

Numbers of Cliff Swallows, an uncommon species to the writer, were flying with Bank Swallows, Purple Martins, etc., near the rocky cliffs facing Muddy Creek. This was my best opportunity to watch this swallow, which is rather rare in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The Grasshopper Sparrow was evident as a breeder in a field one-half mile north of Madisonville. In Ault Park I was surprised by running across a Louisiana Water-Thrush feeding its young. The Whip-poor-will, a rare bird around Cincinnati, is apparently breeding near Cove Creek.

In the cemetery near Fort Thomas, Kentucky, Orchard Orioles seemed to be everywhere, and for the first time I learned their sweet song, which I consider after the Bobolink's, the most liquid of our bird songs, and like that song a bubbling out of joyful notes. Around Cincinnati the Orchard Orioles outnumber the Baltimore Orioles about six to one, while in Western Pennsylvania ten Baltimore Orioles are usually seen to every Orchard Oriole. In the vicinity of Fort Thomas Yellow-breasted Chats were very numerous, although they were not uncommon anywhere.

One of the region's characteristic birds, the Bewick Wren, was not seen, although a lookout was kept for him, as I have never identified this bird. The Yellow-throat was observed but once, while the Redstart was not placed.

As I wandered through the woods many of the common familiar birds of Western Pennsylvania were absent. One of our rich songsters, the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, heads the list. With a northerner it will take a lot of Mockingbirds to make up for the loss of the "potato-bug" bird. The tinkling Bobolink's melody was lamentably missing because no June day bird trip is complete without hearing "Robert-of-Lincoln's" tambourine-like flight song.

THOS. L. MCCONNELL.

FIELD NOTES FROM THE CHICAGO AREA FOR 1916.

The year opened auspiciously. A week of unusually mild weather in February brought, on the 22d of that month, the first Bluebirds, a Killdeer and a few Song Sparrows, although the last species seems some years to winter in small numbers as near as LaGrange, just 5-6 miles southwest of River Forest. On the same day 10-15 Ring-necked Pheasants were seen.

The most interesting parts of the Chicago area are no doubt the sand dunes, on the south shore of Lake Michigan. Here, 30-40 miles from Chicago, may yet be seen several pairs of Great Horned Owls and Ruffed Grouse. During the winter of 1915-16, as again in the present, large flocks of Redpolls and Evening Grosbeaks are

seen; also occasional Snow Buntings and Crossbills. Three flocks or the rare Northern Grosbeaks were seen, of 75, 45 and 8 individuals respectively. One was seen as late as May 4th in Jackson Park. They were again seen at the dunes on November 21 last. They feed on berries of *Rhus aromatica* and *Toxicodendron vernix* or Poison Sumac. When flying a greater distance, they form compact flocks and fly swiftly, straight and noiselessly. In the marshes and swales between the dunes the Marsh Hawk is common; they arrive about the beginning of March, mate about April 1st, and nests with five and four eggs were found on May 20th and 30th respectively. In the same places the Prairie Long-billed Marsh Wren, the Short-billed Marsh Wren and Henslows Sparrow, find congenial habitats. They are common by April 22d.

A visit on April 8th to the Longspur paradise, Addison, proved interesting. The temperature was 30-35°, the wind blew a gale, so that it was extremely unpleasant in those wind-swept, bleak hills; in fact, making headway and looking about was difficult. And yet, the Longspurs were evidently in their glory, they played and chased each other, twittered and tinkled in great style, as though they regarded that kind of weather as the ideal one for them. Conditions in the arctic tundra, where they breed, are no doubt much like they were here on that day. Many were already in nearly perfect nuptial plumage.

A later than usual stay on the part of winter visitants was observed, when Juncos were seen up to May 4th, after Bobolinks, Orioles, Catbirds, Blackburnian and other warblers had arrived. A real rarity was the finding of a Mockingbird on May 18th near my home. Mr. B. T. Gault, with whom I was taking a walk, and I had a good view of it at close range.

The nesting season brought along a peculiarity, inasmuch as in "Waller's Park" and nearby, the Robins especially, also the Mousing Doves placed their nests lower than other years, as low as 2-3 feet in the case of the former, and nearly all on the ground, in the case of the latter. I ascribe it to an attempt to escape the depredations of the Crows and Blue Jays, which probably do not pilfer quite so low, as a rule.

Unusually late records are the seeing of Chimney Swifts and Nighthawks on September 21st, a Hummingbird on October 6th, and a Black-crowned Night Heron on November 19th. A Saw-whet Owl was caught alive by an Italian in "Waller's Park," in a spruce tree, who promptly wrung off its head, for the reason that its calling disturbed him in his sleep, he said! A pair of Long-eared Owls stayed in one and the same Norway spruce there for at least four weeks, probably much longer, as there were quite a number of

pellets, etc., in and below the tree when first seen. One could go there at any time during the day and find them in that tree, even on the same branches, ready for an interview.

Finally, I would like to report one of the periodical incursions of the Goshawk. They were shot here in numbers during November and December. I received one from Orland, twenty miles south of Chicago, and one from Michigan, and Mr. K. W. Kahmann, the taxidermist, received more than fifty specimens alone. They were from the whole northern part of the state and as far south as Springfield.

C. W. G. EFRIG.

River Forest, Illinois.

A CAT-PROOF SHELTER.

Those who try to encourage birds to feed and nest around their homes are at once confronted by two serious obstacles, both introduced by man himself, and both greatly interfering with good results; I allude to house-sparrows and cats. While gun, trap, and poison will more or less reduce the numbers of sparrows and tend to drive them from premises where such measures are in use, it is impossible of course to prevent their occupying places where other birds go, and from annoying and fighting with privileged guests. Cats, however, can be absolutely barred from any given area by proper safeguards.

The more I study the habits of cats in relation to bird protection, the more strongly I feel that cat-proof fences should be in much more general use, and I am in hopes my description of the small shelter maintained last summer will induce others of the Wilson Club to try the same experiment. I had the problem of protecting at least a part of our yard from depredations by a neighbor's cat, a cunning and destructive hunter, but immune, by neighborhood reasons, from the extreme penalty it richly deserves. A strong spring-gun, (usually called an air-rifle) is very effective in daylight visits, one hit preventing further calls for some time, but there remained the probability of unopposed prowls at night. Part of our yard was already enclosed by an ordinary four foot wire fence on tubular steel posts. I found cats even when running from a rifle seemed unable, or very reluctant, to climb this fence, invariably escaping through overhanging trees. Following out this idea, I erected a higher wire fence around a group of shrubbery, and experience has proved it a thoroughly cat-proof shelter.

My shelter is circular, about thirty feet in diameter, enclosed by a small-mesh woven wire fence, hung loosely and with some over-