

one bird was showing signs of weariness, the other of victory, but when they flew at each other and fluttered upward we found it quite impossible to be sure which was which.

Somewhat to our surprise, and almost certainly without our frightening them off, both birds flew upwind and across the highway, still twittering and bickering. We did not keep our eyes on them, but judged from the singing that they were continuing their fighting just across the highway. Turning our attention momentarily to the sparrows we had started after in the first place, we began our return to the car.

As we started to cross the highway Mr. Bunting called to our attention a 'dead bird' in the highway about 25 yards away in exactly the direction of the twittering we had last heard from the fighting Horned Larks. Using our binoculars, we instantly saw that the 'dead' bird was a male Horned Lark, and that a *living* male Horned Lark was beside it apparently pecking at its wings and tail as if trying to rouse it. Approaching, we found that the 'dead' bird was actually still alive, but it was obviously done for. As it struggled feebly, spreading its wings and tail, the other bird twittered, ran at it, gave it a peck or two, and flew off. We were only five or six yards away at that time.

Picking the doomed bird from the ground we watched it expire in our hands while the living bird twittered only a few rods away. We were greatly puzzled as to exactly what had happened. Each of us sensed that this was the very bird we had been watching and we could not help wondering whether it had died from exhaustion or been dealt a lethal blow by the other bird. One thing was certain: the bird could not have been lying there when we had crossed the highway a little more than a quarter of an hour before; it had been mortally injured within the past few minutes.

Some of our questions were answered when we made a skin of the specimen that evening. The bird was in excellent condition. It weighed 34 grams. Though not fat, there was a considerable amount of food in its gizzard. There was no evidence of fractures. The skull, however, showed moderate hematoma along the parieto-occipital suture line, and there was a mild hematoma across the upper back and left shoulder. These wounds (which had not torn the skin) suggested a blow of sufficient force to involve the central nervous system and cause death. Our conclusion was that the bird, its attention focussed primarily upon its opponent and its perceptive powers somewhat dulled by the long and strenuous combat, had struck a telephone wire while fluttering upward and thus met its tragic end. The wind had carried it, still fluttering no doubt, to the highway, where we had found it. Reviewing what we had seen of the two birds—the dying and the 'victorious', we decided that the latter probably had been just as much bewildered and surprised—in its way—as we had by the refusal of the other to continue fighting.

Pickwell (1931. *Trans. Acad. Sci. St. Louis*, 27: 56) states that "all quarrelling" between male Horned Larks defending territories "takes place in the air." He describes the "curious game of tit for tat" which the birds play, "one now chasing, next being chased. . . ." Sutton (1927. *Wilson Bulletin*, 39: 133), however, mentions "tussels on the ground" which may have been in defense of territory.

Mr. Bunting returned the following day to the scene of the above-reported observations, finding a pair of Horned Larks not far from the highway. This pair probably nested somewhere in the vicinity.—BETTY DARLING (MRS. POWELL) COTTRILLE, 6075 Brown's Lake Road, Jackson, Michigan.

White-breasted Nuthatch and Tufted Titmouse hawking for insects.—On the evening of August 13, 1949, I watched a male and female White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*) hawking for flying insects in and about a white elm (*Ulmus americanus*) at my home. The birds frequently made flights of a few yards, generally with some abrupt turns, just inside or outside the peripheral twigs of the tree, about 30 feet above the ground. Less frequently they flew out from the tree as much as 10 yards. Once, when the male alighted

after such a flight, I saw a clear-winged insect in his bill. The nuthatches hawked steadily for eight minutes. On the evening of August 30, I saw a different (banded) male nuthatch make a twisting flight, apparently hawking, from the same elm to another tree. I also saw a Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*) make a hawking flight from the tree. Winged ants were flying about the immediate vicinity on both evenings, and the birds may have been capturing them. I have not found any previous record of such feeding by either *Sitta carolinensis* or *Parus bicolor*. Bent (1948. *U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 195: 27, 28, 52) cites records for the Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) and Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*), and there are records for *Sitta europaea* (1949. *Brit. Birds*, 42: 56, 386).—HERVEY BRACKBILL, 4608 Springdale Avenue, Baltimore 7, Maryland.

The Carolina Wren, *Thryothorus ludovicianus*, as a mimic.—Though mimicry by this species has been reported many times, some ornithologists still seem to have reservations on the subject. Bent (1948. *U. S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 195: 212) summarizes the literature, listing 12 bird species the Carolina Wren has been thought to imitate. The name 'mocking wren' has been applied to *Thryothorus ludovicianus* in publications on the birds of Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa and Missouri, and 'mocker' has been applied to the bird in New Jersey.

While looking over some old notebooks recently, I found substantially this entry under date of April 30, 1903 (locality, Bloomington, Indiana): A Carolina Wren singing; the song was so like that of a Chewink (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) as to deceive me until I saw the performer.—W. L. McATEE, 6200 Woodlawn Ave., Chicago 37, Illinois.

A Black and White Warbler's Nest with Eight Cowbird Eggs.—In an oak-hickory woodland about three-quarters of a mile southeast of Half Moon Lake, Washtenaw County, Michigan, I found, on May 16, 1949, a nest of the Black and White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) which contained not only 2 eggs of the Warbler, but also 8 of the Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). The nest, constructed of grasses, dried leaves, hair and shreds of inner bark, was only 80 mm. in diameter, within, and was about three-quarters roofed over. The entrance was approximately 75 mm. wide by 50 mm. high. The female bird was on the nest and flew when I approached closely.

Within the next 4 days, I visited the nest twice, finding the female Warbler present, her mate still absent. She was apparently obtaining her own food. On one occasion, she left the nest only when I came very near, and she moved quickly along the ground, trailing her outspread left wing and twice falling, as if in an effort to draw my attention from the nest. Following the Warbler, I discovered, only 40 feet from her nest, a Towhee's nest, where both parents were attending 3 nestlings.

On May 26, I found that the 2 Warbler eggs had been removed from the nest, one destroyed completely, one punctured and lying nearby. (Fortunately, the full contents of the nest had been photographically recorded, earlier.) Whether the Warbler had removed her own eggs or whether this was the work of a Cowbird that returned even at this late date is, of course, not known.

Dr. George M. Sutton and Mr. Haven Spencer accompanied me to the nest on May 30 and succeeded in photographing the Black and White Warbler atop the pile of Cowbird eggs in her nest (Figure 1). We measured the eggs and compared patterns of speckling, photographed the group together and returned them to the nest. In Figure 2, the eggs are numbered, left to right, 1 to 4 in the top row and 5 to 8 beneath. Measurements, in millimeters, were as follows:

1.—21.3 x 16.6	3.—22.3 x 15.5	5.—21.7 x 15.2	7.—23.6 x 16.4
2.—21.6 x 16.4	4.—22.5 x 15.4	6.—22.2 x 16.1	8.—22.8 x 16.3

The damaged Warbler egg measured 17.8 x 14.0 mm.