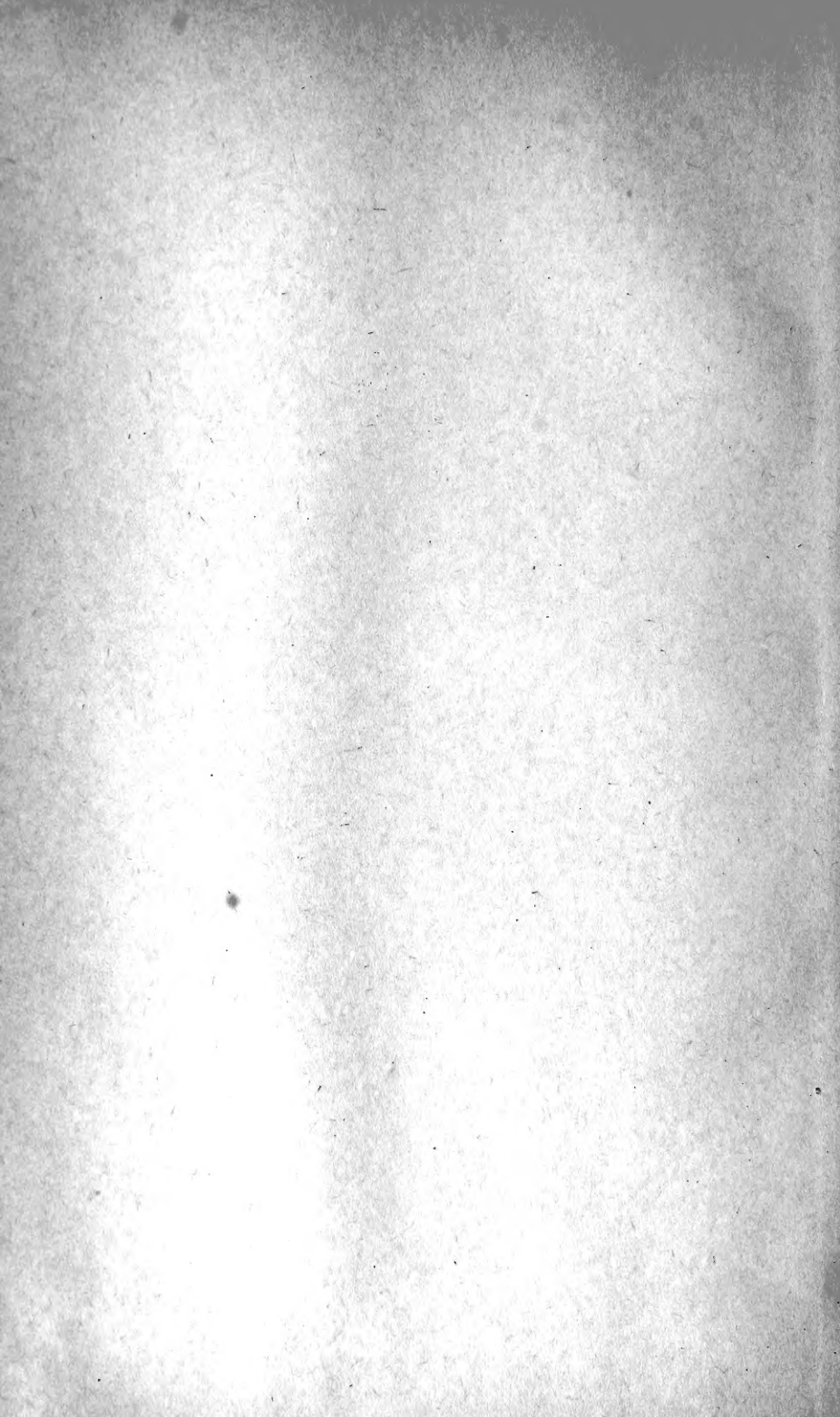


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VOL. XXV. No. 1.

ALBION, N. Y., JAN., 1908.

WHOLE No. 246

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 1.

ALBION, N. Y. JAN., 1908.

WHOLE No. 246

## THE OÖLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK E. LATTIN, Publisher,  
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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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Chill, Monroe Co., N. Y.

### The Maryland Yellow-Throat. (Geothlypis Trichas.)

The Maryland Yellow-throat (geothlypis trichas,) arrives from the South in this locality, some time during the first week in May. But, for some

reason, this year he was delayed 'till the tenth of that month.

The first sound which greets the ear of the ornithologist when he enters that low bushy piece of land or, that patch of aged red cedars draped with grape vines is that merry "witchity-witchity-witch" of the yellow throat as he peers at you out of his shining black eyes, from behind some leaf or branch.

"Trichas," is a common breeder in this section, preferring the swampy lowlands and thickets. They begin their household duties, from middle of May to the first week in June. The nest is composed of coarse grasses grape vine, and leaves on the exterior, and lined with finer grasses and hair. It is generally placed upon the ground, but it is by no means an uncommon occurrence to find it in a grape vine or bramble. On August 29, '07 I found a nest about three feet above the ground in an alder on the edge of a swamp. The eggs which number from four to six usually four, often five, but very rarely six, vary from white to creamy white in ground color, specked and spotted with dark reddish brown, lilac and yellow, and average size of .70 x .50 of an inch. The young birds leave the nest the last week in June. A second set is generally laid.

You will sometimes, but very rarely find the nest arched over with an entrance at one side. I have read in certain bird books that the nest is quite hard to find, but in my experience, this is not so, they being fairly easy to find if the area where the



Photo by P. G. Howes.

**Nest and Eggs of Maryland Yellowthroat.**

nest is supposed to be is carefully searched.

The birds are not at all shy, coming close enough to afford excellent opportunities for study. They are of much use to the farmers, ridding the stalks of rye, wheat, and barley of multitudes of vermin, which might otherwise lay waste these most important crops!

It is a widely distributed bird, ranging from Maine to the Gulf. It is

said to be especially numerous in the swampy thickets of Maryland.

"This bird was considered a species of thrush by Linnaeus, but very properly removed to the genus *Motacilla* by Gmelin." (Wilson.)

The birds take their departure the first week in September, to be exact, they left this locality, this year, September eighth.

P. G. Howes,  
Stamford,  
Conn.

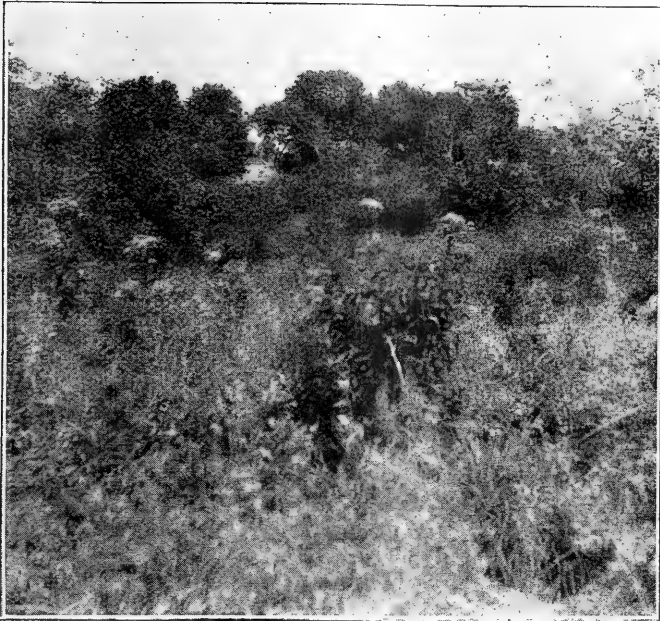


Photo by P. G. Howes.  
Site of the Yellowthroat's Home.

### Archeological Collectors take Notice

We print following extracts from a Detroit Paper. We received the copy some weeks since and contemplated further investigation but time and opportunity do not come to hand.

Daniel E. Soper in a Fake Relic Business.

"Indian copper implements, wonderful battle axes of leaf copper, spearheads so well tempered that they ring like a tuning-fork and other "rare" and "anciently corroded" archaeological treasures which have in recent years been found in Michigan's many so-called "mounds of prehistoric ages" are now brought under suspicion and many are pronounced absolute fakes. An Indian relic factory is believed to have been in operation right here in Detroit.

Many collectors have been swindled, many museums in various parts

of the country have been offered splendid specimens and have only of late discovered on what wholesale lines the Michigan brand of fake relics are being placed on sale.

A former secretary of state, who retired under charges at Lansing some years ago, is acting at the very least as catspaw, dupe and salesman for the makers of these fakes. The curator of a university museum—not in Michigan, be it said—is also concerned in the disposition of the bogus coppers. And a sign painter of Detroit is believed to know much about the bogus stuff.

The scheme is so unique as to win absolute admiration for the perpetrators. If committed in a spirit of humor, it is the most colossal hoax of a century.

Unknown numbers of wealthy men whose hobby is the collecting of choice Indian relics are among the

victims. No collection is left free from the suspicion that among its specimens are bogus scalping knives, fishhooks and other "rare" copper implements."

"For seven years at the least this arch swindle has been in progress. There is no possibility of determining how many are the victims."

"March 6, 1907, George A. West, of Milwaukee, Wis., ordered an Indian pipe from Daniel E. Soper, of Detroit, for \$5. He writes about sending six pipes of a total value of \$40, but names \$35 as the bargain day price for the lot. One pipe, he says, was found in Kent county, Michigan.

The Milwaukee collector sends the pipes back with some show of disapproval. On April 2, 1907, Soper writes again, saying he is sorry Mr. West doesn't like the pipes and adds, "I have been collecting 30 years and my collection is pronounced the largest and finest in Michigan."

Soper is the man who offered relics to Mr. Griffin, which the latter pronounced other than genuine.

On Aug. 22, 1907, Soper wrote to H. P. Hamilton, vice-president and treasurer of the Hamilton Manufacturing Co., Two Rivers, Wis., offering to pay Hamilton's expenses to Detroit and return that he might see Soper's collection. Hamilton had for long been a correspondent of Soper's and wanting to see some of Soper's relics."

"Much discussion of the suspected parties has been going on among those honestly interested in archaeology. The following is an abstract from a letter written Oct. 25, 1907, by a Wisconsin expert of national reputation, Curator Charles E. Brown, of the Wisconsin Archaeological society, at Madison:

"Among other persons apparently connected with these various deals are James Scotford, 167 Abbott street; Adolphe B.

Covert, curator of the University of Cincinnati museum."

Covert was formerly connected with the University of Michigan museum as a young man and later tried to get in at the Detroit Museum of Art, but failed.

All the while these investigations were going on among the archaeologists, the vendors of bogus relics were busily at work urging their wares.

In a letter of Oct. 5, 1907, between Curator Brown, of Madison, and H. P. Hamilton, the Two Rivers collector, regarding bogus stuff from Detroit, this rule is given for determining fraud:

"Test with sharp knife and prick the little ax to see how hard is the incrustation. They can get the green on the copper easily, but they cannot counterfeit the hardness of the genuine incrustation."

Oct. 30, 1907, Soper, in Detroit writes as follows to Curator Brown at Madison, who had examined some of Soper's wares as submitted by Mr. Hamilton, of Two Rivers:

"I wish to know of your findings. The collection in question has been sold. I am just taking over another collection, stuff taken out of the ground within two weeks, among them a beautiful battle ax, pendant, grease lamp of clay, two caskets and two clay tablets.

Yours truly,

"(HON.) DANIEL E. SOPER."

The "Hon." probably refers to Soper's having once been secretary of state of Michigan.

Curator Brown sends this caustic answer in reply, dated the first of the present month of November:

"The specimens are frauds other experts agree with me, I shall be pleased if you will kindly submit to me for my information sketches and other data concerning the collection you have secured."

"The complaint made against you,"

Mr. Soper was told, "is that you continue offering these things for sale after they have been branded as false by experts. They claim it would be for the betterment of all true archaeological research were you to defer making a business out of these finds until the general condemnation of them as fakes is cleared up."

"They are genuine."

"How is it," Mr. Soper, that these things, so necessarily ancient if genuine, antedating even the discovery of America and the Christian era, lie so near the surface?"

Scotford's affidavit regarding the finds was that they lay 16 inches below the sod.

"I cannot tell that," said Soper, "unless it is by some freak of nature."

"Where did you get all these things?"

"Oh, from Scotford and others."

Soper refused to say where it was "near Detroit" that one of the big discoveries was made. They were found all right, and witnessed, he claimed, but was silent as to further particulars.

Soper gave A. B. Covert, of the Cincinnati university, a good name, and said he was deeply interested in detecting frauds. As for Scotford, he said:

---

#### Scotford "Just Found Them."

"He's a simple old man who has no interest in these things—just happened to find them."

Soper has not been left in the dark by the curator of the Wisconsin society, Charles E. Brown, as the following letter of Nov. 1 shows:

To Daniel E. Soper, Esq.: Dear Sir—The pottery pipe and copper tablet belonging to yourself and which Mr. Hamilton submitted to me some time ago, and which I have since at his request return-

ed to you, are frauds. Others to whom I have shown them concur with me in this decision. Have you any affidavits?

C. E. BROWN."

The above extracts are sufficient to explain the case.

The "Oologist" can not spare room for all of the interesting article but we advise collectors of copper relics who have captured Michigan finds to obtain a copy of the Detroit News for Nov. 14, 1907 and ascertain whether any of their prizes bear the "cabalistic" sign that the Soper, Scotford, Covert combine decorated their finds with.

Several years ago many of us became too intimately acquainted with Mr. Covert for our own good but the Editor of the Oologist at least had hopes that he had gone out of business.

Ernest H. Short.

---

#### Two Seasons With The Swainson Hawks.

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Out beyond the vineyards and orchards as one travels toward the southwest from Fresno is a broad alkali plain while still farther on the road leads into a fertile area extending away on the south toward Summit Lake, while westward may be seen the Coast Range Mountains. Several large irrigating canals or sloughs trail across the country, their winding course marked by the rather thin fringe of large willow trees that grows on their banks. Here and there over the wheat fields the form of a lone willow or cottonwood tree rises to break the monotony of the landscape and add a touch of color to the scene.

Here it was that I first became acquainted with the Swainson Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*) on their chosen nesting grounds. I had at times, during the spring, seen these hawks cir-

cling around in the air and late in August quite a flock would sometimes gather far overhead, wheeling, turning, circling much after the manner of Turkey Vultures, finally to go trailing across the sky toward a more congenial winter home. I knew that not a few of these birds were credited with breeding in the San Joaquin Valley but not until the sixth of April, 1906 did I find an occupied nest.

On that date I was afield on the "West Side", as the region described above is sometimes called, searching for specimens to add to my oological collection and items of interest for my note book. It was my good fortune to be able to inspect among other things, two nests of Swainson Hawk and on the following day three more were found.

The first nest which was about thirty feet from the ground, was built against a large nearly vertical limb of a cottonwood tree and supported by several smaller horizontal branches. It was not a very large structure and was composed of dry sticks and twigs with a great many green cottonwood leaves for lining and also a few feathers. Only one of the birds was about and it did not make any demonstration, although the nest was apparently nearly ready for the reception of eggs. Tucked in snugly among the larger sticks of the foundation was the nearly completed nest of of a California Shrike.

Soon after examining this nest the second one was found in one of two old willow trees growing in the bed of a small shallow slough in which water flowed only occasionally. Unlike the other, this nest was placed in the extreme top of the tree but was about the same distance above the ground. The materials used were much the same as in the other instance but the lining consisted entirely of fresh willow shoots, averaging

about a foot in length with the small, tender leaves attached. The female was evidently not ready to commence laying as neither of the birds were in sight and there were no feathers in the nest.

I found no more hawk's nests that day but the next morning I was out before sunrise and tramped nearly a mile to a thin, ragged old willow in a wheat field. There had been a light fog during the night but it vanished even before the sun arose, leaving however, great shining drops of moisture sparkling on every wheat blade so that after walking through the knee-high growth for a few moments, I was thoroughly wet; but what did that matter? Could I not see against the sky the outlines of a hawk's nest in the tree a short distance away?

As I neared the tree one of the birds pitched down from the nest and alighted on a fence post, while her much smaller mate set on another post nearby and during the time that I was present one of them at frequent intervals gave voice to a scream not unlike that of a Wn. Red-tail though not so emphatic and with just a suggestion of plaintiveness it.

The nest was built in much the same position as the one first described and about sixteen feet from the ground. It was made of rather small dry sticks with a three-inch deep lining of green leaves while a great many downy feathers adhered to the nest and even the branches within three or four feet of it. Although I believed it to be a little too early for sets of Swainsoni, yet as I climbed to this nest I almost expected to find an early set but the nest was empty.

Later in the day I found two more nests built in the top of willows bordering a large slough and in one case the tree was several feet out in the water. Each of these nests were lined with green willow leaves and a



few feathers. One of them contained a single fresh egg on which the bird was sitting while in the other instance both owners circled around overhead but no eggs had been deposited.

I was very anxious to visit my hawks again some three weeks later but circumstances prevented. However, on the 30th of April of the present year I paid them another visit, going first to the tree that held nest No. 3 of the previous year and finding it unoccupied so I hurried away to the cottonwood in which the first one described was built, but found disappointment awaiting me there also for no nest was to be seen. Not far away, though, was a much smaller tree but it did not seem promising as quite a number of small birds were singing and flitting about in it. However, I soon discovered a big nest up in the topmost branches. This nest seemed worth investigating as a big sooty-colored hawk was flapping around nearby. It was a rather easy climb to the nest which contained four unusually well-marked eggs and I became so interested that I nearly fell from the tree when a hawk, with an angry scream, darted past me only a few feet away. She came from behind me and had evidently been making a long flight as she came in on a slight downward slant, the noise produced by her wings reminding one of a distant waterfall. After dashing at me the first time she ascended on a long upward curve, then suddenly turned and came back again but with these two attacks her anger seemed to have been spent and she afterwards circled around nearby while her mate remained at a greater distance. The most aggressive of these birds, which I believed to be the female, showed an unusually light phase of plumage while her mate, as

before mentioned, was of an almost uniform sooty-color.

A short time before finding the nest I had seen about half a dozen of these hawks sitting on the fence posts and on the ground in a pasture that had been burned over and they were undoubtedly engaged in catching mice. Their actions were such as to give one the impression that they were sluggish birds, but the two at the nest rather upset this theory. I might mention that in the tree with the hawk's nest a pair of Arkansas Kingbirds had also commenced building and the framework of a Bullock Oriole's summer home was suspended from an outer branch; but of course it remained for the English Sparrow to outdo them all for as I was climbing the tree, the saucy chirp of a sparrow was heard overhead. An inspection showed that a mass of rubbish, grass stems and feathers had been carried in among the larger sticks in the foundation and probably a brood of young sparrows were afterwards raised there.

It might be well to give a description of this nest of *Buteo swainsoni* before passing to another. Outwardly it was much larger than any of the others that I had examined being nearly two and one-half feet in diameter and sixteen inches in depth, the inner cavity being about four inches deep. The size was governed no doubt by the position in which the nest was built and this I believe is the case with nearly all large nests. It was lined with green cottonwood leaves and feathers and was 28½ feet from the ground. The eggs had been incubated about one week.

My limited time did not allow an attempt to reach the two nests along the slough but I had the pleasure of finding another new one in the second of the two willows described as

No. 2 for 1906. The parent bird was setting and incubation was begun in the three eggs that rested on a few green leaves in a nest that did not differ essentially from the others that have been discovered. There was also a gopher, apparently freshly killed, in the nest and the eggs were somewhat daubed with mud, showing that the bird had been in a habit of alighting on the ground. Unlike the owners of the other nest, these birds made no demonstration and the dark, sooty one that was occupying the nest, left quietly when I prepared to climb and circling higher and higher finally seemed to hang almost motionless in the sky, watching operations from far above.

The seven eggs from these two nests have a white ground color with a pale bluish tinge and are spotted and blotched with brown, each egg being marked differently. One of them has a small wreath of blotches around the smaller end while numerous small splashes of brown are scattered generally over the surface and several pale lavender shell marks can be seen.

As I have already noted, each of these nests contained green leaves for a lining and I might add that four nests of Wn. Red-tail and one of Cooper Hawk recently examined all had a similar lining with the exception of one of Red-tail which had several bunches of green cottonwood berries in place of leaves.

In conclusion I would state that not far from where I had seen the hawks catching mice, there was a farmyard with many small chickens, some of which often wandered far from the house but their owner, a very observing man, informed me that he had never known them to be molested by the hawks. One or two other farmers stated that they sometimes lost many young chickens during the sum-

mer but no one had seen the hawks carrying them away so I am inclined to believe that some other cause was responsible for their disappearance.

On the whole the Swainson Hawks are of inestimable value to the farmers of this county on account of the number of mice and gophers they destroy and are therefore worthy of the fullest protection.

John G. Tyler,  
Fresno, Calif.

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### The Crested Flycatcher on Strange Grounds.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

Probably all the readers of the Oologist are familiar with the nesting and the beautiful eggs of this interesting species. I was of a like opinion until one day, early in June, 1904, I discovered a nest built in the rain spout of a barn. The birds entered through a hole just above the nest and certainly seemed secure until a heavy rain storm came spreading devastation and snakeskin throughout the length of pipe.

No doubt such instances are rare, but still they go to show that we had best be conservative in our statements concerning birds and not merely write, "Nest always in a hole of a tree," without a second thought.

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We Note in the current issue of the "West" an advertisement of Archeological specimens by one Wm. P. Arnold of Wakefield, R. I.

We suspect this is none other but W. P. Arnold, erstwhile of Peacedale, R. I.

Should this prove to be the case we advise prospective purchasers to play a safe game.—EDITOR.

# NEW POLICY

## Subscribers, Advertisers

### —NOTICE—

FIRST. In line with the decision recently published by the "Condor" and for the same reasons, i e. That the provision for scientific collecting under the Song Bird Law did not contemplate commercial collecting.

The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1st will be dropped.

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VOL. XXV. No. 2.

ALBION, N. Y., FEB., 1908.

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ERNEST H. SHORT,  
Manager of Oologist,  
CHILLI, N. Y.

# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 2.

ALBION, N. Y. FEB., 1908.

WHOLE NO. 247

## THE OÖLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
ALBION, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

Correspondence and items of interest to the student of Birds, their Nests and Eggs, solicited from all.

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Chill, Monroe Co., N. Y.

## THE BIRDS OF PREY AND THE COLLECTORS.

Recently the Oologist has adopted the new policy of accepting no more advertisements of eggs or skins of North American birds to be bought or

sold for cash, except of game birds and birds of prey. This was a wise step.

Let me say right here that I neither have the desire to unwarrantably interfere with the management of the Oologist in the conduct of its own business, nor do I write as an extremist in the matter of bird protection, for I am a collector myself.

The game birds are pretty thoroughly and carefully protected throughout all parts of the United States and Canada, not only by law, but by public sentiment, and when by diminution in numbers they seem to need fuller protection, they will undoubtedly receive it; as for instance, in New Hampshire and Massachusetts the Wood Duck and the Upland Plover are now protected for a term of years with no open season.

The birds of prey, on the contrary, have few friends. The hand of every hunter and farmer, with a pitifully small percentage of exception, is against them. In some states certain species are protected by law, but to the average man, a hawk is a hawk, and if he can kill it, he will do so with satisfaction. Public sentiment is yet, as a whole, far from favorable to the protection of any birds of prey.

To collectors of eggs and skins in the aggregate, there is probably no other order of birds so attractive as that of the birds of prey. If this is so, and I believe it is, collectors ought to enlist themselves individually and as a class on the side of those birds which mean so much to

them, yet have so few friends. Not necessarily cease collecting, but collect judiciously, not selfishly and gluttonously. No man who collects judiciously, unless he is making an exhaustive study of Moults and plumages, which very few collectors are, should kill his specimens in the breeding season, but should take them either before or after; better by far, after.

