

Recent Bird Notes from Southern South Dakota.—On July 7, 1931, the writer had occasion to spend the day in Yankton County, South Dakota, a distance of about sixty-five miles northwest from Sioux City, Iowa. The following notes taken there are thought worthy of mention. A male Rocky Mountain Grosbeak (*Hedymeles melanocephalus papago*) was seen carrying food, and was no doubt a breeding bird. This must be about the extreme eastern limit of this western grosbeak. The Western Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea interfusa*) was not uncommon in suitable habitats. Several Rock Wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus*) were also seen and heard along the cliffs, on which hundreds of Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons*) had plastered their nests. An interesting overlapping of breeding ranges was also found. The Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus*) was found breeding, and the more western form, the Arctic Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus arcticus*), was also not uncommon. The call notes of the latter bird are very distinct from those of the eastern form. The Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) was found along the Missouri River bottoms, and on the uplands the families of the Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus* subsp.) were already forming into flocks of forty or fifty birds.—WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH, *Sioux City, Iowa*.

A Large Flock of Wood Ibises in Harrison County, Iowa.—On the morning of September 9, 1931, while I was approaching the village of Mondamin, Harrison County, Iowa, from the south, I saw a flock of at least two hundred Wood Ibises (*Mycteria americana*), which had apparently just taken flight from along the Missouri River. The exact site where the birds were first seen was one-half mile from the village. They rose in two groups, which later joined to form the one large flock. As they wheeled about in great circles, rising apparently to gain the advantage of a strong wind, they made a spectacular and beautiful display, with brilliant white breasts flashing light in unison as the birds turned again and again. I had a splendid opportunity to observe them through glasses, and at reasonable range, and even tried to secure a photograph by getting into a position in advance of the flock, but in so doing the birds were lost from sight. They were last seen wheeling about very high in the air and traveling northeastward, about five miles northeast of Mondamin. I was surprised to encounter these birds, with which I have been familiar in Florida, under the circumstances mentioned. I believe this is the first Iowa record of the species.—WALLACE B. GRANGE, *U. S. Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

White-breasted Nuthatches Occupy a Nest Box.—For the past twenty years I have been interested in attracting birds to nest boxes at my farm near Atlantic, Iowa. In that time Flickers, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Screech Owls, Sparrow Hawks, Bluebirds, Chickadees, House Wrens and Purple Martins have reared their families in boxes which I have put up for them. In another location a pair of Crested Flycatchers did likewise. The past summer (1931) added another box nester to the list, the White-breasted Nuthatch, which is common in my grove.

The box used by the nuthatch was similar to those put up for woodpeckers, as described in the book, "Birds of the Wild", and was really intended for the Downy Woodpecker. The box was placed about ten feet from the ground and nailed to the side of an elm tree near the garage. The entrance hole was about an inch in diameter, and the cavity of the box was about four and one-half

inches square by ten inches deep, as nearly as I recall. There was a small amount of ground cork placed in the bottom of the cavity, a substance that I have always used when trying to attract woodpeckers.—FRANK C. PELLETT, *Hamilton, Ill.*

The Red-Cockaded Woodpecker in Grundy County, Tennessee.—On August 8, 1931, Mr. Eugene Odum of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and I took a trip to Beersheba, Tennessee, in the Cumberland Mountains, to see if the Duck Hawks and Golden Eagles were in that vicinity during the late summer.

While walking along the bluffs, which overlook the deep gorge of Roaring Fork, and which are covered with pines, spruces and second growth hardwoods, we heard some unusual bird calls at a point about half way between Beersheba and Stone Door Cliff. These calls seemed to come from woodpeckers or nut-hatches, but were quite different from any calls either of us had ever heard before. The birds resembled Hairy Woodpeckers save for stripes across their backs and the noisy calls which parents and three young kept making constantly. Being uncertain as to their identity, we waited until our return to Nashville for a decision. The size, color, calls, habits, and habitats proved them to be the Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (*Dryobates borealis*), a species new to both of us.

Further investigation shows that Dr. Harry Fortner of the University of Tennessee reported them to Mr. A. F. Ganier some six or eight years ago from Beersheba; that Mr. S. N. Rhoads found them in 1895 near Jamestown, Tennessee, in a similar habitat; and also that Fox took a specimen at Rockwood, Tennessee, April 4, 1884. Since these are the only records for this species in Tennessee it is evident that *Dryobates borealis* is a very rare bird in this latitude west of the Alleghanies.—GEORGE R. MAYFIELD, *Nashville, Tenn.*

The Red-headed Woodpecker as a Mouser.—The streets past my home are paved with smooth unbroken concrete slabs, twenty-four feet wide, with a curbstone six inches high at the sides. Just across the street is a school grove consisting of many fine old shade trees. Robins, Blue Jays, Red-headed Woodpeckers, and several other species make their home in this grove.

On the afternoon of July 28, 1931, I noticed a mouse (*Mus domesticus*) running on the pavement. What could have caused this little creature to come out in broad daylight and parade on the pavement I could not tell, but it had not gone very far when a Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) darted down out of the grove and made an attack upon it. The woodpecker struck the mouse several hard and vicious blows with its stout bill, rolling and tossing it over and over. It appeared that a moment more of such treatment must have finished the mouse, had not a vehicle approached just at that instant, threatening to crush both the red-head and its prey. The bird darted away just in time to save itself, and the mouse, not having been struck by the wheels, hurriedly limped to the edge of the pavement, got over the curb with difficulty, and hid in the grass. The red-head flew back immediately to see what had become of its prospect for dinner, but the mouse was so well hidden that the bird had to give up the chase.

This bird is somewhat erratic in its migrations, but is usually to be found here in fair numbers in the summer time. Ordinarily it catches and devours great numbers of cicadas, June-beetles, grasshoppers, dragonflies, and many other insects, both large and small, but although I have carefully observed it for many years, I had never before seen it attack a rodent.—E. D. NAUMAN, *Sigourney, Iowa.*