

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.



FIG. 1. Black and White Warbler incubating two eggs of her own and eight Cowbird eggs. Photographed in Washtenaw County, Michigan, May 30, 1949, by Haven H. Spencer.

FIG. 2. Eight Cowbird eggs from a Black and White Warbler nest. Photographed in Washtenaw County, Michigan, May 30, 1949, by Haven H. Spencer.

Dr. Sutton concluded, after examining the eggs, that possibly only 4 Cowbirds had parasitized this nest. Four female Cowbirds could have laid the 8 eggs in 2 days.

The situation at the nest remained unchanged during the observations on June 1 and June 3. On June 4, however, I discovered the 8 eggs destroyed and the Warbler departed, apparently due to predation by some carnivorous mammal.

Eight is apparently the greatest number of Cowbird eggs reported for any of the numerous host species of *Molothrus ater*. In a letter dated May 26, 1949, Dr. Herbert Friedmann informed me that 8 Cowbird eggs had once been reported for a Towhee nest, but that 5 was the most reported heretofore in a Black and White Warbler's nest. It is unfortunate that the commonness of parasitism of the Towhee did not come to my attention in time for me to determine the species of the 3 nestlings found near the Warbler's nest.

While this series of observations is of interest principally because of the number of Cowbirds' eggs in the Warbler's nest, it also furnishes a nesting record for a part of Michigan where the Black and White Warbler nests only infrequently; and, further, it shows an unusual perseverance by the female Warbler in incubating a remarkable number of eggs for almost twice the duration of the normal incubation time.—GEORGE W. BYERS, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor*.

**Red-wings feeding on white ash.**—Robert Nero's recent note under this heading (1950. *Wilson Bulletin*, 62: 39-40) reminds me of my own observations of this habit of the Red-wing (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). Every October beginning with that of 1922 this species has fed on the seeds of a large white ash (*Fraxinus americanus*) behind my house in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. My first note of this behavior, dated October 22, 1922, reads as follows: "A small flock composed of both sexes feeding in the top of our white ash. After reaching up and picking off a samara the bird held it against the twig on which it perched and evidently detached the wing, or perhaps shelled the seed, in this way. They seemed to require a solid twig to aid them in the shucking process and not to be able to cut the wing off with the bill alone as some of the finches do."

In some Octobers I have seen only male Red-wings feeding on ash seeds; in others, both sexes. My notes for October 26, 1947: "Many females among the Red-wings here today feeding in the ash trees and resting in hemlocks, etc. The females were in preponderance and flew about together." On at least one occasion (October 16, 1928) I have seen Rusty Blackbirds (*Euphagus carolinus*) similarly feeding on the ash seeds.—FRANCIS H. ALLEN, *215 La Grange St., West Roxbury 32, Massachusetts*.

**Unusual bathing techniques employed by birds.**—Near my home in Streetsville, Ontario, I have observed three species of birds bathing in unusual ways:

Black-capped Chickadee, *Parus atricapillus*. On February 26, 1946, I watched a chickadee bathing in new, light fluffy snow under a wide-spreading shrub. It dived in and fluttered and floundered along with bathing motions of head-dipping and wing-quivering.

Tennessee Warbler, *Vermivora peregrina*. On September 30, 1949, a Tennessee Warbler bathed at a pond's shallow edge by flying down into the water from an over-hanging willow branch. It dipped in and out several times until thoroughly wet.

Slate-colored Junco, *Junco hyemalis*. On October 10, 1949, a junco took an early morning bath in dewdrops. There had been fog in the night, and everything was heavily bedewed, including a patch of thick clover in the lawn. Here the junco burrowed in under the wet leafage making the customary bathing motions of the wings, and sending the spray flying.—MARGARET H. MITCHELL, *Streetsville, R. R. 1, Ontario, Canada*.