

THE MAGPIE AT SIOUX CITY, IOWA.

ON December 5, as I was returning home from a field trip, I had the pleasure of seeing a rather uncommon bird for this locality, the Magpie (*Pica pica hudsonia*). The first indication of its presence came when I heard it give its loud, harsh call. This was such an unusual sound that I hurried in its direction and arrived on the scene just in time to see a large black bird, with conspicuous white markings, fly off through the trees. It soon alighted, however, and then I was able to call Dr. T. C. Stephens, and together we watched the bird. It was alone, but the plumage was in such splendid condition that it was probably not an escaped cage bird.

An interesting fact in this case is that the Magpie here referred to had invaded the very center of the city. It was finding an abundance of food in the back yards, and was observed to visit and feed from several garbage cans. In one back yard it seemed to find a supply of food on the ground; but a dog annoyed the bird repeatedly. The Magpie, however, simply flew to a nearby post, and returned to the ground as soon as the dog retreated. This game was kept up for some time.

The presence of the Magpie at Sioux City may be explained by the theory advanced by Bruner, Wolcott and Swenk in "Birds of Nebraska"; that the Magpies move eastward, in the winter, through the Niobrara Valley, which would bring them within a short distance of Sioux City. Anderson, in his "Birds of Iowa," quotes Coues as fixing Sioux City as the eastern limit of the Magpie's range.

This is not the only record of the Magpie's occurrence in Sioux City, but they are of sufficient rareness to make publication worth while.

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THE WHISPER SONGS OF BIRDS.

DURING the spring and fall migration of 1915, the writer had the pleasure of hearing several species of birds sing the whisper song.

One evening in May, a Brown Thrasher that had just succeeded in getting a mate, and had selected a place to build a nest in an elderberry patch near the house, was seen with his mate near the nesting site, and a few minutes later was heard singing very softly, not half as loud as a Thrasher usually sings. When first heard singing in this manner, and before becoming aware that it was the Thrasher in the elderberry patch, I thought it was