The collector who uses judgment and really has any love for the birds, if he has taken their first set of eggs, will not only refrain from taking their second laying, but will endeavor to prevent their being disturbed by foes of any kind, human or otherwise. Any collector who takes the eggs from an eagle's nest one season, should use every means in his power to see that the birds are not disturbed the following season, because it is a well recognized fact that the eagles do not, as a rule, make a second attempt to breed the same season, if disturbed in their first.

In this way we may foster the breeding of the various species in our own localities, for it is at least reasonable to suppose that birds which breed and are bred in a certain section, will instinctively seek the same latitude, if not the same locality, when the next breeding season comes.

Every true Oologist,—and I mean by that the kind described and exemplified by the late Major Bendire,—will take as much satisfaction in recording the safe raising of a family of rare birds as he will in reporting the taking of a set of eggs of the same species.

Our authorities who have made extensive examination of the contents of the stomachs of raptorial birds, freely condemn only the Great Horned Owl, Goshawk, Cooper's Hawk, Duck Hawk, Pigeon Hawk and Sharp-

skinned Hawk. For the first four I have nothing to say, except that from the point of sentiment I should hate to see any species exterminated. The Pigeon Hawk is known to most of us only as a rare migrant, but we had best proceed carefully with the Sharp skinned Hawk. To be sure its food consists principally of small birds.

The biggest problem in the bird line in this country today is the English Sparrow pest, and ornithologists are carefully watching the spread of the Starling which is now rapidly going on from around New York City. Some of our best ornithological authorities believe that as these or other undesirable species spread,—(Of course it is not yet determined that the Starling is undesirable.)—their natural enemies will hold them in check. If these natural enemies are to do this, high in their ranks must stand the Sharp-skinned Hawk.

If it is neither feasible nor advisable to form an Oologist organization which may stand for these and kindred ideas, all who believe in such should endeavor, by precept and by example, to make collecting in this field not merely the preserving of the rare and beautiful, but of equal or greater importance, the preservation of the source of these things. We are all familiar with the old story of the result of "killing of the goose that laid the golden egg." Let all of us collectors take this home to ourselves and not help in bringing about a similar result by killing the bird that lays the rare egg.

B. G. Willard.

Millis, Mass.,

Jan. 4, 1908.

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### The Mourning Warbler.

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This exceedingly shy Warbler arrives from the sunny south the first and second weeks in May and take

up their home in damp, dark woods where the ferns with their luxurious growth predominate. The male utters short calling notes to the female. The Oven Bird is found in the same locality. About the middle of May they start nest-building, which are almost invariably constructed in a cluster of ferns, about 12 or 15 inches from the ground.

Those nests that we found are about 4 inches in circumference and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height on the outside dry swamp grass interwoven with dry leaves and coarse rootlets, lined with the finest rootlets. Notwithstanding Nehrling's, Chapman's and Davies' statement, "lined with fine hair," they may, however, conform with the locality. The eggs are white, sprinkled with reddish dots near the larger end, and lay from 3 to 5 eggs.

While the female sits on the eggs, the male is perched on a dry small twig of a sapling from 10 to 15 feet from the ground. I saw a male in this position, and having a stout stick in hand with which I parted the ferns in looking for the nest, I threw it at the bird and brought it down. It now adorns our collection of birds.

They utter a peculiar song, which is different from that of any other warbler, thereby leading to the detection of their nests. We took the picture of the nest June 3, 1906, and found another one in the same piece of woods. The shyness of this very peculiar dark feathered warbler makes it very difficult to find. After rearing the young, they leave us again at the end of September.

EDWARD REINECKE,  
Buffalo, N. Y.



Photo by Reinecke.  
Nest and Eggs of Mourning Warbler.

### Excubitorides or Migrans?

For several years I have been much interested as to the identity of the small grey shrikes that inhabit Fulton Co., N. Y., during the summer months. For a long time I believed the species to be the common White-rumped Shrike, *lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*, and as such I mentioned the species in the Oologist for December, 1903.

Later on I reviewed my data on the subject, and in 1906 began to think that the species, *migrans*. Such was the name in "Some 1906 Notes," published in this paper for December, 1907, and it was the query, inserted by friend Short "Was not this *excubitorides*?" that has led to the publication of this article.

I insert a description of our Fulton county Shrike, taken from a freshly killed specimen: Length, 8.81 in.; extent, 12.63 in.; wing, 3.69 in.; tail, 3.56 in.; bill, culmen, 63 in.; tomia, .91 in.; gonys, .44 in.; tarsus, .94 in. Upper mandible of the bill dark grey, lower mandible greyish black; irides, olive brown, tarsus and toes grayish-brown. Forehead, crown, nape, back, rump, and upper tail coverts slaty-gray, tinged more or less with brown throughout, tail graduated, outer rectrix almost entirely white; the remainder with more black as they approach the central pair, the fourth and fifth pairs being black with only the extreme tips of the feathers whitish; the central pair uniform dark brownish black; auriculars, orbital and loreal region, and nasal tufts black; chin, throat and entire under parts, white, tinged on the breast with grayish brown, scapulars grayish white; lesser coverts gray; middle and greater coverts glossy black; primaries medium brown with basal third and vane of the feather, pure white; secondaries of brownish black

with extreme tips of feathers slightly lighter. Sex, fm., Mayfield, Fulton Co., New York, Aug. 2, 1907."

Now it is observable at once that this bird is not the typical subspecies *ludovicianus*, Linn., because our bird has the tail slightly shorter than the wing instead of the reverse, while the bill appears to average slightly smaller. Ridgway gives the range of *ludovicianus* as follows: "Southern United States, Coast district of South Carolina and Georgia to southern Florida, west over the coastal plain of the United States to Louisiana."

Returning to *excubitorides* Swainson, we find that our Shrike agrees in having the tail shorter than the wing, but lacks entirely the sudden change of color of the uropygium and upper tail coverts (whence, indeed, the common name of white-rumped Shrike.) mon name of white-rumped Shrike.) preciously different, in color, from the back.

The range of *excubitorides*, is given by Ridgway (Birds of Middle and North America; Volume III) as follows: "Arid district of western United States and British Provinces, from the eastern border of the Great Plains to the western margin of the Great Basin."

The new variety, *migrans*, Palmer, was first described in the "Auk" in 1898. It is distinguished from the other two common Shrikes by the characteristics mentioned above, as well as by having the under parts usually less purely white than the other sub-species. This character in our Shrike is very pronounced, the breast and belly being strongly tinged with grayish brown. The range of this sub-species fills in the vacancy left by the other varieties, being as follows: "Greater part of the United States east of the Great Plains, but very local in the more eastern districts."



This entirely answers the description of our small nesting Shrike, and I, for my part, am entirely satisfied as to its identity.

Charles P. Alexander.

Editor Oologist,

Dear Sir:—

Please give me the breeding range of the Migrant Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus migrans*). How does the bird differ from the Loggerhead?

On May 21st, last, I saw several Red-breasted Nuthatches picking at the cones on a spruce tree. They were clinging to them in a manner not unlike that of the Chickadee. I am well acquainted with the Red-breasted Nuthatch and am not mistaken as to identity. Is this a common occurrence?

I saw a Cape May Warbler here on May 18 of this year when the Warbler migration was at its height. The migration was rather late this year, on account of the very backward spring I suppose. The first Warbler I saw was the Black and White which arrived on April 30, when the weather was far from agreeable. Warblers were very abundant this spring. I shot a Fox Sparrow on April 25th.

I saw a nest of an American Goldfinch within two feet of the ground this year.

D. B.

Cobourg, Canada.

See answer elsewhere in this number. (Ed.)

Editor Oologist:

I noted with interest your statement concerning the singing of Warbling vireos on the nest in December Oologist, because I have found it very difficult to obtain accurate date on the songs of sitting birds or of female birds in general.

Mr. Burroughs' statement has been

often quoted, but is certainly wrong as to some species. I have watched house finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*). nesting for many years, and invariably have found that the female bird persistently sings a portion of the song of the male, sometimes for an hour at a time, the male responding with the full song in a tree near by. A reliable observer reports to me the same trait in a female black-headed Grosbeak observed by him. I should like very much to see all such instances reported.

Junius Henderson,

Boulder, Colorado.

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### The Quail Trap.

Norwich, Conn., Bulletin.

The Quail Trap, Dec. 3, 1907.—Well, the open season is over without much honor for either gunner or state. What, indeed, can be expected from protective laws that do not protect, when the commonwealth of Connecticut allows 20,000 licensed men to shoot sixty day in depleted covers? Through October the cry was "No game," but in November, when the leaves had fallen, gunners had fine weather, made fairly good bags, and by December 1, clearly showed that one month of open shooting can clean up all superfluous game.

A leading editorial from a journal in a sister city maintains with stout bravado that city hunters are gentlemen, and by association, example, and influence, help to elevate the manners and social status of farmers and farmers' families. Perhaps a residence for the last eight open seasons in the country may permit me to insist that farmers have few lessons in politeness and field etiquette to learn from the sporting "gent" from town. The average city gunner, as I have met him, fastens his horse to a hidden barpost, steals into the woods, picks

up what game he can, and goes away without paying his respects to the farmer.

For many years I fished and hunted all over this county with a man—country-bred—who invariably placed his horse in the barn under the farmer's care, and paid liberally for all privileges, and was ever a welcome guest at the farmer's table.

Two Woodstock gunners, born, bred, and living in the country, part shoot in our woods, bring us part of their bags on lucky days. This season, last year, and in former years, they have generously divided their chicken pats, and woodcock with us. These gentlemen have not fired a shell at quail for four years. But one day, in a season when quail were abundant, they stood on a neighbor's line and dropped three extra large quail on our land, which were at once given to us. This trio of bob-whites, nicely set up, are in our summer home as souvenirs of a vanishing race, and perpetual mementoes of two farmers and country gentlemen who do not require association and example of city shots to tell them what is manly and right to do.

But, alas! the close of the season saw the end of the career of our old cock partridge who for a decade has lived a charmed life in our woods. In the spring we have often listened to his rataplan, and he is the only ruffed grouse I ever heard drum in autumn. We knew his favorite patches of eye-bright and dewberries, met him huckleberrying in open brush, and many times have seen him dusting his collar and turkey-like tail in an unused roadway. Others have seen him budding in maple and apple tress, and this season when we surprised him with three females he was too indignant for flight and stalked away out of sight like a Mongolian pheasant. He exceeded the extreme local weight

of 2 and 3-4 pounds, and was in brilliant winter dress. If wiring will restore the ruff and enormous fan, the taxidermist will be given a white card to give us a lifelike semblance of this superb specimen. He was presented to us by a hunter, neighbor and farmer, who needed no hint for his act of courtesy from the shooting gentlemen of refinement and culture from town.

We shall miss this noble grouse from his beautiful woodland home, where I hope to spend many more days, meet some of his descendants, and where in some sentimental mood I may feel like pencilling on a beech or white birch in his special praise a tribute more worthy of the place and bird than the following jingle:

Old Red Ruff played his bluff

Through many a joyous year;  
Of winter's cold and foxes bold  
He had but little fear.

Behind a tree from you and me

He'd dodge the charge of shot;  
The treetops o'er, his flight would  
soar  
In an eye-puzzling knot.

He'd outwit a gun, in zigzag run

'Round many a screening stump—  
A setter's nose would not disclose  
His perch in hemlock clump.

The woods would hum with his merry  
drum

Beat loud from log or wall;  
Rival and wife in am'rous strife  
Obeyed the sovereign call.

At his flushing whirr, pulses would  
stir

From the berrypicker's heart;  
That roaring whirl scared many a  
churl—

Made e'en the woodfolk start.

By our swampy path he'd take a bath  
On a hot summer's day;

His ruff so grand he'd fill with sand  
In the dusty woodland way.

A score of wives lost their lives  
Ere Red Ruff's race was run,  
And a hundred chicks he lost by  
tricks  
Of fox, hawk, owl, and gun.

But with weakened nerve, a fatal  
swerve  
From any covering shield  
When trees were bare—a snapshot  
pair  
Made the ruler's spirit yield.

So we chance a tear o'er a brave car-  
reer—  
Chant a sincere refrain:  
Red Ruff we'll set in our cabinet,  
Let Science reign!  
—C. L. Rawson.

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#### The Horned Owl in Wayne County, Michigan.

Fifteen years ago *Bubo virginianus* was a common bird throughout the county, but is now comparatively rare owing to unremitting persecution and the cutting away of large forests that afforded safe retreats. At the present moment I know of but three large pieces of timber within the boundaries of the county and feel confident the *Bubo* has not nested in one of those for many years. It is with the remaining two we have to deal.

The Dearborn Township parcel covers 750 acres of ground and here, in 1901, a Red-tail Hawk built an entire new nest and had a complete set deposited just 23 days from the time her first was taken. This nest was placed 65 feet above the ground in the main fork of a large beech. April 13, 1902, we ate luncheon at the base of this tree, but not before pounding it and otherwise convincing ourselves that the nest was not occupied. Leaving the party I went some dis-

tance to investigate a tree cavity, and while returning noticed two projections above the nest that would pass for ear tufts, but no amount of noise induced them to move. The majority voiced an opinion of dead leaves, but this was not entirely satisfactory to me, for a large owl had glided from the vicinity at our approach. However, I would not climb on the evidence at hand, but as we started away I glanced back from time to time, and suddenly discovered that only one projection was visible and while I stood watching the other swung into view. That settled it. This owl remained upon the nest until I could reach into it and then vacated on a straight line through the woods and did not return. Two owlets about a week old and the remains of two red squirrels and a domestic pigeon represented the contents of the nest which had been re-lined with oak leaves and was without down. I did not disturb the contents and hoped to secure a set of eggs the following season, but a careful search throughout the woods failed to reveal any trace of the owls.

The Monguagon Township section of timber comprises about 700 acres—mostly oak and elm of the largest size. I explored this woods on April 17, 1898 and in the most dense and gloomy portion discovered a nest of the Great Horned Owl. It was a rather insignificant appearing structure, situated 70 feet from the ground in the main fork of a white oak without an intervening limb and was undoubtedly built by the owls. Nothing was seen of the birds, but their claim to the nest was assured by a profusion of down clinging to its exterior and also to the limbs and for some distance down the trunk. Not far from this tree grew another equally large but with an abundance of limbs and there was no difficulty in reach-

ing an elevation from which the owlets could be seen but they were "bunched" and whether two or three in number could not be determined. Having plenty of time I remained two hours in the vicinity with a hope of seeing the old birds, but without success.

April 24 found me again beneath the nest, but this time prepared to ascend. It was sighted from fully 300 yards and just as both owls flew from the tree to be seen no more. The nest contained the remains of an adult male and female Cooper's Hawk and two defiant juvenile Bubos. They could not fly a stroke, although subsequent measurements showed a wing spread of 41 7-8 and 41 9-16 in. That they were unable to fly seems remarkable when we consider that the average spread of the adult is not above 54 inches.

It was not until the season of 1903 that I decided to secure a set of eggs if possible, and on March 15, after the other localities had panned out null, I turned to this woods as a last chance. A large nest was sighted from a long way through the trees and kept steadily in view, but no owl was seen to leave. However, droppings on the ground beneath the nest and the sudden outcry of a flock of crows suggested owls and I decided to wait awhile. In a few moments a large owl came into view followed by a long string of clamorous tormentors and alighted upon the topmost branch of a giant sycamore, but instantly perceiving me and took wing. This convinced me the nest was occupied but before attempting the climb I wished to observe the owl's

home coming and found the foliage of a live oak an excellent place of concealment. It was a quarter of an hour before she put in an appearance coming with a noiseless even stroke of wings that tended to blend with the woodland gloom and render her progress scarcely noticeable. She alighted three feet from the nest and, after careful survey of the surroundings, crept cautiously down the limb into it and entirely disappeared. I stepped into view and at almost the same instant caught sight of one wing as she dropped down the further side of the tree and glided away not more than two feet above the ground. This nest was constructed by Red-tails in 1899 and was placed where a large limb separated into three branches just 84 feet above the ground. First limb 60 feet up and circumference of the tree three feet from ground eight feet, 10 inches. Was three-quarters of an hour up the tree but felt well repaid by the fine set of eggs now in my cabinet.

March 1, 1904, Mr. Wisener secured a set of two from this nest (as recorded in the Oologist for June, 1904) and on March 19, 1905, I took another set of two from it. The bird was a trifle late in getting down to business as the nest contained but one egg on March 5. This nest was not occupied in 1906 nor could we find any signs of the Horned Owl breeding in this woods or elsewhere until May 6, when we located a family in Gratiot Township. The first seen was a young bird that had probably left the nest the previous night. It was perched in a low dogwood tree and made no attempt to escape. We located the nest hollow at once and Mr. Spicer shot the female as she flew over.

J. CLAIRE WOOD,

Detroit, Mich.

# THE OÖLOGIST.

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION DEVOTED TO  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMY.

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VOL. XXV. No. 3.

ALBION, N. Y., MARCH, 1908.

WHOLE No. 248

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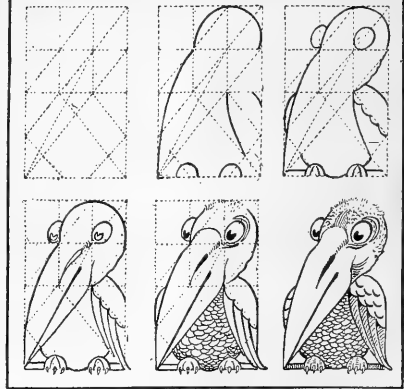
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VOL. XXV. No. 3.

ALBION, N. Y. MAR., 1908.

WHOLE No. 248

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### Hints at Egg Preserving.

When I was but little more than a boy I once wrote, in the columns of this, our increasingly-favored little bird magazine, several articles under the above sort of caption. For many

years I had supposed them forgotten as much by all others as they were by myself. Not long since, however, one such article was referred to by one who is now well known. The comment was both appreciative and gratifying.

I therefore now venture the setting down of a few ideas which I have never seen exploited anywhere else. I do so with the statement: that, (as regards but a single one of them), had I known three years ago, what I found out afterwards at cost of chagrin unbounded, I might have saved intact, a most beautiful set of eggs of the Black Hills form of the Canada Jay.

First, as regards the use of pancreatine in the digesting of embryos: I presume any school boy might have told, out of his rudimentary knowledge of chemistry; that pancreatine is inert at any low temperature. But the writer hereof hadn't sense enough to appreciate this fact until he had lost, through rotting of the egg shell, several valuable sets of Pinyon Jay. Pancreatine must hence be set down as of extremely limited value: especially when one is afield.

Caustic Soda, (or Caustic Potash, the two alkaloids working in just the same way), caused me, on the other hand, regrettable losses in two ways: one through the use of too strong solutions; the other through the leaving of the solutions within the egg shell for too long a time. One learns only by costly experiences that for any small egg the caustic solution must be very greatly attenuated; and that it

need not be left in the egg but a short while,—say, for eggs of robin-size, not over 40 minutes. With small eggs it is well to keep the treated eggs floating in water while the caustic is doing its work. As for the very small eggs, it is wonderful in how short a time and with what weak strength of the soda it is possible to remove even a tough embryo. For example: by using a medicine dropper, having its tip very finely drawn out, I once blew, for our good friend Dille, the only set of eight eggs of the Long-tailed Chickadee of which I have ever heard. Dille wanted them badly, but they contained very tough embryos. To my own incredible surprise every one of these eight eggs was safely and cleanly blown by the use of a two-percent solution of caustic; through holes the diameter of a fair-sized pin. I couldn't do it again, nor would I attempt it again,—for anybody else on earth,—including myself. The secret lay in the leaving of solutions in the floating eggs for not over 20 minutes at a time; and the constant use of a light, in the blowing; to be utterly sure that no vestige of cartilage was left in any egg.

In the preparation of hard-set eggs of one inch, or more, in diameter, the blow-hole perforated patches of slitted paper prescribed by that skillful physician, Doctor Coues, will be found a complete safeguard against the breakage of a blow-hole by the use of the embryo hook. Almost every reader of the Oologist knows how maddening it is to be trying to remove that last provoking humerus or femur, by aid of lamp and embryo hook, only to have some nervous or careless twist of the hook wrench out a piece of the shell from some highly valuable egg. To prevent this one has but to paste on a series of (not less than five) of these pieces of paper. They are to be perforated in the center to correspond

with the blow-hole of the egg. (A harness-maker's punch is just the thing). The edge of each piece is then slit-  
ted so that it may conform in the pasting, to the curvature of the egg. Each piece is then laid on, with utmost care, one seeing to it that each center perforation accurately registers. The entire affair is then to be laid away for thorough drying. Previously, however, the drill-hole should be made, the size thereof to be about one-third as large as the operator may think necessary. Sage hen eggs with fully developed embryos, may be safely blown through holes the size of a large wheat straw. The liquid is then to be carefully drawn from the egg; the greatest care being exercised to remove every bit of the yolk of the egg. (If this be not done, the action of the caustic leaves in the egg a tough, gelatinous mass, which it is almost impossible to remove in any other way than with a sledge hammer). The egg is now to be filled with your caustic solution, (about one-third as strong, if you please, as you may consider necessary). Shake the egg thoroughly. Wipe clean. Put away for from thirty to forty minutes, not more. (When the soluble parts of the embryos have been removed, a very weak solution may be left in the egg for several hours; in case the embryo prove refractory, or the previously used solution has been too weak. But, this long soaking is dangerous.)

While working at the embryo one should keep the paper-covered surface of the egg just as dry as he possibly can. As the work progresses the loss of a few pieces can do no harm: (they will finally all come off, any how); yet it is best to leave them all as long as possible; or until every well-formed bone has been patiently coax-  
ed out of the egg. (This latter process is best wrought by standing on ones head.) This feat may be approxi-

mated by holding the egg above one's head. The object of this is to keep the bits of bone that still remain in the egg afloat and beside the drill-hole. In order to promote this gravitation, water should be inserted into the egg, over and over again. When every bit of bone is gone, and you have crawled clear inside the egg to make sure of this happy consummation, the pieces of paper may be soaked away at your leisure. (If your head is too big to go inside the egg,—mine is,—it will sometimes do as well to shake the egg violently. One's trained ear will make the test.)

A valuable modification of this method of extracting tough embryos is perfectly successful in the saving of eggs in which the embryos are fully formed. There is no egg of over a half-inch in longer diameter but what may be saved for the cabinet, (if of sufficient rarity to warrant such deliberate murder), by the following process:

The patches above described have the centers cut out with fine scissors or pricked out with a pin, to the size necessary for extracting the embryo. They are then pasted, successively, upon the egg; and then allowed to dry. This done, a section of egg-shell is carefully pricked out; the pin following along the margin of the opening in the papers. The embryo may then be gently revolved until the head appears. It may then be chloroformed, or deftly and quickly killed with the forceps. It is then withdrawn; the placenta is carefully removed, (loosening it, if necessary, by a stream of water from the blow-pipe). The whole egg should then be carefully rinsed, and partially dried. Leave the pasted pieces of paper where they are. Over them now paste a cover, of the same paper, perforating this piece, in the center, with a pin, to insure the thor-

ough drying of the egg. The egg-marks may now be made upon this paper,—(which, of course, ought not to be very bibulous),—by the use of a fine pen. Use carbon ink,—always and for all such work, use carbon ink. (The writer once saved in this way a rarely beautiful set of five eggs of the Townsend Solitaire, which could not possibly have been saved in any other way. The resulting specimens are good, sound cabinet specimens, which, unless the paste used should break away from the egg, ought to last indefinitely).

