

eastern edge of the Pine Ridge. During November they appeared at Oshkosh, Garden county, and spread eastward along the Platte to Gothenburg, Dawson county, and Kearney, Buffalo county. A specimen taken at Kearney on November 18 is now in the A. M. Brooking collection. Mr. A. B. Colvin of Gothenburg writes, under date of December 8, that a few of these birds appeared there in the winter of 1918-19 also.

MYRON H. SWENK.

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FURTHER NOTES ON THE DECREASE OF THE CAROLINA WREN

In the *Auk*, No. 2, April, 1919, page 289, Mr. Alex. Whetmore has an article relating to the decrease of the Carolina Wren in his section.

I have also noticed this decrease in Virginia, a little further south of Washington, D. C. These birds, as a rule, are resident the year round, and are found in pairs around some farm, often as much in evidence in winter as in summer. I have attributed their decrease, not so much to hard winters, with snow on the ground, as to the "Swat-the-Fly" movement in the rural districts during the last ten years. These wrens, as well as the House Wrens, feed extensively about the house and farm buildings, and feed on flies, spiders and other insects found under porches, barns, cow stables and other farm buildings. The use of poisoned arsenical fly paper to kill off flies in the above mentioned farm buildings has resulted in the killing of countless numbers of flies. I do not think that the wrens ever drink the water from the shallow receptacles in which the sheets of poisoned paper are placed, but I have seen the wrens hopping around on the porches of my country home, picking up the dead flies, and on the ground also after the flies had been swept from the porch. I have also noted them engaged in similar feeding,—in the cow stable. After watching them extensively while thus engaged, I have noticed they became weak and wabby in their movements, and I have been able to catch them by hand; and within a short time they have died. For a number of years this has been going on, and both the Carolina and House Wrens, especially the former, have become scarce in this section. Of course the House Wren migrates, generally by September 1st, and so escapes the multitude of dead flies killed in September, the height of their season. If snow is on the ground, Carolina Wrens are seen extensively around the farm buildings, looking over the cobwebs, in which old flies, spiders and other in-

sects are caught during the summer. I would suppose, however, that the pairs of wrens inhabiting the woods, and not coming near habitations, could readily secure insect food enough from hollow trees, brush piles, under sides of logs, etc., to carry them until a thaw came.

HAROLD H. BAILEY.

Newport News, Va.,
March 27, 1920.

In the *Auk*, October, 1919, No. 4, pages 574 and 575, Dr. A. H. Wright has two articles referring to birds seen in Virginia that call for further comment.

The colony of Henslows' Sparrow (and there are other colonies of these sparrows in Fairfax county, Va.) shown Dr. Wright near Alexandria, has been known with other colonies to actual "collectors," if I may use the term in place of ornithologists, for quite a number of years, and sets of eggs from those colonies have found their way into many of the large oological collections in the U. S. Dr. Wright does not say he actually found eggs or young of this species, southward of Fairfax county, though they may breed in Prince William county. Dr. Wright also fails to state that actual breeding records were seen or secured by Messrs. Harper and Holt in the vicinity of Camp Lee. If these two gentlemen can produce breeding records for that vicinity I shall be glad to learn of the southwestward extension of their breeding range; but until they do, I know of no colony in this state further southwest, of that in Prince William county. Non-breeding birds may, however, be found anywhere within "Tidewater" during that time.

Referring to the other article: While his reference (*Wilson Bulletin*) gives no information as to the year, number, page or author, I judge the article referred to is one of mine in the *Wilson Bulletin* of September, 1918, No. 3, page 91. On reading Dr. Wright's article one would infer that they were riding in an automobile; did not collect any specimens, and therefore nothing was done other than "seeing it—my first live Dickcissel"; and Dr. Knight hearing it. Will such a record from a moving auto stand the acid test? I do not say that possibly there has not been a Dickcissel in Virginia in twenty years, for in 1917 or 1918, while engaged in work for the U. S. Biological Survey, I also thought I heard and saw a Dickcissel. My train had come to stop on the siding,—to let another one pass. We were in the Clinch River Valley of Virginia, Scott county, and while leaning out of the open window the long forgotten song was heard and a fleeting glimpse of the bird seen. As I remember it, I mentioned the incident in my weekly report

to the Department; but to publish such information as a record and a fact would have been to join the ranks of the opera glass ornithologists, and so bring down upon my head the wrath of real collectors. What I would like to see is a real record of the Dickcissel in Virginia. No hard feelings, Doctor, as neither of us are ornithologists (though you unintentionally used the word) according to the advanced code.

HAROLD H. BAILEY.

Newport News, Va.,
March 23, 1920.

NOTES FROM LAKE COUNTY

EARLY DATE OF DICKCISSEL.—Always rare in the county, I was pleasantly surprised on April 18 of this year to find a male bird singing his raspy *schreeee-schree, schree, schree, schree*, from the very top of a small tree; dropping to the ground to feed every now and then, but always mounting to the top of a bush or tree again to continue his song. Though not yet in *full* adult summer plumage all characteristics were noted as he fed close at hand on the ground. I believe it unusual to find one this far north at quite such an early date, and as an anomaly in migration comparisons will add that the same day a friend and I discovered a Whistling Swan on the open water of Mentor marsh, fully six weeks later than one would naturally look for this bird. It was not a wounded bird as it flew strongly when flushed. It stayed in the vicinity until the 22d.

LATE DATE OF BOHEMIAN WAXWING.—Lake county was not slighted the past winter when the county was visited by large numbers of these interesting wanderers. I first noted a flock of fully 75 birds on January 27, and on February 20 watched for some time a detachment of half a dozen feeding on frozen apples in an orchard. On May 11, while hunting Warblers, a single Waxwing flew from one cottonwood to another some distance away. The larger size and immediate louder call note told me it was a belated Bohemian, so I went out of my way to make a close observation. The rufous under tail coverts and the white and yellow base on the wings confirmed my first decision.

E. A. DOOLITTLE.

Painesville, Ohio.

A MAY EVENING GROSBEAK IN LAKE COUNTY

To Mr. Glenn Vesy belongs the right of discovery of this bird. He reported seeing a male of the species on May 18, and knowing he would not be liable to be mistaken I searched for it late that