

Cowbird carrying away and eating a bird's egg in the evening.—On May 28, 1943, I was looking out of a window of my house near Ann Arbor and saw a female Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) flying toward the house from a field of tall grass and winter wheat about 40 feet away. When the bird was about 10 feet from the house, flying about a foot above the ground, a small white oval which it was carrying in its beak dropped to a small patch of hard clayey soil. It was a small white egg, similar in size and color to the egg of the Song Sparrow. The Cowbird alighted, punctured the shell with its beak, and began to sip the albumen. After a time she removed the yolk whole, swallowed it, and then finished sipping the albumen. By this time the shell had broken into two pieces, and one piece had rolled a few feet down a slight incline. The Cowbird ate the part of the shell near her, then moved down the slope and finished the other. I carefully examined the ground after she had flown away but failed to find any trace of shell. I noticed a male Cowbird within three or four feet of the female while she was puncturing the egg and eating its contents, but he flew away before she had finished eating the two pieces of shell. This incident occurred at about 5:15 P.M. E.S.T., though Hann (*Wilson Bulletin*, 53, 1941:220) has reported that Cowbirds regularly remove an egg of the host "during the forenoon," usually of the day before laying their own egg.—ADA L. OLSON, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor.*

Abnormal feather loss by Cardinals.—Some years ago George Miksch Sutton recorded (*Oologist*, 34, 1917:216) a specimen from Texas of a Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*) with completely featherless head. Amelia R. Laskey tells me of two occurrences of baldness among the 1,621 Cardinals she has banded over a period of 12 years at Nashville, Tennessee. They were females, banded (1) August 20, 1936 (recorded as "almost bald"; plumage normal when taken again in December), and (2) July 10, 1939 ("head bald, except for crest"; not taken again). Milton B. Trautman has reported (*Univ. Mich. Mus. Zool. Misc. Publ. No. 44*, 1940:397) some late summer Cardinals with completely bald heads at Buckeye Lake, Ohio. He tells me further that most of these were observed between mid-August and mid-September, though he once noted an individual with pronounced feather loss by July 4.

Recently I observed an extreme case of this kind and was able to learn something of the attendant circumstances. A male Cardinal was banded December 26, 1934, by Thomas H. Weller at his home in Ann Arbor. On July 20, 1941, it appeared at my home (three-quarters of a mile to the northeast) and has since lived in the neighborhood. It feeds at my window feeding shelves, and I can observe it closely and regularly. Early in June, 1942, I noticed that it was losing feathers from the head. By late June, the head, except for two or three crest feathers, and the upper neck were bare. On July 3 the bird was a "vulture Cardinal" such as Sutton has described, with the head covered only with dark gray, wrinkled skin. I saw no other indication of parasites or disease, and the bird's behavior was normal. Its appearance, though rather repulsive, apparently did not interfere with nesting activity, for on August 7, it brought a full-grown young to the shelf and fed it. On September 1, when it reappeared, after a two week's absence, feather growth had begun again about the base of the culmen. This continued, spreading back over the head and neck, until, by September 28, the normal feathering was entirely restored. The bird stayed through the winter and spring, and this year, its tenth summer at least, it has remained perfectly normal in appearance and has not yet (August 12) begun the regular post-nuptial molt.

Thus we have a record of a Cardinal at least eight years old, losing all of the feathers from its neck and head in June, remaining bald, but living normally through the whole summer, growing a complete new set of head feathers in 28 days, and remaining fully feathered during at least the following 10½ months.—JOSSELYN VAN TYNE, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor.*