The value of this process lies in the fact that the strength of an egg lies largely in the arch of the shell. If this arch be greatly weakened the shell is gone, even though the egg be not weakened by the natural conditions that accompany incubation. But the paper reinforcing leaves the broken portion of the shell greatly stronger than it was in the first place; unless cracks have been made through careless work in the pricking.

I make no apology for what might be called the devilish cold-bloodedness of this destruction of fully developed embryos. It is no wickeder to destroy an embryo than it is to blow a fresh egg; and not, of necessity, one whit more inflictive of pain.

P. B. PEABODY.

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#### Erroneous Identification.

In looking over my file of the Oologist in search of references to the Broad-winged Hawk, I find the following titles which seem to bear evidence of mistaken identity; and as it is impossible to identify the writers in two instances, and quite uncertain as to the address of the remainder, I take this means of commenting on the matter, and requesting further information from the contributors.

C. S. B. Broad-winged Hawk, Black-



Nesting Site of Wild Turkey. (See lower shrub in hill-side faintly marked x-). Photo by Abbott. Taken in Arkansas Pass Region, Texas. Companion photo will appear in April issue.

capped Chickadee, *Oologist*, Vol. VI, 1889, p. 153. Set of two eggs, 2.10 x 1.70, 2.12 x 1.70, April 20, at Bradford, Mass. Nest lined with grass. (Date apparently almost a month earlier than the average set of fresh eggs of *Buteo platypterus* in New England; measurements of eggs quite equaling or beyond the maximum; and notes representing several hundred nests from various parts of the country fail to show grass-lined nests for this species, although together with data, and size of eggs, altogether harmonizes with the domestic arrangements of *Buteo lineatus*.)

M. & C. A Day After Hawk's Eggs. *Oologist*, Vol. VII, 1890, p. 108. Set of two eggs taken in Windsor Co., Vt., April 22, 1889. Female shot. (Although the bird was reported shot, it was in all probability incorrectly identified; for the date is at least 20 days earlier than we find completed sets in Chester county Penna., several hundred miles further south, and well within the Carolinian fanna. Probably also the Red-shouldered Hawk.)

Elliot, E. G. Some Unusual Happenings, *Oologist*, Vol. VII, 1890, p. 145. An account of the substitution of the domestic hen's eggs for two of those of the hawk, April 17, at Bradford, Mass. (Same remarks apply to this as to previous title.)

Haskins, R. V. A Battle with the Broad-wings, *Oologist*, Vol. XXII, 1905, pp. 89-90. A graphic description of the aggressiveness of the female and the collecting of a set of five eggs on May 15. Bird circling around and screaming lustily, nest lined with grass, leaves, etc. (Well authenticated sets of five eggs of the Broad-winged Hawk are almost unheard of, while not so very uncommon in the instance of the Red-shouldered Hawk; furthermore, the former species seem very constant in their nesting habits, flushing quietly from the nest when

disturbed and alighting on a dead branch of a tree a few hundred yards away usually, and perhaps protesting now and then in a Plover-like whistle. The latter "circles around and screams." normally; and also frequently lines her nest with the "grass, leaves, etc." The "etc." I will not vouch for, however, as it stands for all sorts of things or nothing, and should be eliminated from data.)

It is easy to make mistakes, and it sometimes seems very humiliating to have to acknowledge that an error was made; but it is a far greater mistake to perpetuate evident uncertainties by silence. The *Oologist* is doubtless full of errors, no scientific periodical is entirely free of them; and then, there are oologists and oologists, quite a difference truly; and perhaps there are too many who attempt to identify the eggs of a bird by the eggs and nest, and not by the bird. Although few have the courage of our mutual friend, the late Harry K. Jamison, who wrote on one of his customary generous blanket-sized data blanks, after identification: "By the nest and eggs." This was a personally collected set of the Broad-winged Hawk, collected after a deal of trouble and risk, which he relates under the head of remarks; and its identity, if not its identification, is above reproach.

I want to say to the readers of the *Oologist*, that I am now engaged in collecting data on the life history of the Broad-winged Hawk, and would be pleased to have their co-operation in this work. Exact data is desired, whether it be a single date of its occurrence in a practically unworked locality, or notes on its breeding, feeding, migrating or other habits in the center of its abundance.

FRANK L. BURNS,  
Berwyn, Penna.

### Nesting of the Tufted Tit in Pennsylvania.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

The Tufted Titmouse seems to be a rather generally distributed bird throughout all of the Carolinian fauna, growing less common in the Alleghanian zone and only being noted as a straggler in the Canadian. About Philadelphia they may be found throughout the year and are rather common, though they may never be classed as abundant. The course of streams seems in a large measure to determine their distribution, as they are usually to be found in the vicinity of water.

Apparently the coldest winter has no effect on them, as they seem just as contented among the February snows as in the May sunshine. In the winter they may frequently be noticed in company with Nuthatches and Downy Woodpeckers for whose society they show a pronounced liking. They are usually noted in pairs and are, I believe, mated throughout the year.

The Tufted Tit is one of our few birds on whose voice the winds of winter seem to have no effect. Their loud, pleasing whistle may be heard at all seasons, especially in the early spring. It is interesting to note that the female Tit can sing as well as the male.

The Tufted Titmouse has four distinct notes, the one usually heard being the whistle already referred to—a loud, clear "peto, peto, peto," the notes being repeated from three to seven times, usually four or five. This is occasionally varied but the intonation is essentially the same. Another note frequently heard is a "sic-a-dee," something like that of the Chickadee, though noticeably louder. They also have a third, a low-murmured "dee-dee-dee," which I have only heard

at the nest or in the near vicinity of the same. The last, but not least use to which their vocal chords are put is a distinct, snake-like hiss uttered by the female when the nest is threatened.

Never shy, they admit of close observation and may be studied profitably.

As I desire here to record the finding of several of their nests, I must pass over various other of their characteristics. The period of nesting extends in this locality from April to June, but one brood being reared. Usually about April 15th they may be observed peeking into holes in search of possible nesting sites. In this matter they are not easy to please, and will soon weary the ornithologist who attempts to trace them home.

Despite the fact that the birds are common, they are adepts at hiding their homes, and during the period from 1902 until the present season, I have found but three nests.

No. 1 was discovered early in June, 1903, at Oak Lane, Phila. Co., Pa., and was built seven feet above the ground behind the loosened bark of a large dead Oak tree, the bird entering through a crack in the bark. This was well within woodland and on a hill about 75 yards from a stream. The nest was well defined, being made of fine bark strips, small pieces of rags and lined entirely with fur that had evidently once adorned some rug. It held at this date seven full fledged young, which scrambled out when an inquisitive finger was inserted. Both birds came close by and were very solicituous.

No. 2. Three years elapsed from the finding of the above recorded nest till another was discovered, often though I observed the birds. On the twenty-fourth of May, 1906, I was passing through a piece of woodland some two hundred yards distant from

Nest No. 1, when I was attracted by a low, peculiar "dee, dee, dee." quite different from any note I had previously heard. In a moment I had traced the sound to a Tit at the entrance of its nest. A large catalpa tree leaned over the creek at this point at an angle of 45 degrees, and up about fifteen feet, directly over the water and on the upper side of the trunk was a knot hole. The bird was at the entrance to this and in the act of placing some morsel in the bill of his mate within. In a moment I was on my way up the trunk with my eyes glued to the hole. Each moment I expected the female to leave, but in this I underestimated her courage. Looking within I was greeted with her peculiar hiss, but as she sat close, and I was unable to insert my hand in the small cavity, the contents were a mystery. Ten minutes later I had succeeded in borrowing a hatchet from the shanty of a gentleman of color and was again at the tree. The cavity was soon enlarged and I inserted my hand. All this time the female remained on the nest amid the storm of falling chips. On seeing my hand, however, she concluded that it was time to act and she went at me bill and claws. I was hoping for a set of eggs, but imagine my disappointment when I finally discovered the contents to be one newly hatched young bird, six hatching eggs and an unfertile one. This I took and left the anxious birds in possession of their home. I paid several visits to the place after this and learned that the young were fed to a large extent on larvae. They left the nest just eleven days after the eggs were hatched.

Nest No. 3. As I had spent some time in vain search for them the preceding year, I began to wonder whether I should ever succeed in discovering a nest with eggs. However, on

April 17th, I spent the day at Tinicum, Delaware Co., Pa., and while there I observed a Tit fly with a beak full of fur into a hole some 30 feet up an Oak tree. My only other find on this day was a fine set of five eggs of the Fish Crow, but I was well content and eagerly awaited developments. On May 10th I was on hand with a small pocket axe and speedily ascended the tree. On reaching the hole no bird was observed and some time was spent in meditating whether it was advisable to chop out the nest without further evidence. I decided to run the risk, however, and in a few minutes I was enabled to insert my hand. An electric thrill ran through my body for the reward was there—eggs, six beauties and perfectly fresh. At last my desires were rewarded, my hopes realized, and I possessed a set of the Crested Titmouse.

The nest was built, as I have said, 30 feet up in a Swamp Oak and on the upper side of a limb extending diagonally over a pool of water. The entrance to the nest was a knot hole scarcely large enough for the bird to squeeze through. The nest proper was built nine inches back and was constructed of skeleton leaves, plant fibres, etc., and lined entirely with fur and hair, chiefly rabbit, but quite an amount of cows hair was also included in the composition. The cavity was well defined. Neither of the birds were about this nest, from which I infer that one more egg, at least, would have been laid.

Perchance I have wearied some reader, but owing to the fact that little has been published as regarding this obviously common species, I have deemed it advisable to give full data.

The eggs of this species are very handsome, frequently being heavily spotted and rarely blotched with brilliant reddish brown. Outside of their

beauty they are one of the special desiderata of collectors about Philadelphia, and personally collected sets are not at all common.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

### Some New Year's Day Observations

#### In Southwestern Indiana.

The following list of creatures were seen abroad and stirring:

Angle-worms., a grasshopper, ants, frogs (croaking) and the following birds: Bluebird, Bewick's Wren, Carolina Wren, Cardinal, Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Meadow-lark, American Goldfinch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Blue Jay, American Crow, Slate-colored Junco, Belted Kingfisher, Red-tailed Hawk, Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch. That's twenty-three birds, and now I will do likewise.

23 for me.

Cornelius F. Posson.

Vincennes, Ind.

#### A Late Nest of Song Sparrow.

While out walking last year, August 7th, I flushed a Song Sparrow from a hay stack, and after a short search I found its nest, which contained four badly incubated eggs. The nest was made entirely of horse hair, and was placed about six inches back in the stack. On coming there three days later, I found that the eggs were hatched. This time the birds were absolutely fearless, and the sitting bird allowed me to touch her with my hand. Is this not an unusual nesting site for this bird?

Yours respectfully,  
ISAAC VAN KAMMEN.  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Mr. Ernest H. Short:—

Dear Sir.—I thought that the following would be of interest to you:

A friendly White-throated Sparrow, *Zonotrichia albicollis*. On May 4, 1907, I went to Romstadt on a collecting trip, about seven or eight miles from this city (Toledo, O.) During the day I took a male White-throated Sparrow and placed it in a cone in my collecting box, supposing it to be dead. Imagine my surprise upon opening the box the next day to have the bird fly out, all around the room and into the hall. I tried to catch it, but in vain, until I resorted to a landing net which I had handy. Examination proved that the bird was not seriously wounded, so I set him out on a branch of an old apple tree in the back yard. At first it seemed dazed by its freedom, then it hopped up a little higher and began to peep a little, and then louder and more often. I concealed myself to watch results. In about a half hour I noticed another sparrow in the tree. This was a female White-throat. She at first kept at a distance but as he continued his calling she went up to him and coaxed him to hop higher where it was safer, and finally to leave the tree altogether. Although fast recovering, it was several days before he had completely regained his strength. This female remained with him all the while. Two days afterwards I came upon this wounded bird and his nurse, as I called the female. I made believe to try to catch him and immediately the female threw herself on the ground and shammed being wounded so badly that she could hardly keep from under my feet. I allowed her to lead me thus the whole length of the yard, whereupon she took wing and went directly back to the wounded bird. I repeated this twice with the same result. This bit of kind-heartedness on the part of a strange bird set me to thinking. I wondered if it often happened in wild life. It could not have been possible that the female was his mate, for I had taken him fully seven miles away.

Yours truly,  
A. C. READ.



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The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1st will be dropped.

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VOL. XXV. No. 4.

ALBION, N. Y., APRIL, 1908.

WHOLE No. 249

## Take Notice.

Examine the number following your name on the wrapper of this month's Oologist. It denotes when your subscription expired or will expire.

Remember we must be notified if you wish paper discontinued and all arrearages must be paid.

209 your subscription expired Dec. 1904  
248 your subscription expires with this issue  
267 Dec., 1908

Intermediate numbers can easily be determined. If we have you credited wrong we wish to rectify.

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Content to see the birds in magazines,  
Content to set and read of them till late,  
Content to learn what other "bird-men"  
know,  
Rather than venture through the drifts of  
snow.

But spring has come, the real bird days are  
here,  
The naturalist wakes up and looks around,  
The chirps, and songs, and twitters far and  
near,  
Are to his listening ears a joyful sound;  
With field-glass, note-book, box and camera  
too,  
He sallies forth to meet his bird friends true.

High in the air the quack of ducks is heard,  
(A flock has lingered far behind the rest)  
And looking where a clump of brush has  
stirred,  
We get a glimpse of Towhee at his best;  
To Water-Thrush, and Chat and sly Cuckoo,  
We're glad to give a welcome warm and true.

And when the evening shadows close around,  
And warn us that the first bird day is done,  
We heave a sigh and wend our homeward  
way,  
And vainly wonder where the time has gone;  
Of all the days that make the year we say,  
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 4.

ALBION, N. Y. APR., 1908.

WHOLE NO. 249

## THE OÖLOGIST,

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### ALONG THE ARNASAS PASS.

The Aransas Pass is a territory located some seventy miles Northwest of San Antonio, Texas, and has the greatest elevation of any spot in the United States for so southern a point. I spent January to March of this year

in what appeared to be a little portion of Colorado or New Mexico which had been transplanted in this southwestern part of Texas. The altitude was greater than that in any other part of the state—far above what might be expected of Texas.

The country abounded in creeks and rivulets, and it was at a stage, or part of the year when many of the bird residents were ones which have their homes in the northern portions of the United States. Birds from both east and west of the Mississippi River were found wintering there. The Gray-tailed Cardinal, Baird's Wren, Southern Downy Woodpecker seemed to enjoy loitering about the yard at the place where I was stopping. Among the brush piles and thickets the Slate-colored Junco, Towhee, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Robin, and Myrtle Warbler could be seen at any time.

In striking contrast to these species one could note various birds that were strictly Western, such as the Western forms of the Lark Sparrow, Meadow Lark, Williamson's Sapsucker and Lark Bunting.

Not a Thrasher, save the Mocking Bird wintered in the community, although the mountain sides and elevated pastures were full of what I took to be nests of this family, and certain sparrows.

The accompanying illustration with so prominent a bluff was a typical refuge for the Western Horned Owl, Turkey and Black Vulture. The little Texan Kingfisher darted up and down this place, and its flights were

almost as rapid as those of a Hummer.

Although there was no verdure in evidence during February save such as the Juniper and Live Oak, a great many migrants seemed to arrive from the South at an earlier date than usual, because of the mild winter.

In early March I observed a Black Vulture emerging from a hollow among immense boulders( and after crawling through a space only large enough to permit admittance for a man of shadowy appearance), I found the eggs deposited on the bare rocks at a distance of some fourteen feet from the entrance, and in almost absolute darkness. A week or so later while scaling a perpendicular cliff on the border of a stream, I found under the shelter of a small crevice, a Turkey Vulture's nest, showing that she was unusually early with the duties of incubation. A Duck Hawk had her nest on a little shelf over-hanging the water, and had resorted to the same spot annually. It was a typicalerie, and contained four eggs, by the twentieth of March.

While riding along the trails I was afforded an opportunity for the first time, of witnessing the manouvers of a Road Runner, and eventually located a nest of this bird in a juniper growing parallel with a winding road. In construction, the nest reminded me of a Mourning Dove's, but of course much larger.

Referring to illustration in last month's Oologist, this was one of the many brambles from which the Mexican Wild Turkeys sallied forth shortly after sun-up, and their coarse gobble was often uttered in response to the gobble of a domestic turkey, and not infrequently the Wild Turkeys would be found mingled among the tame ones close to the ranch houses, particularly during the months of February and March when

this polygamous bird is mating with several birds of the opposite sex. The tame birds act as great decoys at certain seasons of the year, when they are attracted to within easy gun range, simply by the notes, which to the human ear seem different entirely, from those of the wild fowl, and yet, this is the only way in which the wary game bird can be secured by the gunner.

In as immense hilly pasture the turkeys ventured forth in the vicinity of one conspicuous point, and prospects were quite bright for an oological find. Great growths of briers, algalita and scrub oak made progress quite laborious, but I eventually disclosed a large nest containing thirteen fresh eggs under the shelter of a fallen tree. The eggs were surrounded and almost covered with down and feathers, and reminded one of a Wild Duck's abode. This was my best take while in the Aransas Pass region, and I was obliged to return North at a period when many of the breeders in that vicinity were just returning, and the Pinon Jays, Red-tailed, and Swainson's Hawk were exhibiting signs of nidification.

Gerard Allen Abbott.

Chicago, Ill.

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### Great Blue Heron.

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In Sept., '07 issue, Mr. C. S. Thompson refers to Mr. Peabody's letter on the measurements of eggs of the Gt. Blue Heron.

As the eggs are so common in collections, I did not think the size of the eggs would be of much interest to collectors, but find there is some desire to know how the eggs vary in size according to locality.

I have 17 sets of Gt. Blue Heron in my collection, nearly all taken in Delaware. They lay five eggs as a

rule, sometimes six when the sets are complete.

They build here in large oak trees about 80 feet from the ground.

I have measured six sets and they run as follows: 2.52 x 1.79, 2.50 x 1.80, 2.45 x 1.74, 2.55 x 1.82, 2.59 x 1.79, 2.56 x 1.81—aver. 2.53 x 1.79; 2.76 x 1.75, 2.79 x 1.78, 2.76 x 1.80, 2.84 x 1.78, 2.80 x 1.78, 2.80 x 1.81—aver. 2.79 x 1.78; 2.37 x 1.78, 2.54 x 1.75, 2.54 x 1.80, 2.54 x 1.78, 2.54 x 1.78—aver. 2.51 x 1.78; 2.70 x 1.69, 2.78 x 1.65, 2.70 x 1.70, 2.65 x 1.64, 2.66 x 1.65—aver. 2.69 x 1.67; 2.63 x 1.80, 2.72 x 1.78, 2.72 x 1.80, 2.72 x 1.80, 2.55 x 1.84,—aver. 2.67 x 1.80; 2.37 x 1.70, 2.52 x 1.76, 2.50 x 1.77, 2.65 x 1.75, 2.52 x 1.75—aver. 2.69 x 1.75. Aver. for six sets, 2.61 x 1.76.

From the above it would appear that Mr. Davie's average of 2.50 x 1.50 was away off.

My longest egg is 2.84 and narrowest 1.64.

Full sets can be found here about April 20th, when they lay their first brood; the second brood is laid in May.

Why the Northern birds lay larger eggs than the Southern I do not know, as I have none from the South.

[I dont think they do. The contrary is probably correct.—Ed.]

My friend, Mr. Crispin and I have taken in the last few years in New Jersey and Delaware, a great many eggs of the Gt. Blue Heron. A great many of these were broken for various reasons. We have one rookery in Delaware that we intend to protect, as their nesting sites are fast being broken up by woodsmen.

E. J. DARLINGTON.

Editor Oologist.

Dear Sir:—In The Oologist for March, 1907, Mr. Richard Miller has recorded the suppositious finding of a nest of the Carolina Chickadee in

Philadelphia county, Pennsylvania, years ago. He gives the record as unique; stating, by the way, that he made it "before (he) began to keep a note-book." Inferentially, then, it was also before he began to verify his findings. One cannot but regret the chronicling of doubtful instances like this; even in a journal which does not aim at critical exactness. (Much the same sort of inexact observation is instanced in The Condor for January, 1908, wherein a well-known observer cites the Arkansas Kingbird (Western King Bird), as nesting, one pair near the top of an adobe bluff, "in a little cavity;" the other "on the end of the ridge-pole of (a) cabin." Now, in the two cases here given, the birds in question were, beyond the vestige of a doubt, just Say Phoeebes. The Western Kingbird has never been proven to nest in this manner; which is, however, thoroughly normal with the Say Phoebe.

#### As to "Albino" Marsh Wren Eggs."

It is incomprehensible that any person, whatsoever, of the least experience in collecting, should confuse, under any conceivable circumstances, the nests and the eggs of our two American Marsh Wrens. In the first place, the nests of the short-bill are always, (normally), on dryer ground; are invariably made of dry materials; with exteriors almost always of dry grasses, only. As for the eggs: the most perfectly-albinistic eggs imaginable of the Long-billed Marsh Wren would most certainly be found to be of a cream-color; while the eggs of the Short-bill are invariably dead-white. As for shapes there is nothing "diagnostic." As most people know, the eggs of the Long-bill tend to rounded contours. Contrariwise, the eggs of its cousin average to be



Nesting Site of Turkey and Black Vultures.  
Photo by Abbott. Taken in Aransas Pass, Texas.  
See companion photo in March issue.)

markedly ovate; being thus, in both shape and color, just like liliputian examples of normal eggs of a Leghorn hen. All this, however, one side: If it be worth while to collect at all is particularly worth while to verify all one's findings. The time thus spent will be found invariably fruitful in the acquisition of new elements of knowledge; and in delightful experiences. To say nothing as to the essential differences in size, form and color between the two marsh-wren forms one need but to contrast the blithe, light and crisp "Chip-chipper-chee-chee-chee" of the upland-meadow-frequenting short-bill with the more raucous and deliberate notes of his fellow of the cat-tails.

P. B. PEABODY.

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#### Another Odd Nesting Site.

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Seeing the article in The "Oologist" by Richard C. Harlow, "The Crested Flycatcher on Strange Grounds," reminds me of an experience I had.

I was going across a plowed field one hot day last summer and stopped under a small Locust tree for shade, while talking to the negro plowman. On leaning heavily against the tree I was surprised to hear the familiar call of the Crested Flycatcher, and looking up to see where the call had come from, noticed a tin can hanging on the stub of a limb some three feet above my head. As the can was slightly swaying, I decided to investigate, and on reaching the ground with the can found a well made nest and five fresh eggs of the Crested Flycatcher. The negro plowman informed me that he had hung the can there some two weeks before, while plowing that part of the field, so work must have commenced in short order. The can was twelve inches long by four

by six, and while hanging on the stub of limb the bottom was slightly lower than the mouth, which was entirely open, although close to the tree trunk, thus making the entrance mostly concealed. The date was May 29th, quite late for them to have fresh eggs in this locality, and as one in a can was quite a novelty, kept this as a show addition to my collection. The nest contained the usual amount of snake skin.

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#### Spotted Robin's Eggs.

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In several years of collecting and bird observation in Fulton county, I have only found one set of eggs of the American Robin that were marked in any way whatsoever.

