



Individual songs of the eastern bird range from 1 to 6 tones in pitch, averaging 2.85 tones. Those of the southern bird range from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 tones, averaging 3.17, while those of the western bird range from 2 to 8 tones, averaging 4.3.

In the less exact matter of phonetics, the eastern bird is often entirely clear of phonetic sounds, so far as my ear can determine. Some notes, however, begin with a sound like the letters *ts*, and some link notes together with a sound like the letter *l*. In all of my records only 34 (3.2 per cent) contain the *ts* sound. The *l* sound was found in 112 (10.6 per cent). In the southern bird both *ts* and *l* sounds occur in every song I have recorded. In the western bird *l* sounds occur in every song, and explosive consonants, more like *t* or *k* occur in most of them.

In considering single notes, the eastern bird often sings prolonged notes and slurs, while the southern and western birds sing short, explosive, somewhat staccato notes. However, in the western bird, these are frequently linked together with *l*-like sounds between them.

From these data I would conclude that the Southern Meadowlark is like the Eastern in quality and number of notes, but is intermediate between Eastern and Western in time, pitch and partially in phonetics. It is like the Western Meadowlark in the shortness of notes and the abundant *l*-like consonant sounds. On the basis of certain aspects of the songs, it seems to me that the southern bird is farther removed from the Eastern Meadowlark than its current taxonomic position indicates.

The opportunity to travel and to obtain the data on which this paper is based was afforded by a grant from the American Philosophical Society.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *P.O. Box 141, Canaan, Connecticut, March 23, 1955.*

Cattle Egret in Virgin Islands.—On the morning of February 21, 1955, Mr. Anton Teytaud and I visited a pasture at Sprat Hall, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, from which Cattle Egrets had been reported. Immediately upon our arrival at this pasture we sighted 26 white herons. These birds were feeding among a small herd of cattle. An adult Little Blue Heron flew up as we stopped our vehicle. This led us to suspect that these reputed "African Tick Herons" were nothing but immature Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*).

A quick-stalking, heavy-jowled heron near us began weaving its neck in a peculiar snake-like fashion. It suddenly grabbed an insect flushed by a browsing cow. This was no Little Blue Heron. A careful look through binoculars convinced us that these birds were actually Buff-Backed Herons, *Ardeola (Bubulcus) ibis*. Here before us was not one lone, wind-tossed straggler cast peradventure on this tiny sea-girt island, but a whole flock of 26 rare birds contentedly feeding as at home as could be. None of these egrets was in breeding plumage and only a few exhibited touches of buff on crown, throat and mantle.

After some difficulty a specimen was secured. As the dead bird lay on the pasture the rest of the flock gathered over it in graceful circles.

The bird collected was an immature male. Its measurements were as follows: wing, 234 mm.; tail, 90; tarsus, 87; bill, 56. The iris was yellow, the feet black, and the undersides of the toes yellowish-green, and the tarsus pale yellow. The stomach contents, identified by Dr. George N. Walcott, Agricultural Experiment Station, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, were:

	Number	Per cent of contents
<i>Schistocerca americana</i> Drury	1	55
<i>Neoconocephalus triops</i> (Linn.)	1	15
<i>Scyllina (Plectrotettix) gregarius</i> Saussure	7	14
<i>Acheta simmilis</i> (F.)	2	6
<i>Oecantha niveus</i> DeGeer	1	2
Undetermined spiders	3	6
Carabid beetles	3	2

It is to be presumed that these herons came from Puerto Rico, some 90 miles to the northwest of St. Croix. It is estimated that about 100 are presently on the island.—G. A. SEAMAN, Box 472, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, March 30, 1955.

Behavior of migrating birds at sea off San Diego, California.—On April 13, 14, and 15, 1954, the U.S.S. Mount Katmai (AE-16), in which I was serving at the time, was conducting training exercises in a limited area centered 40 miles from San Diego, California, and 15 miles south of San Clemente Island. All three days were overcast, with fog present in varying density at all times. For an hour or so around noon on the 13th four or five Hermit Warblers (*Dendroica occidentalis*) flitted about the ship. Several female Myrtle Warblers (*Dendroica coronata*) were present at the same time. On the next day at about the same hour two Pileolated Warblers (*Wilsonia pusilla*) were seen in company with a small flock of Audubon Warblers (*Dendroica auduboni*) and Myrtle Warblers. Later in the afternoon of the 14th several Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*), several Audubon Warblers, a Yellow-throat (*Geothlypis trichas*), a Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*), an Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*), and an unidentified wren and hummingbird were noted around the ship. On the 15th of April—again around noon—four White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), two Sanderlings (*Crocethia alba*), a Black Turnstone (*Arenaria melanoccephala*), and an unidentified “peep” sandpiper were seen. At the same time a Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) and a Pileolated Warbler were captured by sailors who simply placed their hats over the resting birds.

Opportunities for observation were available at frequent intervals during the three days but neither land nor shore birds were seen at times other than those described. Most of the birds appeared fairly active; the doves, the heron, and most of the warblers would fly out from the ship, sometimes for some distance, and would then circle for a bit before finally returning to alight again on the ship. The turnstone never was seen to land, but for some time coursed low back and forth and roundabout, frequently passing close to the ship's side. The Mount Katmai had one radar set operating at all times, and an additional one in operation most of the time. Other ships in the vicinity presumably always had at least one piece of radar gear in operation also. Whether these electronic emissions causally contributed to the behavior of the birds observed can only be guessed at.—JOHN B. CROWELL, JR., 49 Irving Street, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts, April 30, 1955.