds roost there is correct.

CHIMNEY SWIFT.—The Swifts have a rendezvous in a large chimney of

one of the college buildings, where they pass, the night. From about two hours before sunset until twilight is fading, clouds of them may be seen hovering near this chimney or whirling about in the near vicinity. During the day they are dispersed about the country feeding. When the Nighthawks were passing over the village the Swifts harrassed them unmercifully.

Of the flights of Cowbird and Bronzed Grackle I shall have something to say later in a special bulletin.

BLUEBIRD.—The increase in the numbers of the Bluebirds over last summer is especially marked. One may find a few every day in whatever direction he may look. Small flocks may be met with in the country.

GOLDFINCH.—Ordinarily the Goldfinch is choice in the selection of its nesting site, preferring the region of the lake, or some fair seized stream. The past season it has been found nesting in considerable numbers in all the brushy pastures near Oberlin, and but few pairs were seen on the lake marshes where it has usually been so numerous. A nest with fresh eggs was found August 22.

PINE SISKIN.—This usually rare bird was found with Goldfinches, helping to form large flocks, on September 26. It seemed to be rather common, and made no attempt to separate from the Goldfinches, rather preferring their company. A few individuals were singing. All were in fall plumage.

Among the birds which have been usually abundant during the summer and fall, Flicker and Red-headed Woodpecker, Vesper and Song Sparrows, and Goldfinch deserve special mention. Meadowlark is still abundant.

There has been a marked decrease in the numbers of Wood Thrushes, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Accentors and Louisiana Water Thrushes over previous years. It has been difficult to find any in the woods since early spring. No reason can be assigned for this scarcity.

PUGNACITY OF THE RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD.—As I sat in a bramble thicket watching for birds on August 17, a Red-eyed Vireo dashed into the thicket, hotly pressed by a Hummingbird. The Vireo sought refuge in a dense tangle of thorns within a few feet of me, but was soon forced to leave it. The tactics of the Hummingbird gave the Vireo no rest, for while the Vireo was flying his tormentor bumped against him repeatedly, seriously disturbing his equilibrium; and when perching he was made dizzy by the antics of the Hummer, which kept up a constant dancing motion within a few inches of the Vireo.

Both birds were evidently much heated and tired. The Vireo uttered a plaintive noise resembling that uttered when his nest is destroyed. I have no doubt that the Hummingbird could worst any bird that flies if he should wish to fight. He seems to have learned all there is to know about aerial locomotion, and his diminutive size enables him to dart about with incredible swiftness. He has no weapons of offense worth mentioning, it is true, but his whirring presence might become very annoying to another bird.—LYNDS JONES, *Oberlin, Ohio.*

DEATH TO THE SPARROWS.—Last evening (Aug. 3rd) a terrific hail and wind storm struck the city [St. Paul] about 12 o'clock, and this morning the streets around the city parks are covered with dead sparrows. In one residence lawn on Summit Avenue I counted over 600 dead sparrows, mostly young of the year.—WALTON I. MITCHEL, *St. Paul, Minn.*

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## ABOUT THE WORK.

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In spite of the financial depression and the closeness of the times, the past year has not lacked its share of ornithological progress and enthusiasm. There is a growing interest throughout the country, especially in educational circles, for the study of the interesting science of Ornithology. The tendency is in the right direction, also, as it looks toward the economic value of birds and an appreciation of the ornithological science. Students of birds who are not bird and skin collectors masquerading as ornithologists are becoming numerous. The field glass is coming more and more to replace the gun. The disciples of Burroughs are multiplying. Books touching the popular scientific side of ornithology now have a wide circulation.

A very important move, and one that, it is to be hoped, will be generally successful, is the recent petition of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture to the schools of the country for the establishment of a "Bird Day" somewhat similar to Arbor Day. The proper and general observance of such a day ought to have considerable influence against wanton shooting of small birds and indiscriminate egg collecting by American small boys; and its educational value can hardly be over estimated. Members of the Wilson Chapter should urge upon the school authorities of the various towns in which they reside, the importance of observing "Bird Day."

Mr. Lynds Jones gives two courses in Ornithology, one elementary, and the other advanced, in Oberlin College. Both courses are offered