On May 19, 1904, Alan Wright and I, while out for a walk south of Gloversville, N. Y., discovered a robin's nest in a willow tree, two feet above the ground. The nest was perfectly normal, both in size and construction, but the eggs, three in number, were immediately noticeable because of their unusual appearance. They were typically 'robin's egg' blue in ground color, quite heavily spotted and blotched about the larger end with a peculiar shade of olive brown. The set was a trifle smaller in size than the average, the eggs measuring: (1) 1.03 x .77 in.; (2) 1.01 x .78 in.; (3) 1.03 x .75 in. The female bird was flushed directly from the nest, so that mistake as to identity is impossible. I would be very glad to hear more about this phase of the robin's economy.

CHAS. P. ALEXANDER.

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#### An Egg of the California Vulture Compared with Those of Other Vultures.

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Eggs of Cathartidae are unusually handsome; the present example being no exception to the rule.

The shape is elongate, tapering evenly and gradually toward the smaller end, being long in proportion to its width. Others that I have examined were not different in this respect. The color is plain grayish-white with a faint greenish tinge as seen in some eggs of the Mallard Duck. On looking through the shell, toward the light, the color appears almost copperas. The surface is decidedly glossed, finely and evenly pitted over the entire shell, except in one small tract at the larger end where the pittings are so crowded as to resemble a blotch. About the smaller end are a few scattered shell-warts, slightly paler than the general surface, but bearing the same glossed appearance.

The color and outline being so plain makes this one of the neatest and most attractive eggs in my whole collection.

The exact measurements are 4.37 x 2.63. Nestling beside it is a magnificent egg of the Andes Condor carrying these dimensions, 4.52 x 2.69.

The color is creamy-white, with not the slightest trace of greenish; while quite generally over the surface are scattered blotches of pale lavender or bran color, partaking of creaminess of the ground plan. The surface is also pitted but not so finely as in the former, and this pitting has more of a scarred appearance, and the gloss, though far less apparent, is present. There are a few shell warts about the larger end.

This egg is splendidly shaped, but is more rotund or even bulging. On looking over these fine samples of eggs, one can but wish that the behests of nature had been accomplished in them.

How small in comparison with these giants do the eggs of our common vultures appear! Although in beauty

of coloration the latter are not at all behind. My series of Catharts Aura and Catharista Urubu are very complete and extensive, and it may be said that in point of beauty they are not excelled by the series of eggs of the Golden Eagle in which the markings are unusually choice.

Measurements of 26 eggs of C. Urubu give an average of 3.01 x 2.01, while the series of C. Aura averages 2.88 x 1.90, the eggs being less tapering than the former; the coloration being more evenly distributed over the surface and averaging heavier; many having a reddish "blush" making them decidedly rich in appearance.

Some sets are indistinguishable from the former. In C. urubu many eggs are almost plain white, one being entirely so. Usually the markings predominate at the larger end; a few are wreathed fine, dark pencil lines as delicate as on an oriole's egg. Some have delicate, dark-brown specks and splashes on a very clear ground. One has the shape and appearance of a gull's egg. Another resembles a murre's egg. Those which were fresh when taken are exceedingly delicate in color, contrasts and the tendency to an elongated outline makes them a strikingly desirable series. Eggs of both the latter species are glossed to some extent and the pitting is very faint.

J. W. PRESTON,  
Spokane, Wash.

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Dear Mr. Short:—

Many have been the discussions on the ability of Owls to see by day-light, and as I was interested in this matter, I thought the best way to solve the problem for myself, at least, was to test it personally. So one clear, sunny day last September, I invaded an old apple orchard, where the cavities in the trees furnished many hiding

places for the Screech Owl. It was not long before I had pulled a sleepy, half-dead looking Owl from the depth of a hole, and took him to an open space near the middle of the orchard. I tossed him gently into the air. He went up with closed wings, but when he started down his wings shot out, and he started circling the orchard. Suddenly he dove straight for a narrow hole in one of the trees, and, closing his wings just before reaching the opening, he slid through smoothly and was gone. This was on a bright day, with the sun shining brilliantly. This at least seems to show that the Screech Owl's power of sight by day is not so weak as is thought by many people.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. HARROWER.

From Ashtabula Co., Ohio.

After reading in the Oologist so many articles from different parts of the country on birds and bird life I am persuaded to take up my pen and send a few sketches of my own observation on ornithology in this county. In all I have identified 120 species of birds here. Although I am told there are 125 species here. Be that as it may I have seen but the 120 and many of these are not known to nest here. Of the birds of prey we have a good supply numbering about 20 species in all. Of these 20 species the American Barn Owl is the greatest rarity. I have never known of but two specimens of this interesting bird being taken in this county, one of which is in my collection, and is a fine specimen. Next on the list of rare raptors is the Snowy Owl (*nyctea*) in 1905 they put in their appearance in November which is the earliest I have ever known of their being here. Four specimens of this noble bird were taken near here last season, the

first in November and the last the later part of January. Of the Heron family we have the great blue, the green, the black-crowned Night Heron, American bittern and least bittern.

This summer bird lovers had the pleasure of seeing the Great White Heron about the water of Grand river. This bird has not been seen in this part of the State before. I saw one on several occasions and at one time saw three about a pond.

We have comparatively few game birds. The quail and the grouse are nearly all gone, in spite of strict game laws and shrewd game wardens which is a good thing, but for all that these birds do not seem to increase as winter is their worst foe. If this finds its way in print I will soon tell you about a learned game warden.

S. V. Wharram.

I recorded a wood thrush in a piece of woods in the vicinity of Greenport on Nov. 28th, Thanksgiving day. I believe that this is about six weeks later than usual for eastern Long Island. As far as I can learn the 14th of October is their latest appearance.

Very truly yours,

L. Is., N. Y.

K. B. Squires.

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#### TAVERN CURIOS.

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#### Great Auk's Egg Fetches a Beggary Price.

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Part of the world-famous curio collection removed from the Edinburgh Castle tavern, London, England, owing to the recent death of its proprietor, Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, was offered for sale yesterday at Messrs. Debenham, Storr and Sons' rooms. Such a strange mixture of objects has seldom been seen in a London sale-room, and many sightseers gathered to watch the celebrated Great Auk's

Egg, which was bought for the record price of 300 guineas, and other wonders, come to the hammer. The auctioneer, however, experienced the utmost difficulty in getting bids for some of the treasures on which their late owner had set such store, and they were knocked down at beggarly prices.

By the time the ornithological and natural history collection was reached bidders appeared to have overcome the reluctance to bid, which made the earlier stages of the sale so tedious, but with regard to prices they remained unrepentant. Only ten shillings was offered for a valuable stuffed gorilla, while a fine specimen of the blue-faced monkey changed hands for 3s. less. A whole case of tropical birds of brilliant plumage went for £8 8s.

As 2 o'clock, the time announced for the sale of the Great Auk's Egg, approached, the room rapidly filled, but it was half-past the hour before the most remarkable feature of the sale was reached. The late Mr. Middlebrook made a quiet corner in auk's eggs during his lifetime, and from an average of about £75 the price of this, his finest specimen, had risen to the record sum of £315 (\$1512.00), when he purchased it by auction in 1899. Yesterday, as was expected, there was a considerable slump in value, the last bid being £110 (\$528.00).

An egg of the *Æpyornis* sold for £30 (\$144.00).

T. REED,

London, England.



OUR NATIONAL FLAG.

The official flag of the United States bears forty-five stars (one for each state) in a blue field, arranged in six rows—the first, third and fifth rows having eight stars each, the alternate even rows having seven stars each. The garrison flag of the army is made of bunting, thirty-six feet fly and twenty feet hoist; thirteen stripes, and in the upper quarter, next the staff, is the field or "union" of stars, equal to the number of states, on blue field, over one-third length of the flag, extending to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top. The storm flag is twenty feet by ten feet, and the recruiting flag nine feet nine inches by four feet four inches. The American "Jack" is the union or blue field of the flag. The Revenue Marine Service flag, authorized by Act of Congress, March 2, 1799, was originally prescribed to "consist of sixteen perpendicular stripes, alternate red and white, the union of the ensign bearing the arms of the United States in dark blue on a white field." The sixteen stripes represented the number of states which had been admitted to the Union at that time, and no change has been made since. Prior to 1871 it bore an eagle in the union of the pennant, which was then substituted by thirteen stars in a white field, but the eagle and stars are still retained.

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The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1st will be dropped.

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VOL. XXV. No. 5.

ALBION, N. Y., MAY, 1908.

WHOLE No. 250

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At the close of the season I shall have for exchange a rare lot of eggs. Many Arctic taken sets, vultures and hawks. Send your lists before disposing of your stocks. All the older collectors remember. J. W. PRESTON, 1411 13th Ave., Spokane, Wash.  
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. · No. 5.

ALBION, N. Y. MAY, 1908.

WHOLE No. 250

## THE OÖLOGIST,

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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### Pileated Woodpecker.

In April, 1907 while walking through the wood of North Boston Erie Co., N. Y., we discovered the trunk of a beech tree, about ten feet high, which bore the unmistakable evidence of having been the object of attack of a power-

ful bird. On investigation, it was found that the tree had been excavated and cut away in several places, forming hollows more than a foot deep. At the foot of the tree was heaped a mound of chips of the wood, some of which were of considerable size.

A work of this kind was obviously beyond the reach of any of the common woodpeckers, and it was, therefore, evident that it had been done by the Pileated Woodpecker, a bird which is extremely rare in this locality. Shortly after the discovery of the tree the birds were seen. The male was heard calling in the woods a short distance away and identified, but unfortunately a working train was on a side-track of a railroad, and on Sundays the Italians were out shooting at every bird they came across. The Pileated Woodpeckers were undoubtedly shot. The bird is very large, about 18 inches long and more than two feet from tip to tip of wing. The general color is a dull black, the side of the neck and breast being white, with a slight yellow tinge. The conspicuous feature is the red crest which stands up boldly on the top of the head. This bird, while comparatively common at one time throughout the northern hemisphere, is one of the first to disappear with the clearing away of the forests in advance of civilization.

The woodpeckers are a very interesting family of birds, presenting a number of features in common, among which are the hard powerful bills, capable of cutting away very solid



Pileated Woodpecker.  
Cut Kindly Loaned by Buffalo "Sunday Express."

material, and the fact that the toes are arranged two in front and two behind, instead of three in front and one behind, as is the case, with most birds. They commonly feed on the larvae which live in the trees just beneath the bark and possess wonderful instinct in determining the burrows of these creatures, making a hole through the bark at the precise spot through which their long barbed tongue must be inserted to draw out the grub into their mouth.

The largest of the family is the Ivory-billed, so called from the color of the beak. This bird is now practically extinct.

The Woodpeckers are of inestimable value to the farmers, in keeping down the insect pests that are so destructive to our forests. The pair of Woodpeckers at work on the beech tree shown in the picture were in search of the larvae of the horn-tail, a very destructive insect. All of the work shown on this tree was done in the space of a few days by these birds.

Owing to this fact, the tree was of great interest, as proving the enormous strength of this bird, as well as its presence in this locality. For this reason arrangements were made to cut it down, bring it to Buffalo and place it in the room of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, where it can be seen by all interested.

O. REINECKE.

---

#### PREPARATION OF BIRD SKINS.

Having ventured, in the Issue of the Oologist for March, last( to take up the cudgels in behalf of greater care, among younger students, in the matter of identifications, I now add a few suggestions for the benefit of those to whom some, at least, of the book suggestions and directions for making up bird skins, may have left much unsaid:

One should be careful to learn, early in his career as a bird-killer, exactly the killing and the tearing power of a given charge of powder and shot. This care, observed in the field, will usually result in a minimum of birds blown to pieces and, on the other hand, in a maximum of birds secured. It is hard to say which could be cause of the greater chagrin: to have a rare bird shot out of all semblance by a too-near shot; or to see escape some bird of no intrinsic value, of itself, and which hence would have done just as well if badly shot-up,—which yet, in its escaping, has left unarticulated a unique nesting record,—not, mind you, merely for a single State; but for the entire Union!

Few beginners know how wonderful a help to clean work, in taxidermy, is to be found in the use of soft, absorbent newspaper. Fat is the great enemy of this craft; and it must be removed, and removed often, bit by bit, with most overmastering patience if the bird on which one is working is to have any scientific or aesthetic value. (But I have forgotten to measure my bird. So, indeed, has the other fellow. The three greater measurements, Wing, Length and Extent, are matters of obligation. And let us remember; that quarter-inches measure not, definitively. Who knows but that some day, a series of one hundredth-inch niceties may evolve, somewhere, another of Dr. Dwight's satirically nick-named "millimeter" races.)

One common default in bird-skin preparation lies in scantiness, or lack, of poison. The nasal cavity, while it ought to receive especial treatment often receives, in point of fact, scarcely any. The preservative should be carefully worked in to the nares. It should also be thoroughly crammed into the bases of the tail feathers.

In making the skin it is a great



Tree Showing Work of Pileated Woodpecker, near Buffalo, N. Y.  
Courtesy of O. Reinecke.  
Cut Kindly Loaned by Buffalo "Sunday Express."

help to tie together the two ulnar wing-bones that are allowed to remain. The connecting thread should approximate the normal distance in the natural bird. I have found the very best method of the shaping of the skin to lie in the use of a narrow band of paper pinned into a cylinder the normal girth of the bird's body. The object of making the cylinder narrow is to admit of the grooming of the entire plumage into normal shape.

Under no conceivable circumstances ought birds of any size to be made up without a re-inforcing of the neck. For this purpose the older ornithologists used to use small sticks or splints. The invariable result of such use, ancient or modern, is a stiff-necked specimen. (Perhaps Dille will deny this). My own way,—which may not prove helpful to others,—is to use annealed wire,—copper wire, when to be had. This is prepared for insertion thus:

After the smooth, moderately-compressed body of cotton is ready, the section of wire, which is cut about three-fourths the length of the bird, has a loop made at one end. This loop is closed down upon the neck-piece of cotton; which, at the front end, has been rolled over and over upon itself until, as held compressed by the forceps, it may be squeezed into the skull-cavity. As inserted, this entire contraption lies with the wire below the cotton. The body is now inserted; set not too far forward; the neck cotton is flattened out; the wire is drawn backward until the bird-neck is just the right length; and the "slack" end of the wire is then looped, and bent tightly over the back end of the body-cotton. One who had never tried this method of setting and making rigid the limp skin of a bird of medium or small size could form no idea of the immense

help in the shaping which results from the use of the wire, in the neck-cotton: (to say nothing of the strengthening of the neck.) To illustrate the value of this neck reinforcing I will repeat here a story as told to me, one day, over our hot weiners, (in Mrs. Dille's absence), by F. M. D., himself: with a merry twinkle in his eyes:

We had a mutual correspondent; a man than whom no living mortal can make better bird skins. Truly, they are better shaped than the birds, themselves. But he uses no neck-strengthenener. One day, in order triumphantly to confute F. M. D., in the latter's spirited defence of the neck-stick, he sent to his Denver friend a valuable skin, made up without neck-re-inforcing. It arrived with the neck broken. And now P. B. P. and F. M. D. are most thoroughly agreed on at least one point.

Very few preparers of bird skin pay the right sort of attention to the shaping of the eyelids. About five per cent. of the skins one sees have too much cotton in the eyes; and pretty nearly ninety per cent. don't begin to have enough. Moreover, the same is true,—only more so,—with the shaping of the throat. A big proportion of the skins have the goitre; while another big share have the consumption. A very neat trick,—though not an easy one,—by the way,—is to introduce into the throat, after the skin is made, just enough cotton, placed in just such a way as that, when the skin dries and shrinks, the throat will be naturally rounded. Just here comes in another trick: After the throat cotton is placed, why not close the mandibles, and keep them closed, by inserting a pin at the ramus of the lower mandible; and running it up into the nares? In a few hours this pin may be withdrawn; its quick and effective and neat use, in

the meantime, proving a boon, indeed, to the previously perplexed manipulator.

A hint about tags: None more fit could be devised than those recommended to the writer by Dr. Bishop of New Haven. They are made of tough, thin linen. They are about three-fourths of an inch wide and about three inches long. (By caliper measure I find; that they are exactly .55 x 2.82 inches). On these slips are neatly printed certain detail outlines; which are immensely helpful to the busy preparator.

One closing suggestion I would fain print in display capitals; and set, over and over again, in endless repetition, on every page of a whole issue of the Oologist: In making any record, in the making of ALL records,

Last year the writer had occasion to go over a parcel of skins,—a few of them rich in suggestion and local interest, that were taken by him in Rice county, Minnesota, and in Manitou Park, Colorado, thirty, odd, years ago. With few exceptions these skins had all to be re-labelled; chiefly because the ink originally used had faded: some of it, utterly so. A powerful reading glass, onl, made it possible to transcribe and to preserve, the precious data. The shape of the tags used, moreover, was bad, in most cases, beyond portrayal. In replacing then, those old odd, clumsy and much-in-the-way labels, with their long, dangling, tangling concomitants of string, the neat, narrow Bishop-style tags were neatly fastened to the crossed juncture of the tarsi of the skins; just enough of the connecting thread being left between the tag and juncture to enable the student to examine the tag favorably. Only strong silk was used; of a size not too large. The combined result made some of the skins in question,—they being

strictly 'prentice work,'—look bum, enough. But one had the satisfaction of knowing that, under any probable set of conditions, the data for those skins will be just as legible to my grandsons,—if I should have any,—as they are to myself, today.

Pardon one more preachment: the very hardest thing, the most tantalizing slow thing, about the making of bird skins, will always be the shaping. Here acquired skill will always set its mark. And no student who aspires to do the very best possible work will ever weary in his well-doing, herein, until his work will pass muster, anywhere. To illustrate what a conscientious perseveringness can accomplish, in these directions, I will say that I have, among the first skins for which I ever exchanged, a few that were prepared by T. E. Slevin of San Francisco. It was among his very first work, I imagine; and it would be hard to find poorer made skins. But, am I not glad, today, that I did not follow up a rather recent impulse, born of accrued criticalness, and burn those skins. For, among the large mass of material left extant by Mr. Slevin, in his dying, are skins in large number that are wonderfully marked for their fastidiously dainty and perfect shaping. And thereby, my fellow boys, there hangs a moral.

P. B. PEABODY.

Livermore, Iowa, April 20, 1908.

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#### THE NEXT WORLD'S FAIR.

Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition at Seattle, in 1909, Now Claims Attention—Management Surprises Country by Not Asking for Government Aid—Its Progress to Date.

By Frank L. Herrick.

Now that the Jamestown Ter-Centennial Exposition has closed, all eyes

are turned toward the next great world's fair, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition which will be held at Seattle, Washington, opening June 1 and closing October 15, 1909.

This exposition will be held in a section of the country where world's fairs are new and for that and many other reasons it is expected to be a success, beneficially, educationally, artistically and financially.

Work on the grounds and buildings of the exposition is well under way and the management is determined to have everything in readiness by opening day. This has been written about all expositions in late years, but the promise has never been completely fulfilled. The officials of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, however, have started out with a completed-on-opening-day idea above everything else, and if they do not carry out their plans it will not be because western energy has not been expended in the task.

The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition promises to be different from former world's fairs in many ways, but one policy stands out so far above any of the rest that the entire press of the country is commenting favorably about it. No money will be asked from Uncle Sam to carry on the work! That policy must be conceded as original. All the management desires is for the United States government to participate in the same manner as foreign countries and the different states, by erecting buildings and installing exhibits therein. Former expositions have been aided by the government in many different ways. Outright gifts of large sums of money have been made by Congress to some world's fairs, while others have negotiated loans from Uncle Sam, some of which were paid back and some of which were not. Some expositions have received both donations and

loans. As stated before, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition will ask for neither. A clause pledging this policy has been inserted in the congressional bill making provision for participation only by Uncle Sam.

Since the United States government began to patronize expositions down to the Jamestown fair, Congress has appropriated a total of \$28,752,251 for world's fairs. Only \$485,000 of this money has been spent west of the Rocky Mountains, the Lewis and Clark exposition, one of the most successful ever held, receiving the benefit of that amount.

The bill that has been introduced at the present session of Congress provides an appropriation of \$1,175,000 to enable Uncle Sam to take advantage of the opportunity for effective advertising. The money will be apportioned as follows:

	Buildings	Exhibit
Government .....	\$200,000	\$350,000
Alaska .....	100,000	200,000
Philippines .....	75,000	75,000
Hawaii .....	50,000	75,000
Fisheries .....	50,000	*

\* The fisheries exhibit is included in the general government display.

On June 1, last before a crowd of fifteen thousand persons, ground breaking ceremonies were held, with many prominent men making addresses, among whom was Hon. John Barrett, director of the International Bureau of American Republics, representing President Roosevelt. From that date to the present time work has been going on rapidly upon the exposition grounds. Most of the grading and clearing has been finished. All of the principal roadways, avenues, circles and plazas have been completed. The Administration Building has been erected and occupied by the executive force for several months. Contracts have been let for the construction of five large buildings and several small ones. Among these are the

Manufactures building, Agriculture building, Auditorium, Palace of Fine Arts and Machinery Hall. The three later buildings will be permanent structures, built of buff brick with terra cotta trimmings. The "A-Y-P," as it is sometimes called in Seattle, will differ again from some former fairs in that some of its exhibit palaces will be permanent structures. The grounds are located on the property of the Washington University, a state institution, and after the exposition is over the permanent buildings and those substantially built will be taken over by the college to be used for educational purposes.

The purpose of the exposition, which is to exploit Alaska and Yukon and the countries bordering on the Pacific Ocean, is receiving much favorable comment throughout the country.

E. H. Short, Rochester, N. Y.,

Dear Sir:—While collecting to-day I made an interesting little find which, I thought, might interest some of your "Oologist" readers.

It was the nest of a Great Horned Owl about 50 feet from the ground in an elm tree. The nest, which contained three, nearly full-grown young, measured nearly 5 feet one way by three the other, and had evidently been used many years. And under the nest, on the ground, was a collection of material which would nearly warrant the erection of a glue factory on a paying basis. For curiosities sake we piled the bones and feet, heads, etc., of a like kind together and this is what we found. Thirty-three feet of Am. Coot, eight feet of ducks and several heads (two mallard and a spoonbill), heads of three chickens and no less than forty-seven hind legs of rabbits and six of squirrel. Besides all this, there were two half eaten rabbits in the nest and

part of a King Rail. I have found many such "grave-yards" of the Horned Owl, but never, such an enormous amount of material as this. The nearest ponds to the nest are nearly a mile, and the water fowl must have been secured here in the night while the birds were at roost. I also flushed two wood cock to-day—the first birds of this kind that I have ever seen in this vicinity in over eight years collecting.

Sincerely yours,

GERALD B. THOMAS.

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#### A Question.

Will the irrigation of the arid and desert lands of the West and the draining of our great Eastern swamps, both colossal works now in progress, for the redemption or reclamation of the land for agricultural purposes, effect our birds, materially, so as to cause an extinction of a species, or with the changes of environment will there occur a change in the habit of the birds that inhabit these regions?

R. F. M.

Oologist.

---

We note that Massachusetts is seriously approaching the problem of **Bird Preserves**. The attempt is worthy of careful trial as deforestation is the greatest of all setbacks to our birds these days acting against the increase of forest birds as the cat does against the birds of the open fields. Of course, it will not be possible to make much progress without extensive preserves under different conditions, some high and dry and some swampy, some marsh land and some brush land.—  
Editor:



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FIRST. In line with the decision recently published by the "Condor" and for the same reasons, i e. That the provision for scientific collecting under the Song Bird Law did not contemplate commercial collecting.

The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1st will be dropped.

**Canadian Subscribers Notice.** Owing to the increased Canadian postage, combination and premium offers will not apply to Canada subscriptions unless accompanied by 12 cents per year extra.

