

The winter which is just passing in northern Ohio has been the most severe winter in a quarter of a century or more, yet the winter bird life has been unusual in the number of birds present, among which our Robin has been the most conspicuous. Crows have also been much more than usually common. In the Cadiz Republican there have been reports of great numbers of Robins all the winter. From Steubenville comes the report that during the most severe weather, when snow covered the ground, many Robins died of starvation. From many parts of the state, both east and west, reports have come in of great numbers of Robins all winter. The cause of this unusual occurrence seems hard to understand, particularly when it is remembered that the winter weather began in November with unseasonably cold weather and snow. The food supply seems to have been only normal. Unusual occurrences of this sort on the part of many species of birds needs investigation before we have any right to assume that it is capricious rather than governed by well defined natural factors.

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## General Notes

### FLORIDA CAERULEA AGAIN TAKEN IN OHIO.

Since my last record of this bird in Ohio, July, 1902, in the *Auk* (Oct. 1902), nothing has been reported of the reoccurrence of this species in this state. On July 16, 1909, a young male in the white plumage was shot at the Loramie Reservoir and sent to me in the afternoon. The intense heat and the somewhat mangled condition of the bird had caused a good deal of trouble in preparing the skin, and it was only after long and careful work that I succeeded in saving it, it being now No. 784 of my collection. It gives me pleasure to re-record this bird in the State, and also to give the first record for it from middle western Ohio.

W. F. HENNINGER.

### BOBWHITE (*Colinus virginianus virginianus*).

A gratifying increase in the numbers of the Bobwhite in past years was largely due, no doubt, to the protection the law afforded them; also because the neighboring farmers have better business than that of hunting birds. Some idea of the commonness the Bob-

white had attained in the summer of 1908 in this locality may be formed from the fact, that on every day in July, and on all but five in August the cocks frequently were heard calling, often three or four of them at the same time. Upon the advance of winter some coveys came close about the farm-house, in one case the Bobwhites ate with the chickens and roosted at night under evergreen trees nearby; in another place they fed with the pigs in the barnyard. In that winter and the following one, heavy snow-falls were blown into deep drifts that sealed the fate of many a Bobwhite; even the semi-domesticated ones disappeared. So widespread was their destruction that in the whole year of 1910, I only once saw and heard a Bobwhite. The same thing was true of the year 1911. Rarely a few of the species have been reported by others. The birds were not hunted by gunners. It is possible that some disease was responsible for a portion of the deaths, but there has been no evidence that such was the case.

*National, Iowa.*

ALTHEA R. SHERMAN.

ROBIN (*Planesticus migratorius migratorius*).

Among the anomalies in bird history during the past winter has been the large number of Robins that have tarried in the Upper Mississippi Valley in spite of the unprecedented length and severity of the cold season. In northern Iowa the first six weeks of 1912 gave us twenty-six mornings of zero weather, or far below the zero mark. The mercury on two mornings fell to 30 and 36 degrees below zero, and on two others to 24 and 25 below, the average for the twenty-six mornings being 13 below. In the first sixteen days of January only once did the temperature rise above zero. This rigor of climate would seem sufficient to drive the Robins southward, but such was not the case. On December 28, with the mercury at 10 degrees below zero, a flock of two dozen or more were seen by the mail-carrier on Route No. 2 out of McGregor, Iowa, and on numerous days since then one or two of the species have been reported from different places in northern Iowa and south-western Wisconsin; while from a point but forty miles south of St. Paul in Northfield, Minnesota, a friend says she has had a Robin boarder all winter.

Somewhat similar has been the case of the Goldfinch, a species that very rarely is seen here in the winter. Tree Sparrows and Juncos have remained in some numbers with us, whereas they usually move farther south during the coldest months of winter. The unparalleled abundance of the ragweed crop last summer provided food everywhere for these seed-eaters. On the other hand