

side of the river, carrying something in its bill. I marked the spot, and after about a half hour came back to it. To my surprise there was a young Starling, almost fully grown, looking out of an old woodpecker hole about twenty-five feet up in a dead tree, which was broken a few feet above the hole and had no branches whatever. Soon the adult male Starling came and fed the youngster. One or two more seemed to be inside, because they could be seen making ineffectual attempts to get their head out of the hole. So far as the writer is aware this is the first authentic instance of the nesting of the Starling in the immediate vicinity of Chicago.

In 1928, Mr. C. A. Eickemeyer, a teacher near Crete, Illinois, thirty miles south of Chicago, described to the writer some birds new to him that had nested in his orchard. From the description it was at once apparent that the birds had been a pair of Starlings, the gentleman in question being also perfectly familiar with our native birds. This year (1929) he again notified me that they had arrived and were starting nesting operations. I have heard of similar instances in 1928 from near Waukegan. This, therefore, registers another gain of breeding territory in the westward march of this species.—C. W. G. EFRIG, *River Forest, Illinois*.

Winter-Killing of Barn Owls in Wisconsin.—A Barn Owl (*Tyto alba pratincola*) was picked up dead in what is known as the Shorewood Quarry, west of Madison, Wisconsin, on February 10, 1930. Four days later another owl of the same species was found within sixty yards of the one first mentioned. Both owls had the appearance of having been dead for a week or more. They were lying on the ground at the base of the quarry face, in the crevices of which face they had been accustomed to roost. A careful post-mortem disclosed that these birds had not met death from shooting or from direct mechanical injury of any sort. Though lean, they were not emaciated. Their alimentary tracts were quite empty, except for a small amount of fecal material in the intestine of one of them.

Barn Owls are rare in Wisconsin, but the presence of these two in the quarry had been known for some months, and their pellet accumulations had been gathered from time to time for food habits study. It had been noted, as the winter had progressed, that the pellets had been becoming smaller, due presumably to the protection afforded mice and shrews by the snow. Many of the pellets last deposited contained remains of but a single meadow mouse (*Microtus*), instead of the three to six small mammals making up a full size pellet. The owls were apparently unable to take advantage of the winter population of small birds; at least, they had not done so.

Madison and environs had experienced the coldest weather of the season during the last half of January, the temperature having dropped as low as 24 degrees below zero. The inference is that a scarcity of food, coincident with the cold weather, proved too much for these individual owls.—PAUL L. ERRINGTON, *Madison, Wisconsin*.

A Hint on the Character of Catbirds.—While bird banding in the spring of 1929 I had the unusual experience of catching the same Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) three times in one day in the same trap. The trap was located in our back lot in a clump of elderberry bushes, where later in the year Catbirds could always be seen devouring the juicy berries. It was an ordinary pull-string drop-trap, equipped with a broken stick as support. As bait a mixture of bread

crumbs, canary seed, and sunflower seed was spread under it. The Catbirds seemed to prefer the bread crumbs.

The bird was first caught on the morning of May 17. His mate (?) was attempting to employ my pull-string to use in her nest, which was being constructed near by, and so jerked the trap down when Mr. Catbird was feeding. He was released, seemingly unperturbed, with band No. A136809. The same bird entered the trap twice later in the day and both times was captured. The bird at all times seemed very nonchalant and when released immediately made off. The next day he was caught again, together with another Catbird, presumably his mate, and the one who was responsible for his capture the day before. She was given band No. A136811. Bird A136809 made his last appearance on May 20 when his mate (?) was again responsible for his capture in the same way as when first caught. Bird A136811 put in an appearance at the same trap a day later and was very frightened upon release. Perhaps a reason for the frequent captures of A136809 and a few other Catbirds at other times was the fact that immediately upon capturing a heavy robe was spread over the trap, shutting out all light and thus keeping the birds from excitement and fluttering. The fact that this was not possible when A136811 was caught the second time may have accounted for her fear. The question is, are Catbirds more than other species apt to be less excitable and consequently more likely to reappear at the trap?—BEN K. POLK, *Des Moines, Iowa.*

An Interesting Green Heron Colony.—On June 9, 1929, Mr. E. L. Jacobs and I visited a small pond about seven miles southeast of Vicksburg, Michigan. This pond, with an area of about a half acre, is nearly surrounded by two high hills and at that time contained about eighteen inches of water. The north half has grown up to a thick mass of button bush eight to ten feet high. As we approached the pond two Green Herons (*Butorides virescens virescens*) flew from the bushes. Having our boots we waded through this thick mass of tangled brush, and to our surprise found twelve nests of this heron, containing altogether thirty-two eggs and thirteen young. I banded one young, the others being too small.

We decided to visit this place again in two weeks, and on June 23 we did so, and banded twenty-one young which included all the young birds that were hatched, but there were more nests with eggs in them. Two weeks later, on July 7, we again visited the pond and banded fifteen more young and still found more nests with eggs. On July 21, I visited the place alone, as Mr. Jacobs was unable to accompany me. On this trip I banded nineteen young and there were three more nests containing a total of eleven eggs. Much to our regret neither of us was able to visit the place again before the young left.

We banded a total of fifty-six young, and on my visit of July 21 the bushes were alive with young banded birds. This was the largest and most interesting colony of Green Herons it has ever been my privilege to observe. We never saw more than five adult birds near this pond at any one time, so no doubt each pair raised two or more broods in a season.

We also found several nests of the Mourning Dove, Red-winged Blackbird, Bronzed Grackle, and one place where a Sora had nested, a single infertile egg still remaining in the nest.—F. W. RAPP, *Vicksburg, Michigan.*