

how they would behave toward other birds. This past spring (1935) a closely planted evergreen grove at the north end of the Iowa State College campus, covering a nearly rectangular area of about one acre, and containing red, Austrian, and jack pines on the north half and Douglas fir, spruce, and white pine on the south half, was placed under observation. On April 27, two Crow's nests were observed in the grove, one about twenty-five feet up in a jack pine at the west end of the grove, and the other about thirty feet up in a jack pine a little north of the center of the grove. The adult birds were at the nests at nearly all of the ten visits made by us. The young left the west nest about May 15 and the other nest was vacated May 25. We saw no evidence of the Crows molesting other birds or their nests during about twelve hours of observation made while the adult Crows were at the grove. A Mourning Dove was nesting about fifteen feet up in a red pine about five rods east and three and a half rods south of the central Crow's nest. Another Mourning Dove's nest was built about twenty feet up in a white pine about six rods south and three rods east of the central Crow's nest. A Robin's nest was set fifteen feet up in a Douglas fir about six rods east and three and a half rods south of the central Crow's nest. No other nests were seen in the grove. The Mourning Doves' and Robins' nests were well protected from view in the more densely branched Douglas fir and pines, and, although the data are few, support is lent to a generalization that such good concealment is of value for nesting Mourning Doves and Robins. During the twenty hours of observations, chiefly during the afternoons in late April and May, 319 individuals of sixty-six species of birds were seen in this evergreen grove and in several rods of deciduous trees at its west end.—GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON and ROBERT TRENEMAN, *Dept. Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.*

**Observations on Nest Site Trials by the Eastern Robin.**—The maneuvers of a male and female Eastern Robin (*Turdus migratorius migratorius*) in several large American elms, approximately eighty feet in height, were noticed on the morning of April 15, 1935, in St. Paul, Minnesota. The day was cloudy and cool and sufficiently early in the season that no foliage hampered observation of the birds in the trees.

They were seen to flit from one crotch to another, in a very random manner, until the entire tree was inspected. Occasionally one bird would fly to an adjoining tree and shortly return to be near its mate. The greatest interest lay in the procedure followed at each visited crotch. The bird would spread its legs in order to support itself with one foot on each of the conjuncting limbs and in this position it would crouch and shift its weight from side to side, and at the same time ruffle its feathers and slightly extend its wings. After several seconds it would reverse its position and repeat the process. In no case did this procedure consume more than a minute's time. The routine appeared to be so similar to the characteristic shifting and turning observed during actual nest building and after nest completion, that it was immediately believed that these birds were giving trials to various sites for their nest.

The Robins evidently preferred to start at the lower branches of the trees, which were twenty-five feet above the ground, and gradually work their way upward until they were approximately fifty feet from the surface of the ground. At this point, the limbs had a tendency to thin and branch out. This was apparently a characteristic without appeal to the birds, for at that height they left with a downward flight to begin over again in an adjoining elm.

The birds disappeared after completing their trials, but on April 29th, when the trees were visited again for observation, a partially completed nest was seen in the last elm. As closely as could be determined, the crotch the conjuncting limbs of which were about five inches in diameter was approximately fifty feet above the ground and formed an angle of about fifty degrees. This is the vicinity in which the birds were last seen during their hunt for a nest site. While the evidence is not positive that the present winged occupants, which at the moment were busily chasing sparrows from the tree, were the birds seen previously, the likelihood is great, for no other nest of any other species could be seen in the neighborhood.—L. J. MEULI, *Lake States Forest Experiment Station, St. Paul, Minn.*

**The Song of the Yellow-breasted Chat.**—The Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) will sit still in one position for half an hour, if not disturbed, and sing, mocking the Crested Flycatcher, Brown Thrasher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Bob-white, and many other nearby birds. He has the habit of saying "Ur ur ur ur ur ur ur" either eight or sixteen times, as a rule, similarly to the Red-headed Woodpecker, then may say it once or twice alone. One said "Ke-ouck" six times, almost like a little turkey, seeming to dare one to approach. If mocked, he repeats the call, often saying "ur" for a number of times, then "tut tut tut" about the same number of times, changing back then to "ur" again, first one way and then the reverse. I have never heard two chats sing exactly alike, so it takes some study to be able to tell them at once by their calls, although all of them generally say the above two notes occasionally, no matter what their song may be. The bird often sits in the top of a dead tree, with head up and tail bent down, for long periods of time, then will disappear and appear again, often at close range if not frightened.

If mimicked, he will approach cautiously, giving the note "kuk" in a soft tone. This note is used only at such times, when it is answered in the same tone. I have stayed in our car, calling and answering him, until he came right up to me and crept under the car and out on the other side, trying to find out what it was all about. I believe I was waving a red flag in his face when I spoke in his own tongue, which to me was not translated into English exactly, although I figured it out pretty well from his actions.

The Quail often says, "Bob, bob white", but the chat never does. He either says "Bob white" or just "white", in a hesitating and uncertain manner, as if not quite sure of himself. One chat said plainly, "cack" either three or six times, then "ur ur ur" from one to six times, then "ah ah ah". Although the chat, Brown Thrasher, and Catbird are seldom seen together, they of course may be in the same woods and within calling distance of each other. All of these birds are mockers. The Red-headed Woodpecker has a common call of "ur ur ur" given a number of times very similarly to the chat, but it never substitutes the "tut" or "cack" or "ah ah ah" intermittently, as does the chat. But the red-head often changes from the "ur", which he says on certain occasions, to "error, error, error" which is also just as commonly heard at times. This particular note is his species "trade mark", as I like to call any special markings, notes, habits, or other traits of birds. When the chat mimics other birds, even though he does a good job of it and fools one at times, if we wait a bit and continue to listen, sooner or later we can hear the "ur ur ur" interchanged with the "tut tut tut" or other variations of the chat's calls, which will give him away, and we may then stamp his "trade mark" upon him with certainty. If we look closely enough and study