**F. H. LATTIN,**

**Publisher.**

**E. H. SHORT,**

**Manager.**

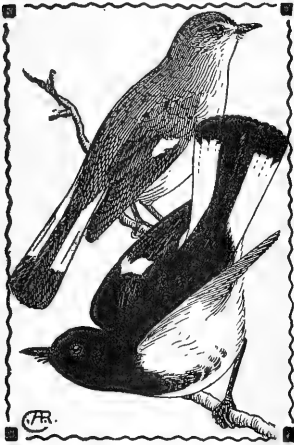
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Author of North American Birds Eggs, and with Frank M. Chapman of Color Key to North American Birds  
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VOL. XXV. No. 6.

ALBION, N. Y., JUNE, 1908.

WHOLE No. 251

## Take Notice.

Examine the number following your name on the wrapper of this month's Oölogist. It denotes when your subscription expired or will expire.

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209 your subscription expired Dec. 1904  
251 your subscription expires with this issue  
267 Dec. 1908

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Entered as second-class matter December 21, 1903, at the post office, at Albion, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 6.

ALBION, N. Y. JUNE, 1908.

WHOLE No. 251

## THE OÖLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
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### An Arizona Hunt.

Our party consisted of three, we decided to go for a little outing and as Oology was our hobby thought it best to hunt over a strip of desert land, about twenty-five miles west of Phoe-

nix, between the irrigated lands and the Aqua Fria (water cold) river. This part of the desert is covered with a growth of small cacti, sage brush, mesquite and paloverde trees.

We took a light camping wagon and left Phoenix about three p. m., April 20th, 1907. Two miles had hardly gone by when we came to a row of large cottonwood trees dividing a pasture. They had been cut off about eight or ten feet from the ground and were sprouting up again from the old stumps, leaving a lot of dead limbs and knot holes. In one of these holes we found a set of four Screech Owls, bird on. Not knowing what bird of this family it was we had to kill it, and afterwards identified it as the "Mexican Screech Owl," (*Megascops asio aikenii*). It was getting late in the season for the Screech Owls as this set was unblowable on account of incubation, two other badly incubated sets were found in addition to the nest containing young birds.

Several trees down the row we found a set of five Desert Sparrow Hawks, (*Falco peninsulæ sparverius*), slightly incubated, two of the eggs were almost round.

Farther up the road we saw a hole in a dead limb about 30 feet above the ground. One of my companions proceeded to climb the tree while within a few feet of the hole a Screech Owl of the same variety as above mentioned flew off disclosing a hole full of young birds almost ready to leave the nest.

Presently we saw a Sparrow Hawk circle around over head and light on

a dead branch of a tree immediately across the road from the Screech Owl's hole. We looked on the other side of the tree and found a hole containing five eggs.

Five or six miles on we found a set of three fresh Vermillion Flycatchers, (*Pyrocephalus rubineus mexicanus*). The nest was situated on the extreme end of a dead branch and was very shaky, however we got them to the ground in safety.

When within a few miles of our destination we found another set of Sparrow Hawks, four eggs, fifteen feet up in a dead cottonwood stump.

We reached the border of the desert by dusk and spent the night there by an irrigation canal. This section abounds in snakes and numerous varieties of lizards so we brought folding cots with us. We awoke the next morning at daylight and were under way by six o'clock. A friend from a nearby ranch accompanied us through the day. He knew nothing about bird eggs but helped us considerably, as he went horseback, and could go many places where we could not in the wagon. Our route for some distance lay along a row of cottonwoods.

In a limb, six inches in diameter and fifty feet from the ground, we found a set of five Bairds Woodpecker, (*Dryolates scalaris lucasanus*); also two Sparrow Hawks' holes, each containing the incomplete set of three, one of which was in a stump not over five feet high and used as a fencepost.

Our friend now left us for a little scout while we turned towards the desert. He returned in about an hour bringing a set of three fresh Palmer Thrashers, (*Toxostoma aurivirastris palmeri*), and stating that he saw two hawks' nests in the tops of tall cottonwoods, one contained young birds the other young and eggs.

Shortly after he returned we came

across an adobe house, unoccupied. Upon going over to investigate a large Sparrow Hawk flew from a hole between the window sill and the adobe wall. The hole went in two feet and contained a set of four fresh eggs.

No Bendire Thrashers (*Toxostoma cinerus*) were found, although, in the vicinity of Phoenix they are fairly common. Sets of four Palmer Thrashers are not common but we succeeded in getting two sets of that number on that trip, and found two other sets of four around Phoenix during the rest of the year.

After eating lunch we tied the horses and hunted on foot for a while, going in pairs, two North and two South. I was with the couple going North. We hunted for a long time without finding anything but a set of Western Mocking Birds. I do not believe I ever saw Partridges so plentiful. We were flushing them all day, but could find no nests, but finally luck turned our way. A large female flew from a bunch of sage brush and there we found a set of eleven eggs. A short distance on we found a second set of the Gambels Partridge, (*Callipepla montezumae*), having about as much as we could carry we went back to the wagon and found our companions there with a set of four Palmer Thrashers and a set of five Gilded Flickers, (*Colaptes chrysoides*). During the afternoon on the desert we found three sets of Phainopeplas, (*Phainopepla mitens*), in addition to the other eggs.

We next turned East to the long rows of cottonwoods and there found a set of three and a set of five Gila Woodpeckers, (*Melanerpes uropygialis*.)

A colony of Burrowing Owls, (*Speotyto cunicularia hypogea*) was found. We dug into three holes the first two contained two eggs each,

and the last one three eggs. Showing that it was too early for them.

Late that afternoon we started for home, went part way and finished the trip next day, finding a set of two Vermillion Flycatchers, incubation advanced, a set of six Sonoran Redwings taken on account of size of set, and another set of five Sparrow Hawks.

We also found sets of the following eggs, but as our boxes were already crowded we left them. They are: Cactus Wrens, Aberts Towhees (Bullock's Orioles, Doves, Arkansas Kingbirds and Roadrunners.

Chas. Winfield Hartrauft.

P.S.—I have been very much interested in the accounts on finding sets of three doves' eggs. A friend of mine has just written from Arizona, stating that he has found two nests of Mourning Doves each containing three eggs and a set of three White-winged Doves, (*melopela leucoptera*).

C. W. H.

### Pennsylvania.

The rarity of this species in Southern Pennsylvania, makes it advisable to place on record the recent capture of an individual of this variety. It was taken during September, 1904, at Fort Washington by Mr. James Camblos. At the time of its capture the bird was sitting on the limb of a tree standing in an open field and proved very easy to approach. Mr. Camblos, recognizing the rarity of the bird, had it mounted and afterward generously presented the specimen to the writer. It is now in my collection and is a fine male in the blue back plumage. This is, so far as I am able to ascertain, the only record of this bird in southeastern Pennsylvania for a number of years.

Richard C. Harlow.

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### Some Arizona Nesting Sites.

Photos by Hartrauft.





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**Nesting of the Wood Duck in New Jersey.**

A few years ago old residents used to come across nests of the Wood Duck, but little did I ever dream that I would be fortunate enough to find

one, but such is the case. On April 25th, this year, I went out with my rifle with the expectation of getting some "sprigs." As I stood quietly among the trees near a pond in the woods there came circling around a wild duck. Waiting with my finger

on the trigger every minute for it to settle in the pond when I could secure a good shot I noted it appeared to settle in the top of a sour gumtree about 40 feet up. Cautiously I walked to the tree, but no duck could I see. I splashed the water, rapped the tree, shook the bushes and fired a shot in the top of the tree but no duck flew from the tree.

As it was getting dark I could not discern any cavity in the top of the tree, so I secured the pair of climbers that I had fastened to my wheel and proceeded to investigate. As I neared the top of the tree out ran two grey squirrels and when about 6 feet of the top out flew Mrs. Duck. As I peered down the cavity I beheld eleven eggs that I could count in the twilight but I could not reach them by a foot or more, and the wood was so hard I could not break it with my climbers, although it was no more than one inch in thickness. By looking down on the outside I found a knot-hole about a foot below the nest large enough for me to insert my hand and now the ticklish part commenced. As I was holding on with one hand I picked a small hole in the bottom of the nest with the other and the eggs commenced to roll, all seemed to want to come out in "jig" time, and great care was needed to keep them from bumping against each other. I counted twelve and lost the count. When I got home I found I had 16 incubated eggs. With hard work and potash I saved them first class. Taking up Davis I found I had secured a very large set. The nest was composed of a few dry pine oak leaves mixed in with the down..

While I was securing the eggs the female flew against me and flew whistling off to the pond and it sounded real dismal at that time as I never had heard their whistle before. It sounded something like the whistle

of a man.

I never collected a set of eggs that I so disliked to take as this, owing to their rarity and the consideration I have for our most heartful game bird.

W. B. Crispin, N. J.

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Mr. Ernest H. Short,

Ed. Oologist:—I wish to report to the capture of a Kirkland's Warbler on May 15, 1908 by Mr. Wm. P. Holt at Port Clinton. This is our first record of this rare warbler in our locality. Also the capture of a pair of Cape May Warblers on May 16. These warblers are rare in this section. On May 15, we took a specimen of the Northern Parula Warbler another of our rarer warblers. During the two days that we were at Port Clinton 82 species of birds were observed. The weather was favorable and birds were very plentiful although the warblers were more common on May 15 than on the 16th. I also wish to report the capture of the Lark Sparrow, *Chondestes grammacus*, by George Chiesa on May 2, this is our first record of this more southern bird. Mr. Chiesa took a beautiful specimen of a partially Albino Tree Sparrow March 22. It had white specked through the chestnut head and also back and tail. The first primary of each wing was white or nearly so.

Yours truly,  
A. C. Read, Toledo, Ohio.

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By an oversight in making up April No. of current volume of Oologist, Mr. Bailey of Newport News, Va., was not credited with the article on "Odd Nesting Site," (see page 57, April), which he contributed. It's another case where the manager apologizes for another's mistake.—E. H. S.



Double Nest of Catbird. Toronto, Ont.

Photo by L. B. Brown.

**Nesting of the Northern Yellow-throat  
in Muskoka, Ont., during the  
Summer of 1905.**

Rising early one morning June 11th 1905 as the sun was showing up in the east, I took a short walk in the woods intending to pass the morning with my friends, the birds. Many Redstarts flitted about among the lower branches of the trees like bits of flame color as though they would set the trees on fire. Over my head came the tap, tap of a woodpecker on a hollow limb of a tree and on glancing up saw that it was a Red-headed Woodpecker busy at work searching for the insects that might be hidden there in the wood, once it flew into the air after a passing insect in the

manner of a fly-catcher, bringing the insect back to the tree in his beak, where he killed and swallowed it. Many other birds were there such as the Red-eyed Vireo, Least Flycatcher, Scarlet Tanager, Wilson's Thrush, etc. I left the woods, and began crossing a meadow with a small brook running through the center with willow bushes and long coarse grass growing on both sides. As I walked along the edge of the brook I heard the Northern Yellow-throat's familiar song of witchity, witchity, witch. It was not long before I saw a male yellow-throat flitting here and there among the willow bushes like a bit of sunshine peering out through his black mask. He was soon joined by his mate who began to scold me. I

sat down on the edge of the bank near the brook in order to see if the female would return to her nest; I waited for nearly fifteen minutes before she finally quieted down and after all was quiet flew down in the grass where she disappeared, after waiting for five minutes and hearing nothing from her, I suspected she must be on her nest. So quietly stepping over to the spot from whence she disappeared, she slipped off her nest and ran mouse-like along the ground and flew into a bush from where she began scolding me as before. I gently parted the grass with my hand and revealed a beautiful nest sunken in the ground made of dry grass lined with hair and arched over which contained four white eggs, speckled with brown, that were partly incubated. That same day I found two more of their nests. While searching every tuft of grass at a time within my reach (the yellow-throats scolded me all the while from some nearby bushes). I discovered a nest, it was not sunken in the ground and arched over as the other nest was, but was built about two inches above the ground in the center of a large tuft of grass, while two yards away I found another nest in a tuft of grass. They each contained four eggs, incubation had just begun.

Signed,  
GEORGE GERALD.

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**The Starling in Pennsylvania—By  
Richard F. Miller.**

Early in November, 1907, a gunner shot two Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) on the Delaware river marshes at Tacony, Philadelphia county, Pa. The writer examined one of them, a fine male, in the shop of a local taxidermist.

They were not escaped cage birds,

but had come westward from the vicinity of New York City with a flock of Blackbirds. This is my theory of their occurrence which is evidently the correct one.

It is well known that the Starling is increasing and spreading throughout New Jersey from the vicinity of New York City, but these are the first birds to reach Pennsylvania to my knowledge.

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**A Few Observations on Eggs of Garter Snake, *Thamnophis sirtelis*,  
var. *ordinatus*.**

On May 16th, this year, the Editor of the Oologist captured and dissected a very large female of this species, length 39 inches.

Prof. Surface in his excellent "Serpents of Penn." gives them as oviviparous. Eggs forming in May and young maturing to the point where they are ejected by the mother ready to break the membranous shell in middle of July to first of August.

Now my Snake contained many more eggs than the authorities give some hardly developed to the stage where they could be counted to a certainty, but 84 well developed eggs were found, and furthermore they were not developing together.

Some were just forming and they ranged from these up to an egg  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. long containing a well developed snake over 4 in. long that must have been expelled soon, probably before June 1st, certainly long before July.

The Snake had met with an accident in the past as indicated by three scars on outside of body and in one ovary was an encysted, dried up, dead young located under one of the scars. Evidently case was ruptured and young killed but was encysted and dried up without causing serious trouble.

Either this is an unusual case or

else it would seem that these snakes mature and are expelled in a series reaching over a considerable period.

This case would also indicate that they produce many more young than has been supposed unless we concede the possibility of numbers of the later eggs failing to mature.

Ernest H. Short.

By some oversight our printer placed Mr. Thomas' address in article in May Oologist under Mr. Peabody's article. Mr. Peabody is still in Kansas. Please note correction. [Ed.]

#### The Pigeon Hawk in Montgomery Co.,

#### Bobolinks and Snowbanks.

During the recent untimely blizzard in Western New York April 30th and May 1st and 2nd the Editor noted Snowbanks a foot deep and four male Bobolinks in sight at once.

This is the only occurrence of such an anomaly we remember.

Ernest H. Short.

#### Winter Wren.

Mr. E. W. Campbell reports finding fm. of this bird incubating set of four eggs in town of Mehoopany, Wyo Co., Pa., on May 23, 1908. Nest in base of fallen hemlock protruding over water of Summer Brook. Composed of moss, hemlock stems and inner bark of poplar. Lining of Grouse feathers.

#### Mockingbird.

On May 28th, I saw a ♂ *Mimus polyglottus*. I did not collect it, but the identity was certain, for it was sitting in the road about ten yards away from me, and I have collected five seasons in South Florida, where they are very abundant, and you can imagine my surprise at seeing him so far from his supposed range. He was

with a *Galeoscoptes carolinensis* who seemed to be anything but friendly towards him.

Yours truly,

C. W. Shaw, Buckfield, Me.

The Editor Oologist,

Dear Sir:—I am enclosing in this a photograph of a very interesting nest taken by myself last season. The accompanying photograph is that of a double nest of the Catbird. It was taken on the 8th of June, 1907, in a wild vine about 6 feet from the ground and when found the parent bird was flushed from the upper nest that contained only 2 eggs, slightly incubated. One often sees the double nests of the ordinary Yellow Warbler but it would be interesting to hear if any other collectors have ever found such a double nest before.

Lewis B. Brown,  
Toronto, Canada.

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That cold rain water and soap will remove machine grease from washable fabrics.

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That milk which has changed may be sweetened or rendered fit for use again by stirring in a little soda.

That kerosene will soften boots and shoes that have been hardened by water, and will render them as pliable as new.

That salt will curdle new milk, hence, in preparing porridge, gravies, etc., salt should not be added until the dish is prepared.

That salt fish are quickest and best freshened by soaking in sour milk.

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The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

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VOL. XXV. No. 7.

ALBION, N. Y., JULY, 1908.

WHOLE No. 252

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Remember we must be notified if you wish paper discontinued and all arrearages must be paid.

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257 Dec. 1908

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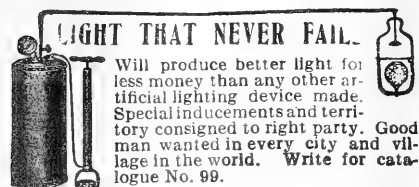
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 7.

ALBION, N. Y. JULY, 1908.

WHOLE No. 252

## THE OOLOGIST,

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Chill, Monroe Co., N. Y.

## The Whistling Swan on Niagara River.

The Whistling Swan, (*Olar columbianus*), is a rare migrant along Niagara River. It may be said to occur regularly about the middle of March

and casually in the fall. Its capture, however, would scarcely be possible, were it not for its proneness to float down the river to injury or death at Niagara Falls.

I am told by observers living at Niagara Falls, in a position to know, that scarcely a year passes without one or more swans being sacrificed at the cataract. In March, 1906, about a score made the fatal plunge, and in the same month, 1907, five were taken, but no such catastrophe in the swan world has ever been described as that which happened on March 15, 1908, when more than 100 of these majestic birds, journeying toward their summer home near the Arctic Circle, came to an untimely end.

A severe rain storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning, prevailed during the greater part of that day (March 15, 1908). About 11 o'clock in the morning, between showers, Wm. LeBlond of Niagara Falls, Ontario, was engaged in removing from the ice bridge, a temporary structure that had been used during the winter season as a souvenir and refreshment stand, when he was startled by a loud cry. Turning around, his attention was first attracted to a swan struggling in the water at the upper edge of the ice bridge, but on looking toward the falls, he saw a great company of swans in distress coming toward the bridge. The scene that followed was a sad one for any bird lover to contemplate.

These splendid birds, helpless after their terrible plunge over the cataract, were dashed against the ice bridge by

the swift current, and cakes of loose ice which were constantly coming down from the upper river. Some had been killed outright by the falls. Others, unable to fly because of injury to their wings, attempted to stem the rushing waters, but here their wonderful swimming powers were of no avail. They were soon imprisoned in the ice where their frightful cries were heartrending.

The game laws of Ontario still permit the taking of geese and swan in the spring until April 30th, and it was not long before men and boys, armed with guns and sticks, availed themselves of the privilege and became the chief factors in the closing scene of nature's great tragedy—the sacrifice of the swans.

The news of a "Great Slaughter of Wild Swan" appeared in the Buffalo

newspapers on March 17th, and the writer started for Niagara Falls forthwith to investigate the matter. As nearly as could be ascertained from interviews with various participants in the "slaughter," the number of swans taken on March 15th was one hundred and two. Not all of these were taken on the ice bridge. A number were pulled out of Bass Rock Eddy, just below the power house of the Ontario Power Company, and within 150 yards of the Horseshoe Falls.

On the morning of the 18th of March, two more swan were taken at the ice bridge and a third was picked up alive at Bass Rock Eddy. This latter bird I secured within half an hour after it was found and the picture shows it still in the arms of its captor.



Injured Swan, American Falls in Background.  
Photographs by the Author.

It was unable to stand on its feet or to use its wings, and was taken in that condition to Buffalo, and placed under the care of the curator of the Zoo in Delaware Park. It quickly recovered from its bruises and shock, and now (March 25th), may be seen floating gracefully on Park Lake.

On March 22nd I went again to the Falls, and saw five more swans that had just been taken by LeBlond, while six had been picked up at Bass Rock eddy early that morning. Three others were seen in the gorge but were able to mount into the air and fly over the falls to the upper river. I went up the river to the historic village of Chippewa, hoping to find a remnant of this swan brigade, but there was not one to be seen on the river below Navy Island. A flock, variously estimated to number 20 to 60 individuals had been seen by a number

of people the day before. I was unable to learn that any swans had been shot above the Falls, although they had been seen there almost every day for a week.

Rev. J. Hibbert Langille in his book, "Our Birds in Their Haunts," tells of finding a dead swan on the shore of Lake Ontario at the mouth of Johnson's Creek, which he says, "by some means unknown, had perished in the course of its long migration." I have little doubt that it met death in the cataract of Niagara.

Mr. L. J. Davison says in his "Birds of Niagara County, N. Y.," nearly every season a number of this species (Whistling Swan) are taken in a wounded condition in Niagara River, below the falls. They are probably wounded in flying into the falls during storms while migrating during the night. I have also been told that

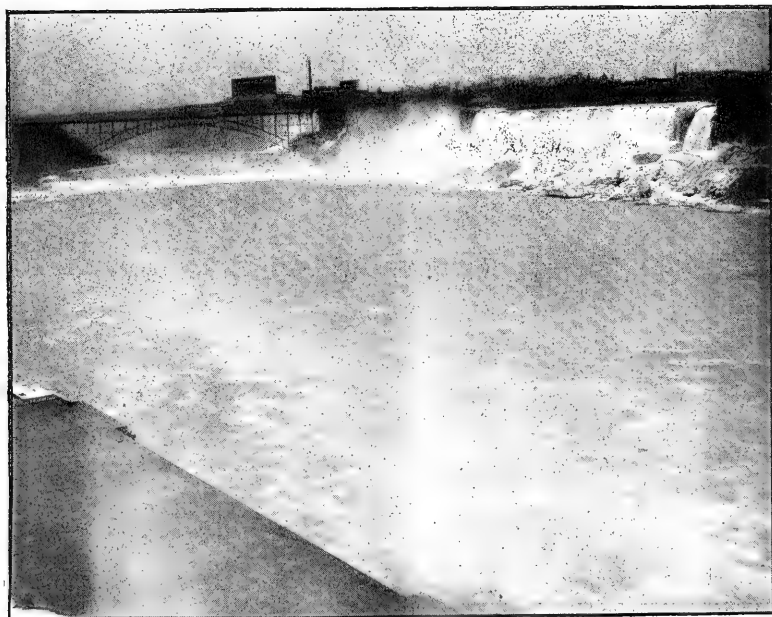


Canadian Rapids from Ice Fender of the Ontario Power Company.

dead specimens have been found on the shore of Lake Ontario near Niagara River, after the ice had been broken up in the spring." While it may be true that birds sometimes fly into the falls from the gorge below, I know that the swans in the present instance went over the precipice from the upper river. They were seen above the rapids before eleven o'clock in the morning of March 15th.

After a long tiresome flight from Chesapeake Bay, the open water of Niagara River would be a welcome sight to this ill-fated flock of Wild Swans. Resting from their labors, they probably dropped down stream unsuspecting danger until to late to save themselves from plunging into the turbulent waters of the Canadian Rapids.

These rapids begin abruptly with a drop of about ten feet in a line running across the river from the head of Goat Island to the gate house of the Ontario Power Company on the Canadian shore. I have watched gulls float down over the crest and spring into the air from the descending water. "Swans being so large and heavy cannot easily take wing, but are obliged to force themselves over the water against the wind by rapid and powerful beats of the wings and feet until obtaining the requisite momentum, they are lifted into the air." "The Wild Fowl of the United States," by Daniel Girard Elliott. When they reach this line of breakers they are probably carried down and completely submerged, after which, by reason of confusion or inability, they can-



Bass Rock Eddy at extreme left, Ice Bridge and American Falls in distance.

not fly, but are rushed forward and a minute or two later are carried over the brink of the precipice and plunged 160 feet into the gorge below.

