

A comparison of my findings with the book descriptions left no doubt that I had seen the Bewick Wren and heard its song. So far as I can learn this is also a new record for Geauga County.

ORANGE COOK.

Chardon, Ohio.

A BIRD STORY FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

(Substantially as related to me by Nathaniel Heyward of Oakley.)

Scene: A rice plantation. Cast: Pickaninny, his mammy, crane (*Florida caerulea*), moonshine (*Ionornis martinica*). Business: An ancient muzzle-loading musket of erratic tendencies, the ammunition more dubious still.

A small negro boy climbed one day to the top of the levee in front of his cabin home. From this point he spied at the edge of the locker bay a crane and a moonshine side by side. Pickaninny at once crouched and skedaddled back down the slope to get the always-loaded family musket. Now he returned to the point of vantage, Mammy lending moral support from the cabin door. Pointing the musket over the levee, Pickaninny took long and careful aim, then pulled the trigger. Eventually the hammer snapped. Mammy now encouraged him by shouting, "Hol er stedly, son, til she go off." During this interval the crane became vexed at moonshine and struck viciously at it with his beak. At last the musket discharged with a resounding "pow" and the moonshine fell over dead. "Dar," said the crane, "I done kill dat moonshine."

W. L. M.

BIRDS OF 1915: TOO FEW AND TOO MANY.

So newhere in the Mississippi Valley some one must have found the spring migration interesting. That it was not so in northeastern Iowa seems to have been due to the weather coming in wholesale sized installments. March, with continuously too low temperature, followed by a dry April, with high south winds and summer heat on several days, tended to hurry northward without loiterings the birds due the last of March and during April. The unseasonable warmth of April was followed by a wintry May. Seemingly as a result of these combinations very few of the birds that pass to more northerly breeding ranges were seen.

A comparison of the median dates for ten years of the first arrivals of twenty-four of our commonest birds with their dates for 1915 shows a retardation in the first half of the season, and an acceleration in the second half, except that the Killdeer and the

House Wren arrived on their middle dates. Fourteen of the earlier comers were from one to ten days behind the average dates for their first appearance. Of these the Sparrow Hawk was one day late, the Meadowlark and Mourning Dove were two days, and the Robin, Red-winged Blackbird and Flicker were three days late. On the other hand the warm weather of April pushed vegetation forward a week in advance of its normal growth and hastened the appearance of some of the birds from one to six days earlier than their average dates. The Brown Thrasher was one day, the Chipping Sparrow and Chimney Swift were two days, the Bobolink four days, and the Red-headed Woodpecker, Baltimore Oriole and Warbling Vireo were six days ahead of their median dates. To the cold weather that marked the month of May was due, very likely, the slight delay in the appearance of the Maryland Yellowthroat and Catbird. The middle date for both is May 10, but they were not seen until the following day.

It would be a pleasure to announce that our summer residents returned with undiminished ranks, but that was not the case. The greatest losses appear to have occurred in the Icteridae family. In this neighborhood Meadowlarks and Red-winged Blackbirds have far outnumbered other species, being more numerous here than in adjacent territory. They are now by no means scarce, but their numbers are greatly reduced without the reason for this diminution being clear. The same cannot be said of the Bobolink, which from an abundant species has become wholly wanting at present. If pleasant weather should ever come again it may bring out a few Bobolinks, which have sought sheltered places along with other missing species.

In this day of vanishing species it may seem absurd to say that of any there are too many. This expression refers to the viewpoint of the birds, not that of their human friends. There seems to be the possibility of making a place too attractive, and that by the increasing of the numbers of some species they become intolerable to their bird neighbors because of their warring on other's rights. In this year of almost world-wide warfare it is depressing to have one's mind constantly disturbed by the fighting of the birds. Their atrocities are authentic; even two Mourning Doves were seen fighting one day. The whole history of the causes of these forages and the bushwhacking of the birds may never be told, but it would make a ponderous volume if written. To-day (May 28) a Robin is building her third nest, her eggs in two nests having been destroyed by some bird, perhaps by House Wrens or Bronzed Grackles, which seem to be the worst egg-despoilers in our yard. It is not for the sake of food always, for frequently the shells are merely pierced.

For many years the Flicker did not increase in numbers, but for three seasons more have returned and excess in numbers betrays a serious fault in this good bird. Under these conditions he is guilty of nurturing family feuds and robs the nests of his fellows that have located near him. So fighting Flickers are adding to the sorrows of a battling world.

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SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE 1915 SPRING MIGRATION IN NORTHERN OHIO.

If one ever had any doubts about the correlation of bird movements with waves of temperature the past migration season would furnish conclusive proof that there is. During the unseasonable warm wave of the second week of February the first migrants appeared, fully two weeks ahead of schedule. This was on February 13 to 15. The second wave was on February 19 to 21, the third not until March 13 to 14, the fourth on March 20 to 23, the fifth April 4 to 7, the sixth April 10 to 12, the seventh April 16 to 20, the eighth April 24 to 28, the ninth May 2 to 6, the tenth May 10 to 17, and the last, composed of a great host of migrating warblers and thrushes, May 21 to June 1. Most of these waves were unusually well-defined, but of course there were scattering records which could not be correlated with anything, as usual. These scattering records may be due to oversight because the individuals were few, or they may be due to the spilling over of a few individuals, the crest of whose wave of migration has halted a short distance to the south of this station.

The Ruddy Duck arrived 20 days before its schedule; the Cowbird 24 days; Red-headed Woodpecker 22 days; Yellow-legs 20 days; Henslow's Sparrow 19 days; Song Sparrow 18 days; Yellow-billed Cuckoo 17 days; Lincoln's Sparrow 16 days; Crow, Robin, Bluebird, Red-winged Blackbird, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 15 days; Meadow-lark, Bronzed Grackle, Cape May Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher, 13 days; Philadelphia Vireo and Red-eyed Vireo 12 days; Wood Pewee 11 days; Blackburnian Warbler, Whippoorwill, House Wren, and Rough-winged Swallow 10 days; Killdeer, Catbird, and Least Flycatcher 9 days; Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler 8 days; Orchard Oriole, Water-Thrush, and Crested Flycatcher 7 days; and Spotted Sandpiper 6 days ahead of schedule. The average range either side of the median may be assumed to be five days, as it so works out from year to year.

The Swamp Sparrow was 23 days late; Fox Sparrow and Belted Kingfisher 17; Phoebe and Towhee 14; Northern Parula Warbler 11;