

GENERAL NOTES

Conducted by M. H. Swenk

A Hybrid Field-Vesper Sparrow.—Several times during May I was within a few feet, and studied with a glass as long as I chose, a bird that was evidently a cross between the Field Sparrow and the Vesper Sparrow. The general appearance was of the Field Sparrow with the typical head markings and flesh colored bill. The wings were barred as in the Field Sparrow, but the lesser coverts were solid bright bay as with the Vesper, while the tail was distinctly like that of the Vesper Sparrow, having the outer feathers white.—E. A. DOOLITTLE, *Painesville, Ohio*.

The Bald Eagle in Arkansas.—On the morning of August 29, 1928, a friend of mine called me out of a local confectionery, and pointing up, wanted to know what kind of a bird that was, soaring over the valley. A glance was sufficient to tell that it was a Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), for the white head and tail flashed in the sunlight like a mirror as he turned. A small crowd soon gathered, and twenty or thirty people watched the bird as it circled over the valley, at a rather low elevation, until after three or four minutes it straightened away to the west, and was soon out of sight. This is the only record for me, and the bird has been reported only three or four times from the Arkansas Ozarks in the past ten years.—J. D. BLACK, *Winslow, Ark.*

Strangulation of Gulls.—While at Chase Lake, North Dakota, on an expedition of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, during June, 1928, I found several dead Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) which seemed to have died of strangulation. Upon further examination the deaths were found to have been caused by the gulls attempting to swallow whole Richardson's Spermophiles. In all the specimens examined, the spermophiles were caught in the throat, head first, with the hind feet and tail extending out of the mouth, as if the gulls had tried to swallow the mammals head first.

The gulls probably picked up dead spermophiles, as the farmers had been killing them with poisoned oats. The death of the gulls could not have been caused by the poisoned rodents, as in no case was a spermophile even slightly digested, so that undoubtedly the gulls died of strangulation.—E. V. KOMAREK, *Oak Park, Ill.*

Trapping Juncos and White-throats.—Our yard, this last spring (1927), had many Slate-colored Junco and White-throated Sparrow visitors, but we did not succeed in trapping many until we began using the prepared bird seed bought at the stores.

Even so, we were not securing as many as we should until we began setting the traps in the bottom of our fish pond, which had been drained for winter and not yet filled again.

We found that a light litter drawn over some seed scattered over the bottom of the pond enticed the little rascals, who enjoyed scratching like small chickens, and the outside food did not prevent them from entering the traps. Some mornings we had birds in every trap, without exception.—EDWARD A. EVERETT, *Waseca, Minn.*

Tactics of the Domestic Pigeon in Evading the Duck Hawk.—On April 12, 1928, while stopping briefly to examine the cliffs at Dauphin, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, where Duck Hawks (*Rhynchodon peregrinus anatum*) live,

and probably nest, I learned of an unusual method employed by pigeons in evading their dreaded foe, the Duck Hawk. The pigeons, upon seeing the hawk towering above them, preparatory to striking, fly with terrific haste down toward the main highway. As the Duck Hawk poises before his plunge the pigeons arrange themselves under the telegraph wires, and fly along one after the other, just beneath the wires. The hawk swoops, but always veers off when it sees the wires. Goshawks have been known to kill themselves by flying into mesh wire while making their attack upon poultry; evidently the Duck Hawk does not commit such folly. I understand from local residents that the pigeons which pass the cliffs now regularly fly near the road, ready to dart to cover under the wires at the first sight of their enemy. How different are these tactics from those of the flocks of shore-birds in the North Country which swarm into the sky and mill about in a confused mass, awaiting the dreaded plunge of their pursuer.

Robins, Flickers, Meadowlarks, and Blue Jays which fly by the cliffs are struck down with comparative ease. These smaller birds apparently have not learned of the protection the telegraph wires might afford.—GEORGE MIKSCHE SUTTON, *Game Commission, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Some Cowbird Experiences in Columbus, Ohio.—On May 22, 1928, at about 9:15 A. M., a male Cowbird (*Molothrus ater ater*) alighted on an old shed near our house, giving his high pitched call—"seeee." Soon a female Cowbird arrived near by, whereupon a Field Sparrow and a male Indigo Bunting also appeared, and scolded. The female Cowbird then disappeared, but shortly afterwards returned with an egg in her bill, which she ate at leisure, contents and shell, while an unfortunate Song Sparrow protested. With a satisfied air she hopped on to the fence, wiped her bill and flew away.

On June 8, 1928, I discovered a nest of the Maryland Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas trichas*) in a patch of weeds in the same vicinity. In it were two warbler eggs and no less than four Cowbird's eggs. All were warm. The warblers did not show themselves at all. I unwisely removed all of the eggs of the parasite, without thinking until later of the shock it would be to the warbler to find such a radical change in her household. The unappreciative warbler promptly deserted her own eggs. The Cowbird eggs remained in the house for five hours at a temperature of 68°F. Then I cracked one, and the horrid little reptilian creature inside waved its fore paw and opened its bill! The egg that closely resembled this one in its markings was also nearly ready to hatch, but the others, which were like each other but slightly different from the first two, were fresh.—MARGARET M. NICE, *Columbus, Ohio.*

The Hudsonian Chickadee in Michigan.—On July 28, 1928, in spruce forest on a sandy plain south of the Huron Mountains, about fifteen miles from the shore of Lake Superior and at an elevation of about 900 feet above the lake, I came on a band of chickadees and kinglets which included both the familiar Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus atricapillus*) and the Hudsonian Chickadee (*Parus hudsonicus*) and both the Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa satrapa*) and the Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula calendula*). Walking in the clear and rather open stand of spruces, and hearing chickadee notes which seemed not wholly familiar, I squeaked, and presently the little coterie was all about me. There were two or three Black-caps, but the majority of the chickadees, a half dozen, more or less, were Hud-