

Further evidence of the homing ability of the Cowbird.—Several reports have been published describing homing ability in the Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). These reports are reviewed, and added to, by Harold B. Wood (1952. *Wilson Bull.*, 64:46).

At my station in Addison Township, Oakland County, Michigan, I banded a female Cowbird (No. 49-140409) on May 4, 1951. This bird returned on April 10, 1952, and subsequently repeated on April 12, 15, and 22. On April 22 I put her in a small canary cage, placed it on the floor of my car, and took her to a point 15 miles *south* of the station and released her at about 4 p.m. On April 28 she re-entered the same trap (a government sparrow trap). I then took her, in the same container, 22 miles *south* of the station on a different road and released her at 3 p.m. On April 29 she re-entered the same trap between 9:00 and 10:30 a.m., thus completing the 22-mile flight in from 18 to 19½ hours.

I then intended to transport the bird to a point north of the station but did not because the fore part of the bird's head was scalped at some time during the last flight. I released her at the station and she did not again enter a trap during the 1952 season.

I had presumed that the bird would not live long with what appeared to be such a serious injury. I was, therefore, considerably surprised on April 18, 1953, to find her in a Glenhaven drop-door trap situated on a steep bank near a creek. There were soft small feathers covering the fore part of her head, but across the rear of the occiput there was a ¼-inch scar upon which no feathers grew. The nape feathers being normal, the bird had a peculiar flat-headed appearance which made it possible for me to recognize her in the field.

I held her over-night and on April 19 took her, in the cage previously mentioned, to a point 5 miles *east* of the station to the border of a small lake. The weather was stormy, snow squalls alternating with clear weather. I released her at the edge of the lake, facing east. Just at that time it began to snow again. The bird rose somewhat higher than the trees bordering the lake, seemed to hover in almost one spot, flew a short distance to the north, then to the south, then to the west (away from the lake) and into a tree. I did not see her again that day. On April 23 she returned to a sparrow trap in a field about 60 rods from the house. If she flew directly from the place where she was liberated, this was the first trap she would have come to. She was then taken in the same cage, this time completely covered with a white cotton cloth, to a point 17 miles *north* of the station. She was held over-night and photographed. At 7:45 a.m., April 24, she was released facing south. She exhibited no special behavior but flew directly to a tree. My traps were closed April 24 until late in the evening. At 9 a.m., April 25, she was in a drop-door pedestal trap at the edge of a marsh. I released her there.

On April 29 she entered a sparrow trap. Again in a covered cage, she was taken 21 miles *west* of the station and released at 5:30 p.m. She exhibited no special behavior, but flew into the nearest tree. At 9 a.m., April 30, she was back in a drop-door trap in a field 500 feet from my house. I released her there. When I had completed my work and returned to the house at 10:30 a.m. she was in a pedestal trap near the house and was released there. On May 1, 3, 15, 23, and 28 and on June 1 and 4, she repeated in various traps. Several times I saw her on perches and flying about over approximately 10 acres; the last such observation was on June 18. She made 13 entries into four types of traps in 1953. On the occasions in 1952 and 1953 when she was taken 15 and 5 miles away, she returned during the sixth and fourth days

respectively. On the flights of 22, 17, and 21 miles, she returned on the first day after release. Concerning homing experiments with wild birds, Donald R. Griffin (1953. *American Scientist*, 41 (2):218) says, "While the percentage of returns falls off with distance, the speed of those birds which do get back tends to rise or at least to remain fairly constant."—MRS. ALICE D. MILLER, 1150 Brewer Road, Leonard, Michigan, August 16, 1953.

Screech Owl observed bathing.—On November 16, 1952, at about 7:15 p.m., E.S.T., my wife and I were driving along an avenue which borders a small park in Ann Arbor, Michigan, when we saw a gray Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) standing in a puddle of water. We stopped the car within a short distance and backed up until the scene was once more fully illuminated by the car lights.

The puddle of water in which the owl was standing was 1 to 2 inches deep and approximately 2 feet in diameter. The owl appeared to be quite unafraid of the lights and of the noise of the running motor. While we watched, from a distance of 12 to 15 feet, the owl bathed in the puddle, much in the manner of a passerine bird, pushing its head and breast into the water, beating its wings, and then shaking the water from its feathers. We watched for perhaps a minute. It was not until I got out of the car and approached to within 4 or 5 feet that the owl flew away. The car lights were still on and the motor was running.

Reexamination of the site the following morning showed the puddle to have been formed in the depression at the junction of a garage driveway and the street. Both driveway and street were paved. For sometime prior to November 16 the weather had been extremely dry, so that the water in which the owl was bathing was of artificial origin, possibly from a hose.—WALTER R. CROWE, *Institute for Fisheries Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan, January 9, 1953.*

Ivory Gulls in western Lake Ontario.—On January 4, 1953, two Ivory Gulls (*Pagophila eburnea*) were observed at Hamilton, on Lake Ontario, Canada, by the writer in company with David Powell and Leslie Gray. The birds, which were seen under good conditions and studied at some length, apparently were immatures, being sparingly flecked with dusky brown at the tips of the primaries and at the bend of the wing. Size appeared similar to that of Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*), and the birds had a small-headed, pigeon-like profile that appeared quite distinctive. The dark eyes, black legs, and dusky bill with yellowish tip were seen clearly.

When first seen the Ivory Gulls were at the edge of the ice sheet with Ring-billed and Herring gulls (*Larus delawarensis*, *L. argentatus*) but a passing locomotive startled the flock into flight minutes later. The two Ivory Gulls circled and settled back on the ice, but all other birds in the flock departed. In flight the long, pointed, white wings and white mantle were noted; the wing-beat was rapid and tern-like. After settling, one bird walked to the open water and apparently drank there.

The gulls were about 50 yards from shore and observations were made from an elevated position on the bank, below Woodland Cemetery. The study was carried out in bright sunlight, with the aid of a 20-power spotting telescope on a tripod and binoculars.

The arrival of these rare stragglers, seldom seen away from their Arctic pack ice, was of great interest to local ornithologists, many of whom reported the presence of one or more Ivory Gulls around the same date.—ERIC WALTER BASTIN, 43 Inglewood Drive, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, January 15, 1953.