

## GENERAL NOTES

Conducted by M. H. Swenk

**Second Occurrence of the Western Sandpiper in Iowa.**—A female Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes maurii*) in juvenal plumage was collected by the writer on August 23, 1933. This bird was feeding alone in the shallow water of a cut-off creek bed near the Skunk River, ten miles northwest of Mitchelville, Polk County, Iowa. It was recognized as a Western Sandpiper before collecting it because of its long bill, thicker at the base. It appears to be a bird of the year, the skull being very thin and the plumage entirely unworn. The specimen is preserved in the writer's collection.

The only previous occurrence of this species in Iowa, substantiated by specimens, was on October 15, 1895, when Paul Bartsch secured two males and a female at Burlington, Des Moines County. These are now in the University of Iowa Museum.—PHILIP A. DUMONT, *Des Moines, Iowa*.

**Some Unusual Food Habits of the English Sparrow.**—While we were living in Richmond, Virginia, I occasionally noticed English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), usually females, busily eating the small leaflets of the mimosa tree in our front yard. Since we moved to Wilderness, I have seen two other rather unusual food habits of this bird. First, a short while ago, I saw two females of the species attempt to catch a hornet on the wing, as it was returning to its nest under the gabled roof of the porch. Another time, I saw a male vigorously shake something in his beak. Upon investigation, I found it was a large caterpillar, about three and a half inches long and more than an inch in circumference. It was very flat and contained but a small amount of green, mushy vegetable matter. There was not a break in the tough, leathery skin to account for the lack of body filler.—GORDON W. JONES, *Wilderness, Va.*

**The White Pelican on the Tennessee River.**—A record of the occurrence of the White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) on the Tennessee River in April, 1928, came to my notice several years ago. Some workmen on the highway bridge at Savannah, Tennessee, noticed a large dead bird floating in the river and secured it. A friend who witnessed the finding of the specimen saved a wing and the upper mandible as curios. These were later shown to me in Nashville. The mandible bore the horny elevation and checked with sizes quoted in the manuals.

The date of finding this bird was given as "about a week" after April 19, on which day an accident claimed a number of lives on the bridge. The pelican was said to have been shot, and to have been dead "a long time." Savannah lies about thirty river miles below the state line, above which point the Tennessee flows between the states of Alabama and Mississippi. The actual point of occurrence of this bird may have been in any of these states. Howell (*Birds of Alabama*, p. 39) gives several records for the Tennessee Valley.—HARRY C. MONK, *Nashville, Tenn.*

**First Record of the Golden-winged Warbler for South Dakota.**—On May 10, 1933, while on an early morning walk along the "Dells", about half a mile south of Dell Rapids, some warblers were noted feeding about thirty feet up in some ash and maple trees. After observing them for some time with bird glasses, it became evident they were not any of the migratory warblers that were familiar to me. In order to make their identification certain, I collected one

of the birds and found it to be a male Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). This is the first record of this bird for South Dakota. There appeared to be four birds of this species in the immediate vicinity, two males and two females. Identification was confirmed by Dr. T. C. Stephens. Mr. William Youngworth made the specimen into a skin, and this was donated to the collection of the State Museum at Vermilion.—EDWIN C. ANDERSON, *Dell Rapids, S. Dak.*

**Analysis of Two Hundred Long-eared Owl Pellets.**—On February 19, 1933, I flushed three Long-eared Owls (*Asio wilsonianus*) from an evergreen in an old cemetery four miles northeast of Saline, Michigan. From beneath this tree I gathered up just 200 pellets, indicating that the birds had been roosting in this tree during much of the winter. The cemetery was a half mile from the nearest parcel of timber, a swampy piece of woods of some extent. Immediately adjacent to the cemetery on the east and south was plowed land; across the road to the west and north was pasture. I made the analysis of the pellets in the laboratories of the Museum of Zoology, at Ann Arbor, where I had the advice and assistance of Dr. Lee R. Dice and Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne. The results of the work were as follows: 170 *Microtus*, 21 *Peromyscus*, 3 *Synaptomys*, 4 *Blarina* and 1 English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). The preponderance of *Microtus* would indicate feeding in the open, although occasional forays into the nearby timber would yield *Peromyscus* in some numbers. *Synaptomys* is rare anywhere in Michigan, and while *Blarina* is not rare, the fact that it lives in burrows would explain its comparative absence from the bill of fare. Could a like number of pellets be obtained from this immediate vicinity in successive years, their examination should give indication of any fluctuation in small mammalian biota from year to year.—CHAS. J. SPIKER, *New Hampton, Iowa.*

**A Loon Found in the Highway.**—On the evening of April 14, 1931, while I was away from home, a neighbor, William Gabbard, and his brother-in-law, brought to my place a live Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) which the brother-in-law had discovered on a highway as he was driving along in his car. Later the same evening I saw Mr. Gabbard and he told me that his brother-in-law had taken the bird home with him but was going to bring it back in the morning. Early the next morning I went to see it. Loons must hate dogs for this one flounced towards Mr. Gabbard's dog each time it came near. The bird was chained, else it may have given the dog quite a battle. The extreme tip of its long, sharp, black bill was broken off; some one, teasing it, had allowed it to peck the sole of a shoe. Irregularly it gave vent to a long, drawn-out wail, and when placed in a small vessel of water it splashed and tried to dive, thoroughly enjoying, I would say, the opportunity to spend a few seconds in a bit of its natural element, though closely surrounded by unusual spectators.

I desired the freedom of the handsome bird, and before I left I was promised that it would be taken to some nearby body of water and released, but later I learned that this was not done immediately and it died in captivity a few days after I saw it.—GRANT HENDERSON, *Greensburg, Ind.*

**Nesting of the Prairie Horned Lark in Central Virginia.**—For the past three or four years the presence of the Prairie Horned Lark (*Otocoris alpestris praticola*) during the summer in the vicinity of Lynchburg has led me to believe that it was nesting here. It is a fairly common winter visitor. On March 27, 1931, I saw a bird make two trips with nesting materials in the bill, and located the site that had apparently been selected for a nest. I did not return