Swans are not the only water fowl that are sacrificed at Niagara's shrine. On the occasion of my visit March 18th, I saw a handsome male Canvasback Duck (*Aythya valisneria*, Wils.) come down against the ice bridge. It was unable to fly but succeeded in extricating itself from the moving ice and gaining a foothold on the bridge at a point where to attempt to catch it alive would have been a perilous undertaking. Later in the day I saw an American Golden-eye Duck (*Glauclionetta clangula americana*, Bonap.), struggle out of the foaming water below the Horseshoe Falls into Bass Rock Eddy, and with great difficulty reach the shore. It made no attempt to escape when picked up. While no external injury was apparent, it was unable to walk or fly. It recovered, however, from its shock by the time Buffalo was reached, and when opportunity was given, it flew off as strong as ever in the direction of the river.

Regarding the disposition made of all these swans, which in the aggregate, would approximate a ton in weight, I will say that the cygnets were nearly all selected at once for the table, and many a tough old bird as well. A large number, however, have been preserved by the taxidermists of Niagara Falls and Toronto. Five fine specimens secured by Mr. Ottomar Reinecke are being prepared as a splendid group for the Museum of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences by its taxidermist, Herman Grieb. The latter reports that the stomachs of the birds examined by him were empty. One specimen, a female, and not the largest, measured 51 1-8 inches in length and 81 inches from tip to tip of its extended wings. I saw no less than 50 of these dead

birds, and looked them over carefully, thinking that possibly there might be a Trumpeter Swan (*Olor buccinator*, Rich.), among them, but none was found.

While the killing of the wounded swans at the ice bridge was technically lawful, and in a certain light might be regarded as an act of mercy, inasmuch as without human interference most of the birds would probably have perished from their injuries or by starvation, yet it is greatly to be regretted that as many of the birds as possible were not taken alive and given opportunity to recover. I believe that fully one-third of the swans taken would have survived if given proper care. But the impulse to kill was stronger than the spirit to save, and not even a pair of these unfortunate birds was secured from nature's doom and restored to nature's freedom.

JAMES SAVAGE,

Buffalo, N. Y.

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A Novel Prize.

E. W. Campbell, taxidermist, is engaged in mounting a beautiful white swan, and the bird will soon be placed on exhibition in the window of Farrer & Peck's drug store, on Water street. There is some interesting history in regard to this swan. It is the property of John L. Davies, of Sharon, Pa., a former resident of this place, who is engaged in the plumbing business in Sharon. Mr. Davies was at Niagara Falls a short time ago, attending a convention of plumbers, and while there a rather remarkable incident occurred. A flock of whistling swans, apparently in flight from the south of Canada, was seen hovering over the city. A few minutes later the whole flock, numbering 228 in all, apparently having become exhausted, fell into the Niagara river, just above the falls, and all

of the birds were carried over the falls. There was a scramble for the birds among the people who happened to be along the river below the falls. The birds were injured and helpless and only a single one escaped alive. Mr. Davies and several friends managed to secure a boat and captured several of the swans. The one that fell to the lot of Mr. Davies was an exceptionally fine specimen, being as white as snow and measuring 56 inches long, being somewhat above the average size. Mr. Campbell has mounted the bird in an artistic manner.—Pittston, Pa. Gazette, April 2, 1908.

#### Death Roll.

Louis W. Hahn, Naturalist, Silver Creek, N. Y.

Dr. F. N. Damon, Shells and Ind. Relics, Scituate, Mass.

W. E. May, Oologist, Detroit, Mich.

Isaac S. Kirk, Mineralogist, Nottingham, Pa.

August Koch, Williamsport, Penn., Oologist and Ornithologist.

W. E. Shepherd., Boston, Mass., Veteran English Glass Eye Manufacturer.

Messrs. Hahn, Damon, Kirk and Koch were "old timers" on our subscription books.

#### A Correction

Editor Oologist.

Dear Sir:—In the Oologist of last April, some writer makes the statement that the Arkansas Kingbird never has been proven to nest in such a manner as on the ridge-pole of a cabin or adobe bluff. He says that nests of this bird, mentioned by Mr. E. R. Warren in the Condor, for January, 1908, as being located in the above situations, were "beyond the vestige of a doubt, just Say's Phoebe."

I cannot speak from experience as to the nest in adobe bluff, but in Central Washington I have many times found the nest of the Arkansas Kingbird in almost any place on the outside of a house, where it could safely be placed, and two nests were built inside of barns on beams against the wall of the building. I also found a nest on the end of a roll of wire fencing for hen yards that had been left standing upright against the side of a small cabin. Apart from this it seems quite beyond belief that any ornithologist could mistake either nest or birds of the Say's Phoebe for those of the Arkansas Kingbird.

J. H. BOWLES,  
Tacoma, Wash.

In regard to Mr. Peabody's criticism in the "Oologist," for April, 1908, regarding what he dubs the suppositious finding of a Carolina Chickadee's (*Penthes carolinensis*) nest in Philadelphia county, Pa., by the writer:

There is nothing doubtful about it or I would not have written it, for I do not write merely to see my name in print.

To be sure the nest was discovered before I began keeping a notebook or verifying my observations. It was found when I was 15 or 16 years of age and when I had known the Chickadee for about 5 years, for I knew all the common birds years before I commenced keeping a notebook.

If Mr. Peabody thinks, as I infer he does, that the nest I found was a House Wren's, he is grievously mistaken, for even if the bird (which flushed from the nest) was not seen, the composition of the nest, size and color of the eggs would hardly have been confused by the casual novice for *Troglodytes aedon*.

One point which Mr. Peabody overlooked is that I did not record the

discovery of the nest until years afterward when I became fully informed upon the status of the Chickadees of this locality, and knew what I was writing about when I gave the record as unique for Philadelphia county. The Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*) does not breed in Philadelphia county, Pa.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

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### Hunting Eagles' Nests.

Mr. Crispin, a celebrated tree climber and Oologist of Salem Co., N. J., and the writer having contemplated a trip after Bald Eagles' eggs for some time, have the following notes to submit to the readers of this paper. A friend of mine, well acquainted with the country, volunteered to go along with us; that made a "crowd" which was full of the right spirit that ultimately leads to success.

Mr. Crispin had been over some of the ground before and therefore was not a total stranger as to where the Bald Eagles nested. He collected an addled egg about three years ago from one nest that we visited yesterday, also a young bird, but since then they have deserted the place and from information and experience we gained were led to believe they do not return to a nest after it has been robbed of its young.

Having failed on our first attempt, we walked some three or four miles to another nest that Mr. Crispin had taken two eggs from two years ago after going up 100 feet from the ground. As we approached the place and could not locate the nest, Mr. Crispin went to a nearby farm house to make inquiry regarding the tree, and they informed him that it was cut down in order to destroy the nest. This was bad news for us after traveling first 18 miles by train, six miles

by wagon and ten miles on foot. The farmer next informed us that two Bald Eagles were building "just over thar," which proved to be not more than 500 yards from the house. We could not see the nest at first owing to the dense woods, but soon noticed one of the birds sitting in a tree, and when we neared the nest the other flew away. The nest was placed in a pin-oak, 75 feet from the ground and impossible to climb owing to its large size and the many small dead branches that covered the trunk.

The nest was an immense affair, made of coarse sticks that were much darker in color than the one we had visited earlier in the day, after being exposed to the weather for several years; the nest being new was much shallower than the one that had been used several times and rebuilt. As it was impossible to climb the tree a consultation was held and it was decided that Mr. Crispin climb a gum tree that grew near it and look into the nest. It was necessary for him to go up to the top, some 80 feet, and after great effort he was able to declare that the bird had not commenced to lay.

March 5th was the date decided on to go this year because the set taken two years ago on March 10th, was badly incubated, and both eggs were broken while trying to blow them. The severe winter this year no doubt made the birds late owing to the sticks being frozen fast and having a new nest to build.

We went back to the farm house and had a little talk with three boys who lived there, and after some good advice and a pecuniary reward they promised to get the eggs later on. Our next move was to hire a team and drive about five miles lower down the bay, where we found a man who declared he knew of eight or ten

Eagle nests about nine miles farther on. We made him an offer for the whole lot and he promised he would go after them this week. If he gets them I will give the readers of *Oologist* full details of his experience. I have not given the exact location of these Eagles nests because it might excite the curiosity of some collectors to such an extent that they might be foolish enough to go over the same ground and suffer the same experience as we did.

E. J. DARLINGTON,  
Wilmington Del.

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### Oological Freaks.

Believing you have other readers of "The Oologist," who are, like myself, especially interested in oological freaks and abnormalities, I think the following "finds" this season will be of interest to them:

On May 16th, I found a Field Sparrow's (A. O. U. 563) nest containing two young about two days old, and one egg measuring .46x.39. This egg had the usual markings of eggs of this species except that it is spotted on the small end instead of the large end.

On June 20th, I found a nest of Brown Thrasher (A. O. U. 705) containing three fresh eggs and on returning to it two days later it contained five eggs in the nest and one egg on the outer rim. These are, without doubt the eggs of two birds, as two of them were darker and heavier spotted than the others. Also two females and one male approached with their usual actions when the eggs were being taken. I have never secured more than five eggs of this species from one nest before.

On June 21st I found a nest of Indigo Bunting (A. O. U. 598) containing six fresh eggs. Three of them were partly covered by the lining of the nest and the other three were

placed in the nest, as usual. The three lower eggs were probably abandoned and the parent bird, partly covering them with more grasses laid the others. Would you call this one set of six eggs or two sets of three?

On June 22nd, I found a nest of Yellow-breasted Chat (A. O. U. 683) contained 3 lightly incubated eggs, one of which was almost pure white, having only three very faint spots of brown, another well spotted, and the other one sparingly spotted. This clutch is a series in itself.

On June 27th I found a nest of Bluebird (A. O. U. 766) containing four lightly incubated, pure white eggs. Of the many clutches of this species I have examined, this is the first one of pure white eggs I have ever found. This nest was in an abandoned Red-headed Woodpecker's hole, in a fence post, about four feet from the ground. In April of this year I found a clutch of five badly incubated eggs of this species in this hole, but left them to hatch.

W. L. GRIFFIN,  
Ky.

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### Suspended Nidification.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

On July 26th, 1907, I discovered a Goldfinch's nest which the female had just started to build in a small cottonwood. On account of the favorable situation for observation the nest building was closely watched, and probably for this reason the nest was apparently deserted when just about completed. Several times within the next two weeks I looked in the nest but to all outward appearances it was deserted. For some time then it was not visited, and my surprise may therefore be judged when on passing the tree on August 31st, I beheld a Goldfinch upon the nest. On investigation it was ascertained that it held four incubated eggs which were allowed to hatch. The eggs could not have been laid earlier than August 20th and an interesting problem is here presented. The nest was finished on July 30th and therefore a period of 20 days elapsed between the completion of the nest and the laying of the first egg. Who can enlighten us on the subject?

Edge Hill, Pa.



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#### Will Irrigation Alter Bird Fauna?

E. H. Short.

Dear Sir:—Seeing in the Oologist a question regarding irrigation, drainage and birds, I will say a few words.

I believe that irrigation will make some difference in the birds of a locality, i.e., will add new birds to the list of that locality. But as there is not enough water to irrigate anywhere near all the arid land and semi-arid land, it will not make a great difference as a whole.

Since coming here in the spring of 1906, I have noticed nearly as many common kingbirds (444) as Arkansas kingbirds (447), which is the western variety. Nearly all books say of 444, "rare west of the Rockies," so I think irrigation has something to do with it.

There are not many birds here except along the rivers, though the

"boosters" will tell you that there are lots of birds here.

There are quite a lot of English Sparrows here already, (though nothing like they are in the east) but instead of trying to get people to kill them off the paper here states that they are a much maligned bird, will not move out of the town into the country, or bother other birds, etc. That shows about how much they know of the English Sparrow out here—not much, surely.

By looking up the Youth's Companion of June 11th, you will find an account on page 284 of how a man caught an eagle (golden) near North Yakima last winter. The eagle was on exhibit here for several weeks and was then shipped to the capital at Olympia.

C. E. WEBSTER,  
North Yakima, Wash.

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VOL. XXV. No. 8.

ALBION, N. Y., AUG., 1908.

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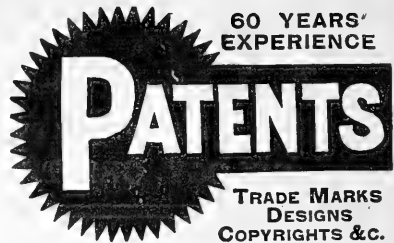
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 8.

ALBION, N. Y. AUGUST, 1908.

WHOLE No. 253

## THE OOLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXIDERMISTRY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager,  
Chill, Monroe Co. N. Y.

Nesting of the Broad-winged Hawk in  
Delaware Co., Pa.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

The season of 1908 was a memorable one to me for several reasons, but chiefly because of my unusual

luck in ferreting out the nesting places of our native hawks. Here in Pennsylvania we are wont to become discouraged over the absence of this class of birds, and I fear I have often cast a sigh as I read of the experiences of collectors in the west. During my short period of collecting they had invariably been a stumbling block to me, but somehow this year the mist cleared away from before my eyes and when I packed up my irons for another year I found that I had taken fine sets of Cooper's, Sparrow, Broad-wing, Osprey and Duck Hawks. As I recall the various trips and successes my blood courses through my veins once more with the enthusiasm of the hunt, and I long for the days gone by. And prominent among the list stands the day spent in search of Broad-wings, the 16th of May. From time to time, my friend had told me of their breeding in the vicinity of Wayne, and when I jumped off the train at that place on the 16th, I was prepared to do or die.

Discouraging news awaited me. The hawks had not been seen lately, and had apparently disappeared. But what study teaches one to fight down despair more than ornithology? As we struck off across the fields the dew was still clinging to the grass, and in a short time we were thoroughly drenched, but what cared we, for there ahead of us lay the chosen haunt of the Broad-wings, the wood-covered hills merging into a valley through which a stream dashes on its way. As we pushed through, our eyes eagerly scanning the tree tops,

the songs of the birds were heard on every hand, the notes of the Red-eyed Vireo and the rollicking song of the Kentucky Warbler being especially noticeable. Several times did my pulses quicken momentarily at the sight of old nests, but never a hawk did we see. At last my eye caught sight of a bulky mass some 40 feet up in a double crotch of a beech. A rap on the tree failed to scare a bird, but instinctively I knew it to be a Broad-wing. The irons buckled on, I hurried up and eagerly looked over the edge. There I found—nothing. It was a new nest, even to the lining of fresh green beech leaves, but for some reason it was later deserted, though not disturbed in the least. In speaking of this matter with Mr. Frank L. Burns, he mentioned that it was by no means a rare trait of the Broadwings to leave a nest after completing it.

And so the day wore on, and my spirits began to sink. Farther and farther we roamed and still not a hawk did we see. Entering another woods we struck along the top of a ridge, commanding a view of the steep hillsides on either hand. Some distance ahead and far down the hill I saw a nest. On closer approach the tail of the bird was seen over the edge and I knew that at last success had crowned my efforts. A rap on the tree and she was gone. It was an ugly climb, but nothing less than chains could have kept me from that nest. Gradually, the distance to the nest grew less, and the ground rapidly receded. Over broken limbs, projections and several "bulges" of the trunk I struggled, and at last looked over the edge. Do you older collectors remember your first set of Broadwing's? If so, you can sympathize with me. The eggs were packed and the nest measured, and I returned to

the ground a gladder and wiser man. Then while my friends unstrapped my irons I pulled out my notebook and wrote: "The situation was on a steep hillside within 10 yards of Darby Creek, and the nest was at least 75 feet up in a Shellbark which leaned slightly towards the creek. Bird-flushed when I tapped on the tree; several times she circled back near the tree, making no outcry of any kind. The nest was built in a two-pronged fork and was very substantially built, evidently by the birds themselves. Constructed of corn-husks, sticks, and lined with pieces of bark, a few downy feathers and green oak leaves. Outward diameter 30 inches, cavity 6 inches across and 3 inches deep, being much better defined than my Cooper Hawk's nests. The eggs were three in number and handsomely marked with blotches of reddish-brown and shell markings of lavender and stone-gray." Later developments showed them to be incubated about nine days.

An so ended my day with the Broad-wings in the verdant hills of Delaware county. I have found the nests with young in Bucks county, but nowhere does it appear common in the Keystone State, unless it be Chester county, where I understand a number of sets have been taken.

---

#### Four Sets of Eggs From One Bird's Nest.

RICHARD F. MILLER.

On May 29, 1906, a set of three fresh eggs of the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) were taken from a nest at Holmesburg, Pa., which was saddled to a horizontal wild cherry branch, along the edge of a wood at the bottom of a railroad embankment.

On June 7th, another set of three fresh eggs were taken from the same nest.

On June 16th, a third set of three fresh eggs were collected, also from the same nest.

On June 26th, a fourth set of three fresh eggs were removed from this nest.

No nest egg was left in the nest to induce the bird to continue laying, for in such a case, in all probability, the bird would have deserted or incubated the egg left in the nest.

There can be no doubt but that the four sets were laid by the same female, as only one pair of birds inhabited the wood, a small and isolated grove of about one-quarter acre in area; for the eggs are alike in shape, size and color, and show no diminution in size, the last set being as large as the first.

Nine days elapsed after the taking of the first set until the laying of the second set; nine days between the second and third sets; and ten days between the third and fourth complement.

When the first set was taken the nest was thinly lined, the bare walls being plainly visible through the lining of rootlets, but before the laying of the second set the birds had lined it thickly with this material.

Several years ago there was a Wood Thrush's nest in the same situ, from which a set of eggs was taken, and it would be interesting to know whether they were laid by this bird, but as they have passed out of my collection it is, of course, impossible for me to say.

Subtracting three days for the depositing of the eggs, for the Wood Thrush lays an egg every day until the set is laid, we have a minimum period of six days for the bird to get "into condition" to lay each set, which seems to me a remarkably short time; and in 28 days the bird laid 12 eggs!

The nest was not afterward seen until late in the summer and appearances then indicated that a brood of young had been raised in it, undoubtedly by the same pair of birds, who laid a fifth set and managed to hatch them.

(These notes are interesting as bearing on the much discussed question as to whether disturbing a set of fresh eggs tends to prevent breeding that season, but taking so many sets from one pair could only be justified as a rare experience.—Ed.)

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#### Another Set of Five Robin.

Ernest H. Short.

Dear Sir:—May not this be of interest to at least some of the Oologist readers, though it is a taking of seven years ago.

During an afternoon's search for Siskins, on June 26, 1901, and without results in the way of the little hair-lined nests, I was finally rewarded with a lucky find. It was a nest of the Western Robin (*Merula migratoria propinqua*). The nest was eight feet up and near the end of a 15-foot spruce limb, on the edge of a small swampy gulch.

As I was not in line for taking sets of this common yearly resident, it must have been my poor success in finding Pine Siskins for the day, that gave me an egger's feeling to see something with eggs in it, so I just took a peep into this nest. It contained five fresh eggs. The eggs are fine specimens of Western Robin, everyone being of an unusually dark bluish-green cast and perfectly uniform in size and shape. Nest was of usual structure, mud and dry grass, lined with fine grass. This is the only set of five eggs of Western Robin, I have ever seen.

C. IRVIN CLAY,  
Eureka, Cal.

### Anent the Cardinal.

On October 29, 1906, at Cornwell's Station, Bucks County, Pa., a nest of the Cardinal Grosbeak was found six feet up in a clump of green briars in a wood, containing a rotten egg, which was collected and is now in my collection.

It is, of course, impossible to tell how long the nest had been deserted, (as it was), and the exact time the egg was laid, but judging from experience, the time necessary for an egg to addle and rot does not exceed six weeks, then we can safely admit that the egg was deposited about September 16th, or even allowing a longer period for its decomposition, and supposing it to be about eight weeks old, it could then have been laid about September 1st, which is remarkably late nesting for this handsome bird in this vicinity.

But the Cardinal is an erratic breeder, albeit, for I have found new nests as early as March 30, 1902, and April 1, 1908, and collected fresh eggs as late as August 17, 1904; and examined young almost fledged August 25, 1899. I have found eggs and young birds in nests of Cardinal in April, May, June, July and August, and am of the opinion that the bird rears two broods in one season, although most ornithologists seem to think that only one brood is raised. Of course, when a nest containing eggs is destroyed, the bird will build another and lays a clutch of eggs in it, but I do not regard this as a second "brood," as I have known some ornithologists to so style it.

RICHARD F. MILLER.

Frankford, Phila., Pa.

Woodmere, L. I., July 8, '08.

Dear Mr. Short:—

Is it not an uncommon event for the Song Sparrow to sing while in

search of food? The only time I have known it to do this was on July 5, 1908, when the bird covered a space of from 3 to 4 feet and then stopped to sing his full set of notes once. He continued the performance several times, at last flying to a near-by evergreen to sing for five minutes or so.

On June 6th, I found a set of three Chipping Sparrow's in a large single rose bush in yard. The eggs were fairly heavily marked over entire surface with brown and lilac, principally with brown, but the usual wreath was quite plainly visible above the other spots.

Is this not also an uncommon occurrence?

CHAS. A. HEWLETT.

The Song Sparrow sings on the wing quite commonly. Eggs of the Chipping Sparrow showing spotting over entire surface are not common.—[Ed.]

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### Chimney Swifts Nesting in Hollow Trees.

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The Chimney Bird unquestionably in early times nested in hollow trees, but now such a habit is a curiosity. While in Warren county in June of this year, I found three of these birds, two females and a male, sailing around over a slashing, full five miles from anywhere. Presently the birds were noticed going in and out of a tall, hollow tree, and they had every appearance of having selected it for a nesting site. A friend of mine reports having observed the same state of affairs in a hollow tree standing on the edge of a New York lake, last season.

R. P. SHARPLES,

West Chester, Pa.

### The Mourning Warbler.

In company with my friend, Thos. H. Jackson, I had an interesting time hunting the nest of the Mourning Warbler in Warren county, Pa., this spring. The nest is very hard to locate, although we succeeded in two instances. Both nests were in low blackberry bushes on the edge of tall timber. It was with great difficulty that we could see the parent bird when she flushed. She would creep quietly off into the neighboring brush and make no fuss whatever. Once, when the nest was being photographed, and we were near it for quite a time, the mother bird did come back and scold a little. The five eggs in this nest were slightly incubated. The other nest had but one egg in it, and when found, about June 1st, was nearly ready to hatch.

When hunting the nest it is useless to try to locate it by watching the parent birds. They are most extremely cautious in approaching it, and while the male will stay and sing in the neighborhood, I never saw him go near the nest, and he made no protest when we found it.

R. P. SHARPLES,  
West Chester, Pa.

### Big State Game Farm.

The state game farm, near Auburn, is now the busiest place in Illinois. Already this month 8,000 baby birds have made their appearance and 2,000 more are expected. Mother birds are sitting patiently on that number of eggs, and every day another is made happy by the arrival of chicks. Thirty thousand eggs of game birds were placed this spring at the farm. They included pheasants, native quail, ducks, turkeys and all other kinds of game that inhabit this state. In addition to

the eggs which were placed under the hens at the farm, the game warden, Dr. J. A. Wheeler, sent throughout the state, 30,000 eggs for private use. The farm is now producing from 900 to 1,000 eggs a day from the 1,400 hens.

"Game birds in Illinois came through the winter remarkably well," said Dr. Wheeler. "We have had the most encouraging reports from every section of the state. The pheasant is proving itself to be an ideal bird for Illinois. You cannot starve it. It will eat the bark on a tree before it will quit. I have been surprised at its hardiness."—Macomb, Ill., Journal.

