

spread, advanced toward her with dancing steps. As he neared her his excitement grew but his approach was stately and unhurried. As he came near he seemed to be floating along just over the ground and he rose gradually and settled upon her back. All this time he had been pouring forth impassioned melody. The act lasted several seconds and was accompanied by much fluttering of wings.

This mating was surprisingly different from what I have witnessed in other *Passeriformes*. With House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*), Western Lark Sparrows (*Chondestes grammacus strigatus*) and English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), observed on numerous occasions at San Diego, California, copulation occurred at intervals of a very few seconds for many successive times.—FRANK F. GANDER, *Natural History Museum, San Diego, Cal.*

**Skunks as Prey for Owls.**—As long ago as 1892, when Dr. A. K. Fisher wrote his classic "Hawks and Owls of the United States in Their Relation to Agriculture", it was recognized that in regions where the skunk is common it forms a not uncommon article of the Great Horned Owl's food. However, skunks are not listed in that work as among the stomach contents of any other kind of owl. It was therefore of interest to the writer to find that an American Barn Owl (*Tyto alba pratincola*), which had been killed on the highway by a motorist and was brought to the San Diego Natural History Museum on April 29, 1931, was strongly pervaded with the odor of skunk. Furthermore, the scent could be positively identified as that of the genus *Spilogale* (Spotted Skunk), which, in the writer's experience, can be distinguished without difficulty from that of other genera of skunks when it is fresh.

When the wings of the dead Barn Owl were spread, a round yellow spot about five inches in diameter was found on the secondary feathers of the left wing, and it was from this spot that the strongest skunk odor emanated. Two similar incidents were recalled to the mind of the writer, both involving Western Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus pallescens*) which had been in close contact with skunks. One of these birds was collected in December, 1915, at Fort Lowell, near Tucson, Arizona, and had a discolored area on its plumage where the scent had struck, which was, however, of a light pinkish color, not yellow. As there are three genera of skunks (*Conepatus*, *Mephitis*, and *Spilogale*) to be found in or near the locality where this owl was secured, we may perhaps assume that one of the two larger forms, not *Spilogale*, had been the victim of the owl. Further experience may determine which of the two had been attacked.

The other Horned Owl was taken in January, 1917, at Potholes, Imperial County, California, and was marked with a yellow stain like that upon the recent Barn Owl. We may now assume that this Horned Owl had been preying upon a *Spilogale*.

Frank F. Gander, a member of the San Diego Natural History Museum staff, informs me that several years ago a dead Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus flammeus*) was brought to him, very odorous with skunk scent. Although the events which led up to this condition are not known, we may perhaps add the Short-eared Owl to the list of owls which have killed, or attempted to kill, skunks.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego, Cal.*

**Incompatibility of House and California Wrens.**—I have been wondering if any other lover of birds has noticed anything odd in the attitudes of House

Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon aedon*) and Carolina Wrens (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) toward each other. Several years ago, when I was quite a small boy, we had here at my home what I now know to have been Carolina Wrens. As I grew older and became interested in birds, I realized that Carolina Wrens were the first birds ever to have chosen a house of my construction for a nesting site. But they were then gone from my premises, though they were still to be found in my neighborhood, and House Wrens were using my houses. They reigned supreme for several seasons; then the Carolina Wrens returned. The House Wrens left, and have not been here to nest since, but the Carolina Wrens nest with me each year. A pair of House Wrens come each spring but they do not stay. Though the Carolina Wrens are with me at odd times throughout the winter, they spend the greater part of this period in the heavier woods; one spring when they were later than usual in beginning to nest, a pair of House Wrens came and began a nest in a rick of wood, but the Carolina Wrens appeared before the nest was complete, and the House Wrens abandoned the premises.

House Wrens are quite common in this vicinity; almost all farm homes have one or more pairs each season, though most of them do not have the Carolina Wrens. My premises appeal more to the Carolina Wren than do most homes here, due to the fact that the forest comes almost to my door. However, I know that if it were not for the Carolina Wrens, I would have at least one pair of House Wrens nesting with me each spring. But I am not complaining. I like the Carolina Wren well enough. Nevertheless, I certainly wish that both species of wrens could get along together peaceably. I would like to have them both. But, whether true in other localities or not, I know that here, where many different birds throng each spring, the two species of wrens do not agree.—GRANT HENDERSON, *Greensburg, Ind.*

**Bird Notes from Lake County, Ohio.**—Twice in past years I have reported the Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) to the WILSON BULLETIN, but both were dead birds found on the beach of the lake. However, on August 17, 1930, I saw my first live specimen, and to make it more interesting it was in the black phase of plumage with the contrasting straw color on the neck. When first seen it was flying swiftly just above the water and close to the beach. A Spotted Sandpiper left the shore and I was immediately treated to some wonderful aerial gymnastics, as the Sandpiper mounted by twisting spirals high into the air, while the jaeger easily kept pace and at times rose above to strike at the victim with its bill. The sandpiper finally escaped and the jaeger came flying swiftly back past me, again low over the water, affording another fine view of its plumage and falcon-like appearance.

I was much surprised on October 21, 1930, to find a Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) busily feeding in a quiet little bay of Grand River, fully three miles from the lake, where it has previously been reported on rare occasions. The bird was entirely unsuspecting and fed up to within six feet of me as I stood at the edge of the water. A full plumage description was taken on the spot and the bill proportions noted.

On the same day as the discovery of the Red Phalarope (October 21), I had the pleasure of a good study of the Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*), though I had seen the bird and suspected its identity on October 18. It was an immature bird, which as yet had acquired no noticeable black feathers on the