

departure, which was later than that of most of the other sparrows. Associated with them during the greater part of their stay were three Fox Sparrows; at times also numerous White-throated, Song, Swamp, Field and Tree Sparrows, Juncos, a half-dozen or more Lincoln and two or three Clay-colored Sparrows. Somewhat apart from this company was a small flock of Purple Finches, the same birds it is believed were seen every day and remained nearly three weeks. During the day the Harris Sparrows were generally to be found in one of four places, either in a brush-pile, a thicket composed of dwarf plum trees and raspberry bushes, a weed patch, or in willow trees that overhung a favorite bathing place for the birds; all four of these places can be described within a circle having for its radiance one hundred yards.

While driving ten or twelve miles over prairie roads during migration days, one soon comes to look for Juncos and their congeners chiefly in the vicinity of the farm-houses, which, more often than not, are built on hill-tops and provided with wind-breaks of evergreen trees. On the other hand, a drive of equal length through the neighboring woodlands with farm-houses in clearings reveals the sparrow hosts, not near the farm buildings, but where thickets are growing in sheltered places. These observations may lead one to think that sparrows in their migration halts are influenced to tarry in certain places quite as much by sheltered roosting-places as by good food supplies.

AN EXERCISE IN BIRD STUDY.

BY W. F. COPELAND.

During the summer school at Ohio University, the class in Bird Study did some work that I wish to report. Students were asked to select a nest containing young birds, make observations for one day, and report same to the class. Such studies have been made by others and have always been highly recommended by them. Others have made the criticism that there is a probable error because the birds are more or less disturbed by the presence of the observer. In the reports here

given, all we can say is that the parent birds fed their young a certain number of times, but it can reasonably be assumed that, had the observer been absent, the number of visits to the nest would not have been diminished, but more likely been increased.

These observations were carefully made and care taken to make the records exact. By way of commendation, it is safe to say that a day's work of this sort has much value, even though much has to be eliminated on account of error. A student cannot avoid the fact that birds are actually doing work, and by knowing the amount that one pair is doing every day, he has an index that will tell him approximately what that particular species is doing for his community.

I see no impossible reason why such an exercise might not be used with interest and profit in our public schools and more especially in rural districts. Of course we are to insist upon exact observations and records, but I do not think that we are to be more interested in records than we are concerning the influence of such studies upon the life of the pupil. And so I wish to repeat that I think there is enough of real value in this exercise, after all errors are omitted, to make it well worth recommending to every bird student and teacher.

Below are given brief extracts from reports made before the class:

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT.

By Ernestine Cooley.

The nest was found June 20, '08, in a clump of bushes and briars. It was loosely put together, being made of leaves and bark from the grape vines. Four little birds, probably four days old, were in the nest. On Saturday, July 4, the entire day was spent near the nest, the observations beginning at 4 a. m. and ending at 6:45 p. m. The parent birds being so nearly alike it was not always possible to distinguish between them, but occasionally both visited the nest at the same time, proving beyond a doubt that both brought food to the young.

During the morning the birds seemed annoyed by my presence and would often make considerable fuss before coming to the nest, but in the afternoon they would slip in quietly, and