E. H. Short:—

My son and a friend have just returned last night 13th, from up the Susquehanna River, fishing. They bring me a young, in down, of the Semi-palmated Sandpiper (No. 246). I have mounted and saved it. So this bird breeds in Pennsylvania, as well as the Least Sandpiper. I sent you data a while back on "Least." I have that young one safe as well as this one. I may yet, some day, find a young unable to fly of No. 256. It will be no surprise to me to do so, as the Solitary does breed in Pennsylvania, sure.

Sincerely,  
E. CAMPBELL.

### Man-o-War.

Mr. Reynolds says: "Reed, in his Bird Guide, speaks of the Man-o-War Bird as possibly breeding on some of the Florida Keys. There is quite a large colony of them breeding on Bird Key, near Veteran, Fla., which they share with Fla. Cormorant and Brown Pelican."

July 25, 1908.

My Dear Mr. Short:—

A little incident that came under my observation in Phoenix, Ariz., last winter, may prove of interest to your readers.

Two holes were discovered within 75 feet of each other. One contained one egg of the Desert Sparrow Hawk and the other two of the Mexican Screech Owl, both birds on. Several days later the birds had exchanged nests. Nest No. 1 (Sparrow Hawk's) had two hawk's eggs, and owl on nest. No. 2 (Owl's) two owl's eggs and one hawk, hawk on. Later, nest No. 1 was vacated, and one of the two eggs broken. No. 2 contained four owls and one hawk. This seems very queer to me, as both birds are fighters.

Sincerely yours,  
C. WINFIELD HARTRANFT,  
Devon, Pa.

---

#### How to Clean Enamel Paint.

Soap never should be used in cleaning paint, especially white enamel or any paint with a gloss, as it removes the gloss, which is its chief charm. If in washing enameled woodwork a cupful of common carpenter's glue is melted and poured into a pail of warm water it not only will facilitate the cleaning, but will leave a high gloss such as new paint has. If once used this common glue will become a household necessity.

---

#### How to Clean Enamel of Stains.

To clean and remove all stains from enamel rub well with salt moistened with vinegar. This will clean equally well enameled pots and pans, no matter how burned or discolored.

---

#### How to Keep Vegetables Fresh.

Green vegetables can be kept fresh for days by wetting them and then rolling them up in paper, screwing the ends to keep out the air.

#### How to Keep Feathers Fluffy.

The expense of keeping either an ostrich feather boa or an ostrich feather laden hat looking like new reduces itself to nothing at all and very little trouble when one knows the way. The straightest feathers may be curled "without ripping," as the old ads. used to say, and boas require only a little shaking. Boiling water and dry heat are the two essentials, and the method of treating either hat or boa is the same. An old fashioned teakettle with long spout is best for the boiling water. Either a radiator or the top of a stove is usually best for the dry heat. A register seldom sends out sufficient volume. In any event, both kinds of heat must be ready at the same time. When the kettle boils the feathers should be waved to and fro in its steam until they have gathered a little moisture, not so much, however, as to be wet. At the time when the last lingering remnant of curl disappears they are usually ready for the dry heat. It is this which curls the feathers, and hat or boa should be held as close to it as can be without burning, and either should be shaken gently every moment.

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#### How to Make Dainty Neckwear.

As it is absolutely necessary for a woman to wear some form of a neck trimming to be considered well dressed, the woman of limited means will look about for a way to construct some of the fussy, fluffy little bows and jabots at home. It is wonderful how cheaply these can be made at home compared to the tremendous price which one must pay for these in the shops. Hemstitched handkerchiefs with dainty colored borders may be had for moderate sums, and these, with the addition of a little valenciennes lace, may be made into charming jabots. The lace edge should be whipped on all around the handkerchief, which is then laid in small plaits and pressed. It is then divided about two inches above the center, and the short end is folded over the longer one to form a jabot effect. All white handkerchiefs with barred borders may be treated in this same way with charming results.

## RENOVATING OF PILLOWS.

### How to Fill Them With Feathers Without Losing Many.

Renovating pillows is of vast importance during the house cleaning season. Stuffing in more feathers when your pillows wear soft is a thing most inexperienced housekeepers dread, and with good reason, for unless it is done just so the feathers fly every which way, bits of the soft down clinging to hair and dress and everything in the room with a persistence remarkable in such apparently yielding things. When that necessary time comes around, shut yourself up in as empty a room as you can get (a small one is best), taking all the pillows which need filling, a case full of feathers (or another pillow from which you purpose to replenish the others), strong thread and stout needles and a knife for the ripping.

Turn your hair up under a cap or tie a big handkerchief over it. Don't wear a cloth dress to do the work in, even though you take the precaution to put on a big work apron—the kind that covers you up from throat to hem. Those feathers have a way of creeping along the floor—the slight drafts of air caused by your movements being sufficient excuse—and attaching themselves to the hem of your dress.

Close doors and windows before you begin your work. Then with your knife rip open the end of a pillow and the end of the one whose contents are to be divided among the others. An old method was to transfer the feathers by handfuls, pressing each little lot well down before taking another. But a better way is to insert the ripped end of the pillow to be emptied into that of the one to be filled and then to shake down enough to make it fairly—but only fairly—hard. Then slip your hand inside and push the remaining feathers far back, at the same time working the edges of the ticking together. When you finally separate them there will be fewer feathers set flying around aimlessly than in any other way.

Pin the seam of the filled pillow together and begin on the next, doing all of them before you sew up any, but seaming them all before you leave the room.

### How to Renovate an Old Waist.

Last season's waists were made much narrower in the shoulders than this year's, and the sleeves simply were immense. If you have a waist which has sleeves made of the same material as your waist and which are too large, it probably also has a yoke of some shape of net. Maybe your waist, especially if it is of silk or satin, is worn under the arms. If you have a few pieces of velvet or silk you can make your waist as good as new and in a pretty, up to date style. Rip the sleeves out and cut the armhole from two to four inches larger, or enough larger so that all the worn part is cut away. Cut the neck round, if it was V shaped or square, and finish it with a half inch wide band of velvet or silk and sew a band of the same material into the large armhole. This band should be two or two and a half inches wide. Make a belt of the same material. If the old waist blouses too much it should be let down an inch or so. This will give you a pretty, modern overblouse, which may be worn over lingerie, net or lace blouses.

### How to Amuse Children.

When children become restless on a rainy day a good way to keep them amused is to give them an old tomato basket, some white cloth and thread. They can make little rafts, canoes and boats out of the basket, using the cloth for sails, and with the use of the bathtub will keep themselves busy the rest of the day.

### How to Soothe Tender Feet.

It is a clean and dainty habit to be as particular about the condition of the feet as the hands. In many cases the same preparations may be used on both. Daily baths in camphorated oil or cologne water are refreshing if the feet are tender and sensitive.

## CARE OF METAL PIECES.

### How to Clean Brasses, Bronzes and Wrought Iron.

To clean brasses quickly and economically, rub them well with vinegar and salt or oxalic acid and salt. Wash immediately after the rubbing, and polish with tripoli and sweet oil. Unless the acid is washed off the thing will tarnish so quickly that its last estate will be worse than its first. Copper kettles and saucepans, brass and irons, fenders, candlesticks and trays are best cleaned with vinegar and salt. Cooking vessels in constant use need only to be well washed afterward. Things for show, even pots and pans, need the oil polishing, which gives a deep rich yellow luster, good for six months.

Oxalic acid and salt is the thing for furniture brasses. If it touches the wood around it, it only improves the tone. Wipe the brasses well with a wet cloth, and polish thoroughly with oil and tripoli. Sometimes powdered rottenstone does better than tripoli. Rub after using either with a dry cloth or leather until there is no trace of oil. No matter what sort of brass is to be cleaned, it must first be freed completely from grease, caked dirt and grime. Wash with strong ammonia suds, rinse and dry before beginning with the acid and salt.

The best treatment for wrought iron or wrought steel, which both have a knack of growing gray and lusterless, is to first wash it very clean with a stiff brush and ammonia soapsuds, rinse well, dry—by heat if possible—then oil plentifully with sweet oil, and dust thickly with powdered quicklime. Let the lime stay on two days, then brush it off with a clean very stiff brush. Polish with a softer brush and rub with cloths until the luster comes out. This ought to give the color of iron in daily use, which is nearly the most beautiful in the whole range of metals. By leaving the lime on iron and steel may be kept from rust almost indefinitely.

Before wetting any sort of bric-a-brac, and especially bronzes, remove all the dust possible. The less dust water finds about fine lines and cran- nies the less it can leave there. After dusting wash well in strong white soapsuds and ammonia, rinse clean, polish with just a suspicion of oil and rottenstone, and rub off afterward every trace of the oil. Never let acid touch a bronze surface unless one wishes to eat and pit it for antique effects.

### How to Weigh the Baby.

Use the basket in which baby's toilet articles are kept, supposing it is average size. Buy five yards of webbing—an extra heavy tape. Cut two strips each sixty-four inches long. Pass one under the basket diagonally and fasten securely at corners. Do same with other strip, fastening at opposite corners. Join the ends over the top. This leaves ample space to slip baby under. In one end of the remaining piece of tape sew a loop large enough to pass one prong over the chandelier. On the other end sew the ring of your ordinary hook scales at such a height that when the loops on the basket are hooked into the scales the basket will skip the bed or table by six inches. Place a pillow and set of clothing in basket and weigh. Place the baby in and after weighing him subtract the weight of basket and clothing and you have baby's exact weight.

### How to Slip House Plants.

To slip house plants, fill a dish with sand. Cut slips away from any kind of house plants, taking care the slip is made from a young green shoot and the cut is made slanting. Keep sand wet all the time. Place in a sunny window. They will begin to show little roots in from two to three weeks. After roots are formed put in small pots and shift into larger pots as they need it. Water each day. To enrich plants water with a solution of 150 grains of glue in about two gallons of water.



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SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

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VOL. XXV. No. 9. ALBION, N. Y., SEPT., 1908. WHOLE No. 254

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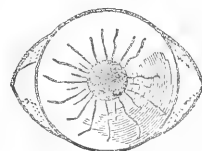
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WHY could he not be chosen  
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—McLandburgh Wilson.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 9.

ALBION, N. Y. SEPTEMBER, 1908.

WHOLE No. 254

## THE OÖLOGIST,

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## SIDE-LIGHTS ON THE RALLIDÆ.

Some of the following anecdotes disclose the facts, that while the rails are very retiring, and seclusive in their habits, they are not so shy and timid as a great many aquatic

birds, and generally speaking, I should say they were rather unsuspecting creatures.

For many years I have resided within a mile of their haunts. The marshes and sloughs to which they confine themselves while breeding, are often traversed by thoroughfares and car-lines. These encroachments do not seem to effect the constant return, in equal numbers annually, of these birds which might well be termed the connecting link between land and water fowl.

The King Rail is appropriately named for he outshines all others of his tribe. During the balmy nights of May and June, it is not an uncommon occurrence to hear one of these birds about the door yard, a mile from his actual abode. Frequently they will stand under an electric light and give vent to their clucking. I know of one instance, wherein one of these King Rails wandered into the parlor of a private residence during the early morning hours when the doors were ajar, and house-cleaning was in progress. Generally speaking, the King is a droll bird, and some of his antics during courtship are on a par with those of the Flicker.

The Virginia Rail though two-thirds smaller than the King, is quite similar in habits and disposition. He seems very fond of warbling and amusing himself by uttering a series of notes alternating by a rising and falling inflection of the voice. The song of the Red-eyed Vireo conveys an impression not unlike that produced by this monologist.

The Sora is not so local in its range

as the other two varieties and frequently wanders, or appears out of its environments.

Several years ago, I received a telephone call at my office one morning, from a friend whose headquarters are in the very center of Chicago. On entering his suite, he found wandering about the room of a ten story building, one of these Carolina Rails. The bird manifested no fear or discomforture in association of human beings. The little fellow was captured and placed in a waste basket awaiting my arrival.

The Sora has been observed, on prairies about farm houses, feeding in company with chickens. Their flute-like notes are uttered in ascending scale, after the manner of our field sparrow.

The Florida Gallinule is known locally as the Rice Hen. They are very wary and probably the noisiest of the family. Frequenting deeper water than the true Rail, they rarely expose themselves except when actually flushed. Where the marshes are transversed with telegraph lines, this bird seems to have the misfortune of flying against the wires and frequently suffering fatal injury.

These four members of the Rallidae are extremely nocturnal and the discordant sounds issuing from their throats, produce as much confusion as a quantity of domestic ducks, geese, turkeys and chickens together on a poultry farm. All have a habit, especially the King, of postponing nest building until the eleventh hour. I have found a single egg lying in what appeared to be nothing but a very small mass of wet vegetation. As the bird continued laying, she added to the size of her nest and when the complete compliment of eggs, ranging from seven to fourteen are laid, the nest is found to be a well

built structure, and quite compact for a bird of this nature.

In seasons of heavy rain fall, particularly during the spring of 1902, I recall vividly, how the King Rails, after being deprived of their first setting by the unusually high water retreated to the meadows and timothy fields. In a radius of one-fourth mile, I found six nests, during the last week of May. The sites were hill sides, twenty-five feet above the marsh where the water had flooded their first abode.

I quote a few extracts from my note book which are quite becoming to the eccentric disposition of the King Rail.

"May 11th, 1902, found nest composed of dead rushes, built on a floating mass of the same in water two feet deep. Location, fifty feet in the rear of barn and within one hundred yards of several residences. Bird swam from nest which contained ten fresh eggs. May 25, 1902. Female flushed from eggs. Nest compactly built of dry grass stems, and placed two feet from the ground in willow tree situated in center of small lagoon. Eggs ten and perfectly fresh. June 19th, 1902. Female lifted from nest containing ten incubated eggs. Nest dry grass and slightly hollowed. Location on ground in timothy hay field, twenty-five yards on either side of Oak Grove or Pond. Four nests within radius of few rods. June 19th, 1902. Flushed parent. Nest well constructed and built almost entirely of dead oak leaves. Situated in same field as the last described nest, but nearer to the grove and almost under the shelter of an oak tree.

Typical nests of the King Rail are well concealed in some tussock of rank grass, and perhaps not to exceed one hundred feet, from a road, or car track.

The King, Virginia and Sora Rails are very sociable and naturally gregarious. I have found them nesting in colonies and this is particularly true of the Sora. The latter variety often deposits her eggs at intervals of more than one day apart. A complete set, ranging from seven to fourteen eggs vary greatly in the development of their contents. Eggs of this variety show greater variation than the products of the other Rallidae.

Many domiciles of the Virginia are adeptly concealed, under the weather beaten masses of marsh grass. They can be found only by uncovering the last year's growth, as you make your way through the vegetation.

These nests are reached by the birds in a round about way. A little tunnel seems to exist which permits a bird to vacate her nest without being seen by the observer until she is at a point perhaps twelve feet from her treasures

This trait is most characteristic of the Virginia. The King or Red-breasted Rail invariably weaves a canopy over her nest, but the artificial method employed thus can be detected by a trained eye many yards away, and is only a tell tale sign, to the collector, but probably serves its purpose in concealing the sitting bird from raptors and is also a relief from the beating rays of the noon-day sun.

The Carolina Rail and Florida Gallinule construct their nests very much along the same lines and choose situations quite similar. Typical nests of both the later varieties have the characteristic run-ways or path leading over the edge of the nest into the shallow water. This path is constructed from the same material as the nest proper. The larger bird, swims quietly from her eggs, when disturbed. The Sora exits quietly on foot. Occasionally I have met

with the little Yellow Rail whose eggs are by far, the handsomest of marsh birds. A set of nine in my collection are marked exclusively and entirely on the large end with lavender, heliotrope and brown. The background for a space not to exceed one-half inch in diameter is completely hidden by this beautiful combination of specks. The immaculate portion of deep cream, almost approaching a salmon tint.

I have never had the fortune of personally disclosing a nest of this bird, nor can I claim such an acquaintance with the still smaller and rarer Black Rail. The latter variety is represented in my collection by a set of 8 eggs, light cream in color, dotted evenly over the entire surface, though rather sparingly, with marking of dark brown.

Gerard Alan Abbott.

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#### Bird Notes from El Rancho, Va.

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Migration is now in full swing, Kingbirds, Orioles, Swallows, Swifts, Purple Martins and Grosbeaks have left us. Nighthawks, Bobolinks, Coopers, Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks are passing through and these moonlight nights, one can hear at any time the notes of birds passing overhead, the loudest, but not most attractive, that of the Night Heron. From Sunday, Aug. 23rd until the 29th we had almost continual rain.

The Purple Martins seemed to suffer most—the young seeking shelter from the wet in almost any sheltered place. The Martin box on the front lawn made a fine shelter for them and was sometimes literally covered with birds—while inside, the twelve holes were filled. On the porches of the box on the protected side they sat huddled closely together the greater

part of each day and seemed to have stopped migrating, but Saturday the 29th in the afternoon the sun came out and soon all had disappeared. Although the nights are now cool, the Chuck wills Widow and Whip-poor-wills are still with us. The berries on the black gum, holley and dogwood trees are abundant this year, all serving as excellent food for the Robins and Flickers during their stay in this section. A late pair of Ospreys in my back woods still have young unable to fly. They must hurry or frosty nights will catch them ere they can fish for themselves.

H. H. Bailey.

Denver, Colo., May 13, 1908.

Editor "The Oologist",

Dear Sir,

In the April Oologist the Rev. P. B. Peabody takes occasion to criticize the Condor and also the well known scientist, Mr. E. R. Warren, of Colorado Springs, in connection with an alleged incorrect statement regarding the nesting habits of the Arkansas Kingbird.

He concludes his criticism with these words "Now in the two cases here given the birds in question beyond the vestige of a doubt were Say's Phoebes. The Western Kingbird has never been proven to nest in this manner, etc."

Upon what facts or authority Mr. Peabody bases this unequivocal statement would be interesting to know, but to one who is intimately acquainted with the habits of *Tyrannus verticalis*, his lack of information on this subject is certainly surprising, especially for one of his standing in Ornithological matters.

Mr. Peabody's statement that the Western (or Arkansas) Kingbird has never been proven to nest in the manner mentioned is hardly tenable in

the face of standard authorities. Davies mentions a number of various nesting sites, including fence posts, frame work of a windmill, cornice of a house, etc., while Bendire, quoting Mr. Wm. G. Smith one of the most careful and accurate Colorado observers says that they "nest occasionally on ledges" and further gives numerous instances of similar nesting sites. These two authorities alone are without doubt sufficient to "prove" almost any point upon which they both agree perfectly, and a close study of their opinions on this question will be much more conclusive than anything I might say on the subject.

The writer's intimate acquaintance with *T. verticalis* has extended over a period of ten years and covers not only eastern and western Colorado, but also numerous localities in Utah, Nevada, Idaho and Oregon, and I have no hesitancy in saying that throughout this vast stretch of country, the Western Kingbird nests fully as often about buildings, fences, etc., as it does in trees, and this is not the result of examining a few nests only, for I have literally seen hundreds of nests in the past several years.

Throughout western Colorado, Nevada and Idaho it is seldom indeed that a stockyard, or corral is to be found without one or more pairs of these birds nesting in one of the many nooks perfectly suited to their needs. In the prairie region of eastern Colorado windmills are a favorite nesting site, and in the mountainous portions of the state a large majority of the abandoned cabins furnishes a nesting site for these birds.

I have found their nests many times between the two upright posts of a pole fence immediately adjoining heavily timbered ground and there can be no possible question but what sites of this kind or about buildings

are selected through choice and not through lack of suitable trees for nesting purposes.

Among all the birds with which the state of Colorado is blessed there is no species (including even the Say's Phoebe) which varies so greatly in its choice of a nesting site as *T. verticalis* and as I have been unable to detect any difference in the habits of Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Nevada birds it is very surprising that Mr. Peabody has failed to observe these characteristic traits of such an abundant bird.

Respectfully,

Robt. B. Rockwell,

Associate Editor The Condor.  
Colorado Springs, Colo, May 21, 1908.

Editor, The Oologist,

Dear Sir,—

Mr. Robert B. Rockwell has called my attention to Mr. Peabody's communication in the April Oologist, and his criticism on my remarks of certain nesting sites of *Tyrannus verticalis*. Mr. Rockwell also sent for my approval the manuscript of the reply to Mr. Peabody which accompanies this. At first I thought I would ask him not to send it, preferring to fight my own battles, but as on reading it I found so much information on the nesting of this bird I thought better of it, and only write this short note to affirm what I said in my Condor article.

The nest in the adobe cliff was found by my assistant, J. W. Frey, when fishing in Fortification Creek, near Craig, Routt county, Colo., and who called my attention to it. Both of us saw the parent birds and they were Western Kingbirds, and not Say's Phœbes, as Mr. Peabody guesses. They were Yellow-breasted Kingbird whose outer tail feathers had a distinct whitish edging, and this was also the case with the birds

which had the nest on the ridgepole of a cabin. The nest was almost directly over the door of the cabin, and we camped in that cabin three days and had abundant opportunity to observe the birds. I will say that I have lived in Colorado nearly twenty-seven years, and have known both the Phœbe and the Kingbird most of that time, and I knew something about birds before I came here, having collected and studied in Massachusetts.

Edward R. Warren.

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#### WE NOTE

That our old correspondent, Chas. W. Bowman, now writes from De Witt, P. O., Calif.

As many of our friends have enquired for Mr. Bowman in the last four years we thought this item might be of interest.

Dr. M. T. Cleckley, of Augusta, Ga., reports considerable damage to his collection by the recent flood.

The regular yearly number of "The Warbler" comes to hand from John Lewis Childs. It is notable as containing a complete catalogue of the Childs Library of Natural History.

A pair of Orchard Orioles reared a brood of young the past season in a pine tree in the door-yard of W. C. Voke near Chili Center, Monroe Co., N. Y.

My second record of this bird for Western New York.

Editor.

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To the Editor of The Oologist.

Dear Sir:—As to Warbling Vireo singing on the nest my experience is the same as yours. I have found many Warbling Vireos nests by going out early in the morning and, guided by the song, find the bird on the nest singing. I think that it would be safe to say that it always sings on the nest. I do not know which bird does the singing, but think that the male takes a turn at sitting in the early morning, and that it is he that does the singing.

VERDI BURTCH,  
Branchport, N. Y.

### The Editor Has Lately Noted

First—A Black-crowned Night-Heron flew over our head one smoky, foggy morning in mid-September. A very rare bird in Western New York.

Second—In a neglected school yard on Sept. 14th I found an Olive-backed Thrush that was a victim of some unexplained accident. The right wing had been thrown clear forward so that the bird's head protruded between the three outer primaries and the balance of the wing. The bird was unable to fly and could not extricate itself from the embarrassing predicament.

Glad I happened along before Mr. Tom Cat. On drawing the wing further forward the bird promptly drew its head out and flew away and a tragedy was averted.

Third—New York State gives the New Pheasant Law its first trial next month. This law allows a licensed hunter to kill male Pheasants every Saturday and Thursday in October provided he only kills a total of 3 birds in the month. He is to report his take to his city or town clerk in a sworn affidavit and,—shades of Blackstone,—this patched up freak finally asserts that "the burden of proof shall rest entirely with accused" in case of any claim of violation. Suppose a man hunts alone and kills a Pheasant can he be certain that he can prove to everyone's satisfaction that he did so legally? In Mexico, I am told they hold a man dishonest until he proves the contrary. Is that rule becoming infectious?

Fourth—Let no reader of the *Oologist* who buys or exchanges specimens of any kind forget that the matter of Postal reforms in an indirect issue in the present political campaign that must possess a live interest for him since nothing but the at-

titude of our last Senate stands in the way.

Must we have a Hughes to whip them into line or must we dispense with them?

Fifth—Several parties are evidently getting into line for our "Black List."

We would particularly warn the two gentlemen in N. W. Canada that they must "hurry up."

E. H. Short.

### Large Sets of *Merula Migratoria Propinqua*; Western Robin.

As large sets of the Robin either *M. migratoria* or *M. m. propinqua* are rare the following notes may be of interest to some oologists:

On April 29, of the present season, I found a nest of the Western Robin, placed twelve feet up in a small Fir, containing five fresh eggs. The nest was a little larger than usual with less mud and more grass and weed stems. The five eggs are perfectly uniform in size and shade and are without doubt laid by one bird.

Set No. 2 is still better. On June 15, one of our neighbors told me there was a Robin's nest in her back yard and if I wanted the eggs to come over. I jokingly remarked that if it contained 5 eggs I certainly would like it. On June 20 great to my surprise and also delight the little girl from our neighbor's house come in and told me her Robin's nest had six eggs in it. Needless to say I got excited at once and upon climbing the tree saw the six eggs all perfectly uniform and slightly larger than average Robin eggs. That was Set No. 2 added to my rarities.

Set No. 3. On June 22nd the same pair that gave be the set of six started building a new nest in an apple tree within twenty feet of the first nest and on July 1 had three eggs. I

left on a fishing trip and upon returning July 10 went over to investigate the Robins doings. The nest contained five eggs of the same type as Set No. 2, but were too far advanced to save. This pair of Robins was watched every day, by a young lady interested in birds and we both are positive the eggs were laid by one bird.

I had never seen a set of more than four eggs of either the common Robin or our Western variety before, although I have examined and taken notes on about three hundred nests in Oregon and Washington in the past five years and have also collected a good many sets in (New Brunswick, Canada,) of the eastern Robin. This season has certainly been a red letter year with the Robins' nests for me. In some future paper the writer hopes to tell some of the readers of the "Oologist" about the Black-throated Gray Warblers he found this summer.

Yours truly,

Stanley G. Jewett,  
Portland, Oregon.

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#### Gave Him All the Lot.

"So that is your final word?" said the rejected one. "Very well, then, Arabella. In your presence I will end the life you have blighted."

He drew forth a small bottle labeled "Poison," drank off the contents and fell senseless at her feet. Did she sink beside him sobbing with remorse? No. She hastily left the room and in two minutes had returned and was kneeling beside him. Then she forced between his lips the following: Half a cup of turpentine, one pint of milk, a cup of warm soapsuds, a tablespoonful of aromatic ammonia, a cup of black coffee, a glass of mustard and water, a gill of vinegar, the juice of a lemon, the beaten whites of six eggs and one cup of flour and water.

"Algernon," she observed coldly as he slowly opened his eyes, "it is evi-

dent you had forgotten that I am a graduate of a correspondence course in first aid. My one regret is that, as I could not on the instant ascertain whether you had taken an acid or an alkali, I was compelled to administer all the antidotes I had learned."—London Scraps.

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#### A Picture Romance.

It is said that one of the most beautiful ladies in French society today was first revealed to her husband on the walls of the salon. It was while visiting the salon in 1878 that the youthful Marquis de C. was struck by the childish beauty of a young girl, one of the prominent figures in a picture of a village fete. Her tumbled golden locks, her dancing blue eyes and the freshness and graceful abandon of her figure so fascinated him that he sought out the artist and learned from him that the "little witch" was the daughter of a poor peasant near Avranches, where the picture was painted. To seek out the peasant and to make the acquaintance of his fascinating daughter, child of nine summers, was soon accomplished, and the marquis lost his heart even more completely to the real than to the pictured maid. With the father's approval he had the girl educated at one of the best schools in Paris, and nine years later, on her eighteenth birthday, the maid of the village fete blossomed into the still more lovely Marquise de C.

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#### How to Scale Fish Properly.

When scaling fish hold them under water in a dishpan. The scales will not fly all over if this is done, but will fall to the bottom of the pan. When the water has been poured off of them they can easily be transferred into the garbage pail. The kitchen will be free from the scales, which fly about if the fish is scaled in the ordinary way, and a great deal of extra and troublesome labor is saved. Dipping the fish in boiling water for a moment and then into cold will make the scales come off without trouble or delay.

#### How to Test Dress Goods.

Of the goods sold as "all wool" there is not one-tenth that is genuine. Generally the main component is cotton. The test for this is simple. All that is necessary is to pull out a few threads and apply a lighted match. Cotton will go off in a blaze; wool will shrivel up. To distinguish pure linen from counterfeit is even easier. The intended buyer need but wet her finger and apply it to the goods. If they are pure linen, the moisture will pass straight through. The spot touched will be soaked at once, and almost immediately one side will be as wet as the other. Frauds are more numerous in silk than in any other fabric, but here also the material of adulteration is cotton. Its presence can readily be discovered. Draw a few threads out. The pieces of cotton will snap off short when pulled, while the silk will stretch and permit a considerable pull before breaking.

#### How to Get Cinders Out of Eyes.

When travelers will open car windows instead of leaving them down, as all the wise ones do, there is the constant danger of cinders, which irritate the eyeball. Those who travel two or three times a day on the trains find that their eyes are in a bad condition about this time of the year. Here is a good bit of advice from one who knows: Restrain the impulse to rub the eye and insert a flat linseed in the corner of the eye. Close the lids and the seed will slide painlessly around the eyeball and soon come out at the other corner, bringing the cinder with it. The best part of this remedy is that it does not leave any chance of inflammation. The oil of the seed covers the eyeball and takes out all irritation. It is advisable for those who use the trains constantly to carry a few of these seeds in the pocketbook.

#### How to Cure Fainting Spells.

There is no more sure cure for an attack of faintness than a hearty sneeze. It immediately stimulates the

blood vessels of the brain. In many persons fainting never goes so far as a loss of consciousness or loss of control of the limbs. And in these the sudden weakness is often brought to an end by a sneeze caused by nature herself without any external aid. A grain or two of pepper, snuff or tobacco introduced into the nose or tickling its interior lightly will usually insure a sneeze. These simple procedures or others similar in character may prove invaluable when smelling salts and other elegant aids are absent.

#### How to Preserve Pretty Feet.

A perfect foot is a great rarity, and so is a pretty foot. While it is not possible for one to obtain a perfect foot, one can cultivate a pretty foot. One should be just as dainty in the care of the foot as of the hand. The toes should not be cramped and squeezed until they are crooked in shape and overlap one another. The foot should be as white as any other part of the body, but the heel and the tips of the toes should be rosy and pink. Callouses and hard spots should be rubbed away with a piece of toilet pumice. It requires but little care to keep the feet soft, white and dainty.

#### How to Remove Iron Rust.

Iron rust may be removed from clothing by holding the stained spot over a bowl of water to which a little ammonia has been added and applying with a small glass rod or a little piece of wood 18 per cent muriatic acid. The instant the stain disappears immerse the spot in the water, thereby preventing the acid from changing the texture of the goods. Before using the muriatic acid it is best to test it on one corner of the goods.

#### How to Mend Breaks in Plaster.

For breaks in plaster mix together one-half pint powdered lime, one gill plaster of paris and cold water to make a thick paste. Fill the holes with this and smooth the surface with a knife, working quickly. Mix only a little at a time, as it hardens rapidly.



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**How to Keep Food at Its Best.**

Green vegetables should be put in the icebox as soon as they are delivered. Salad greens should be thrown into water or wrapped in a damp cloth

and then in newspaper and left in the air if they are not to be used immediately. Proper receptacles of glass or tin should be provided for the cereals, and they should be emptied where they belong at once and closely covered to prevent insects getting in them. Coffee should go at once into an air tight canister or it will lose its aroma. Salt, soap and cheese should be kept in a dry place, and olive oil should be kept cool.

**How to Make Linoleum.**

A good, strong linoleum may be made from old brussels carpet that has not been worn through. Tack the carpet right side down on the floor and then apply paint, giving it a large number of coats, the last few coats to be of the desired color, allowing each coat to dry well. If the paint begins to wear apply a fresh coat of paint. The effect of mosaic tile may be produced by dotting the last coat with different colors of paint.

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# Out May 1906

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The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

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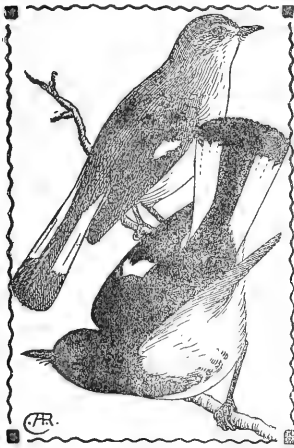
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VOL. XXV. No. 10.

ALBION, N. Y., OCT., 1908.

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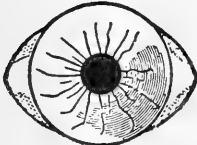
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 10.

ALBION, N. Y. OCTOBER, 1908.

WHOLE No. 255

## THE OÖLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
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### WE NOTE.

The Co-operative Ornithology plan advocated by Rockwell of Denver, Colo., in current issue of "The Condor" would be great if individual ornithologists all over the country were uniformly unselfish enough to freely

volunteer the results of their observation and study for that purpose and incidentally it would certainly boom "The Condor."

A Brown Thrasher was well seen by the Editor at Chili Center, Monroe Co., N. Y., on the morning of Sept. 28th last. Our second individual record for Western New York in 22 years.

A copy of the last Report of New Jersey State Museum comes to hand completely covering the Mammals of New Jersey and a supplementary report on the Fishes, etc. Well gotten up and illustrated by many fine plates, it forms an appropriate and valuable addition to the reports for 1905 and 1906.

So far as we can judge, that the clause in New York's new game law, establishing an open season for Pheasant shooting is working out as we feared it would. There are not game protectors enough to prevent unscrupulous hunters from bagging both cocks and hens far in excess of the legal limit.

William Savage.

We reprint below some extracts from an article on the work of Wm. Savage, the Iowa "Recluse Ornithologist," taken from the "Des Moines Register," soon after his death last July. Of his family our older readers remember David L. Savage as publisher of the defunct "Iowa Ornithologist."

A native of England, Mr. Savage came to New York at the age of 15,

and six years later removed with his wife to the Iowa homestead.

To the majority of settlers of that early time the prairie lands were most alluring, but true to the instincts of his nature he chose the wooded wilds on the banks of the Big Cedar creek in Van Buren county. Here, far removed from the public highway and almost inaccessible, nestling beneath sentinel oak and graceful elm, here, among his friends of the forest, the feathered and furry tribes, he builded his home.

Fashioned from logs of the "forest primeval," each crevice chinked up with plaster, roofed with clapboards, split out with mallet and frow, the chimney constructed of stones leading out from the old style fireplace. Here he lived, and here his children, three sons and a daughter, were born.

Within a stone's throw of the house and surrounded by the same dense growth of trees and underbrush the workshop stands. Crude and unplastered, yet affording for his treasures ample protection against the elements.

It is this workshop that furnishes a direct clue to the personality of the man.

In the accumulated conglomeration of odds and ends, some useful and others not, we see the economy of the former generation, which picked up every pin, and stored away all remnants with an eye to the future possible use. This in direct contrast with the wasteful extravagance of the present age.

The apparent confusion and disorder which prevails throughout the room, indicates the careless disregard of the occupant for conventional housekeeping, yet there is an absence of accumulated dirt, and these scattered articles were probably considered by Mr. Savage to be just within convenient reach.

### An Odd Shop.

On one side of the workshop are hanging traps of various sizes and kinds. With these he caught the wild marauders who often visited his place.

Of guns there are a sufficient number to start a small arsenal, conspicuous among them is a flintlock pistol of ancient pattern, but which is still in shooting order.

Above the rude home-made table which served as his desk, an old style grain cradle hangs.

The bench on which he sat was cushioned with a piece of sheepskin, fastened on with an old suspender.

The desk was littered with pencils, brushes, paints, etc., and while these are of the best and finest materials it is possible to purchase, there was not a palette in evidence. The colors were all mixed on pieces of broken dishes, and one pattern of plate in particular must have been at least fifty years old.

In one corner is a cot where he was wont to rest when fatigued by his various occupations, for this artist, naturalist, and ornithologist, was also trapper, farmer, horticulturist, taxidermist and by trade a tailor.

In this workshop Mr. Savage painted his bird pictures. Over 200 portraits are preserved in this collection, which consists of a reproduction of almost every bird which has ever visited this section, whether as a resident or migrant.

The birds were shot or captured by Mr. Savage and his friends and after most careful and minute measurements of the subject have been drawn on white paper without any thought of background or perspective. The colors are then applied, great care being taken to mix them in such manner as to make an exact reproduction of the bird in size, color, form and outline. And more marvelous still the texture of the feathers is wonderfully true to nature.

Mr. Savage would spend days in search of a rare or strange bird of which he had caught a glimpse, and rarely if ever failed to capture his quarry.

Some neighbors almost resented this intrusion of their premises and the slaying of their feathered friends, but no sacrifice was too great nor effort too strenuous which enabled him to secure a coveted bird for his collection.

On one occasion a "red snowbird" was creating considerable comment among the residents of an adjoining neighborhood. He was soon on its track and secured—a cardinal grosbeak, which had probably been deserted by its migrant companion and was wintering in company with snow birds.

We may regret the eccentricity which prompted so talented a man to live in such apparent seclusion. Yet did he not accomplish more than many whom the world rates as successful?

In no other place could he have studied bird life so auspiciously as in this retreat, under conditions which he created and maintained.

It is hoped that his successors may honor his memory by keeping inviolate this wildwood home, where birds congregate in larger numbers and sing and mate with greater freedom than in any other section of the state.

It is largely through the persistent personal interest and effort of Mr. E. R. Harlan of Des Moines, that Mr. Savage was persuaded to sell his collection intact to the state board of trustees.

He looked at them for the last time, as he said, and packed them away for shipment just a few days prior to his death.

The pictures have not yet been sent, but it is the purpose of the son, John Savage, to carry out his father's

intentions and the offer of the historical department based on the report of Professor Paarman of the State University of Iowa will be accepted.

Thus the state will come into possession of the only collection of this kind in existence and of an artistic and scientific value beyond estimation.

On the other hand the lifework of a conscientious, painstaking toiler will be properly cared for in the magnificent new building of the historical society.

Some day soon this man's lifework will be brought to Des Moines to take the place it deserves in the museum of the state historical building, arrangements having been completed for its purchase.

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#### Mountain Climbing.

My brother, his wife, and myself, while up at Sacandaga Park, on our vacation, this June, were one day seized with a great ambition to try our skill at mountain climbing. The foothills of the Adirondack Mountains lay just back of our cottage, and one of them known as Gifford's Mt., at once attracted our attention, as being the largest within easy reach, and accordingly, the morning of the 25th found us en route for this destination.

I, as the scientific man of the expedition, had my hands full with the birds, butterflies and other insects, which constantly fluttered along in front of us. We followed a country road for a couple of miles and then cut across the fields westward, directly for the mountain, which loomed up before us like a gigantic pyramid. We passed through rocky fields and swampy fields (where we sank above our ankles in a moss-like grass) and after a couple of hours' walk, arrived at the base of the mountain. In a small pine tree, in a rocky field, I

found a nest of the song sparrow containing five very large and apparently fresh eggs. In a pasture field, very exposed, a vesper sparrow's nest with four, well incubated eggs was observed. A Maryland yellowthroat's nest with three young birds, about eight days old was found at the base of a willow sapling in swampy ground.

We followed the dried up bed of a mountain torrent, and for the first three or four hundred feet, the ascent was by no means difficult. Then the country became wilder, the trees thicker, and soon the path up which we were to plod seemed very nearly perpendicular. A stout stick that we carried, proved of much use until we struck the wall-like barrier, when it was discarded, because swifter and safer progress could be made by grasping the stout saplings and pulling one's self up by sheer force. We had a few bad knocks and hard falls among the jagged rocks, but after a while we caught the knack of this sort of walking and made very good time in the ascent.

At about 700 feet from the base of the mountain I flushed an oven-bird, *Seiurus aurocapillus*, from its nest among the leaves; the nest contained four fresh eggs which I measured. They seem to be typical of this bird; (1) and (2) .77x.58 (exactly the same); (3) .72x.59; (4) .74x.57 in, rounded-oval, fine in texture, of a delicate pinkish-white, spotted, blotched and ringed about the larger end with rich reddish-brown, the ring interspersed with lilac-grey. At the summit of the mountain is a ledgy rock, from which point, places scores of miles away are brought into view. A steel plate and a flag were placed in this rock by the state surveyor. About the summit, birds seemed to be very scarce. A few oven-birds, a pair of hermit thrushes, white-breasted

nuthatches, and three or four red-eyed vireos were noticed.

About 4 o'clock we started the descent, and if the ascent had been steep, the downward one seemed doubtfully so. The sun was in the back of the mountain which shut out the light in such a manner that the woods seemed filled with a sort of dim half-light. After several falls, stumbling and other acrobatic stunts, we emerged from the dim shadows into the sunlight, where birds were singing, and the sun was still high in the heavens. We now followed a cow-path and stopped at a farm house for a drink of cool milk. Completely exhausted we dragged ourselves into our cottage at sunset.

Although my attention was very much taken up with the bird fauna, I still carried my insect-net and several interesting beetles were captured. Among the bushes at the base of the mountain, three species of Lampyrids, or fire-flies, were secured; *Celetes basalis*, *Tryptherus latipennis*, and *Malthodes niger*, both male and female; also an Elaterid, *Melanotus leonardi* and a beautiful Mordellid, *Mordellistena amica*. In the damp recesses of the higher altitudes, many fungous growths were found and examined. These yielded several rove beetles, Staphylindae, sp., such as *gyrohaena* sp.; *Bolitobius axillaris* and *B. cincticollis*; also *nutcotretus sanguinipennis*, Say.

CHAS. P. ALEXANDER.

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#### The Ruffed Grouse and Some of His Habits.

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The Ruffed Grouse, commonly called the Partridge in the north, is the game bird most sought for by sportsmen in the east.

It's favorite resorts are heavily timbered districts, although they are of-

ten found in swales and low, wet woods of hemlock, pine, etc.; also in birch thickets, and are seen occasionally during September and October feeding on the berries of the Winter-berry, a bush that grows along the edges of rivers and streams.

On entering the woods look for them on logs or brush piles or on the ground under bushes, also among brambleberry bushes or dead ferns out in the open. In the latter case their plumage harmonizes so well with their surroundings, trusting as they do to the dead leaves and ferns, that one may approach quite near to them before they take wing.

In September and October they feed in beech trees on beech nuts and in poplar trees on leaves as well as on the ground for clover leaves, wild berries of many different kinds whether ripe or green. The green berries are eaten by them when ripe berries are to be had. Insects also form part of their food.

In the cold weather they often come out on the edges of woods or clearings to sun themselves or to have a dust bath to rid themselves of lice or other vermin.

During rain they seek shelter under bushes or in trees.

When a human being approaches near, both male and female partridges make a sort of hissing sound which sounds most like wheat, wheat, wheat, rapidly repeated. Sometimes a male partridge, if he has been hunted a few times and has become wild, will whistle (I have never heard the female whistle), as an intruder tries to see him through the overhanging branches or through the bushes catches even a glimpse, he will instantly fly with a whirr from his wings into the air like a rocket, flying sometimes into a tree, but is most likely to fly but a short distance only to drop into cover again and run ra-

pidly along the ground for a few yards and hide until all danger is past.

Ruffed Grouse are more abundant some years than others, as hard winters and wet springs, besides foxes and squirrels and other animals have much to do to decrease their numbers.

Observations on the Ruffed Grouse were made in Muskoka, Ont.

GEORGE GERALD,  
Toronto, Can.

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#### A White-eyed Vireo's Peculiar Method of Feeding.

On September 6, 1906, I saw a White-eyed Vireo at Wissinoming, Pa., feeding in a unique manner. When first seen the bird was searching for food low down in the shrubs along a bush-fringed running brook, and was not particularly observed as it exhibited no unusual traits or habits. I was just about to turn my attention to some other bird which I heard in a pile of brush behind me, when to my astonishment the Vireo deliberately plunged from its perch—a small alder shrub on the brink of the brook—into the water, returning almost immediately to its perch, where it sat for several seconds, and then made another plunge. This it repeated a third time, after a brief rest. The plunges only partially submerged the bird, but the immersions were brief, as they were performed kingfisher fashion—head first into the water.

After the third plunge the bird preened its feathers, flying into the bushes as I approached to ascertain the cause of its unusual method of feeding, for such I inferred it had been doing.

The water of the stream where the bird made its puzzling plunges was fairly covered with Water "Striders" (*Hygrotrechus remigis*) and *Gyrinus*

sp., but whether the bird could have been feeding on these insects I cannot say, as I was too far away to perceive whether the bird captured any, and I certainly did not see it eat any on its perch, after the plunges. Surely, it could not devour the hard-shelled Gyrinus, but in no other way could the bird have captured these two species of insects than by plunging, as both are remarkably agile and run with surprising rapidity on the water. Anybody who has tried to capture any of these insects knows how hard it is, and it would not be an easy matter for a bird to secure one, except by plunging.

It is well known that the White-eyed Vireo feeds on the ground, unlike its relatives, and that it devours many different kinds of insects not eaten by the other Vireonidæ, in general, but I never suspected that it fed on water insects, for I cannot assign any other reason for the bird's peculiar plunges than to capture the "Water Striders," although I did not exactly see any taken.

It certainly was a unique performance, and if the bird was not capturing insects, what was its object in plunging into the water?

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

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Dr. Morris Gibbs.

Dr. Morris Gibbs, of Kalamazoo, Mich., in times gone by, a prolific and valuable contributor to our columns, both reading and advertising, died Sept. 18th, last, at his home.

As an interesting writer on Bird topics and the originator and persistent advocate of the Gibbs' embalming process in taxidermy, Dr. Gibbs will be instantly recalled by all our older subscribers.

We append below some extracts from an article in the Kalamazoo Telegram":

"Dr. Robert Morris Gibbs, aged 52 years, died this morning at 2:30 at his home, 128 East Lovell street, of paralysis. For the last 21 years he had been disabled as the result of paralysis, and that, added to complete physical break-down, was the cause of death.

Dr. Gibbs was born and died in the same room in the same house, and all but four years of his life, spent at Howard City (where he "enjoyed the excitement of country practice") was spent in this city, and his residence has been at the family home, 128 East Lovell street, during this time. He was educated at the University of Michigan, where he was a member of the class of 1877, and at Rush Medical College, Chicago, from which place he graduated in 1879.

He was a naturalist of a national reputation, being the author of several books on the birds of Michigan, on which subject he was considered an authority. He held the chair of professor of natural science at Kalamazoo College for several years, and carried on much experimental work along scientific lines, even after he was disabled.

"While deprived of the use of his limbs for the past 21 years, he found much joy in life, and it was often his custom to spend hours at a time in watching spiders and ants at work. He was a clear and close observer of natural phenomena, and at this time has a book in press at Lansing, dealing with his favorite subject, "The Birds of Michigan." He was also an extensive writer for magazines and scientific publications. He compiled two large collections of specimen birds, one of which is in the Russel museum at the University of Michigan, the other being in Lansing."

## Bird Notes from El Rancho.

This has been a fine season for the birds. With the exception of a severe thunder storm on April 13th, which destroyed a large number of nests in trees, especially those of the Blue Gray Gnatcatcher, the weather has been ideal for the rearing of young. As I sit at my desk writing, a young Chimney Swift sits on the andirons in the fireplace, his eyes not yet open, but his mouth continually so, crying for food. This is even the Swifts second brood, notwithstanding they were broken up once at the beginning of the season. Chipping and Field Sparrows have raised three broods to my knowledge, while the Kingbirds have followed second with two broods, in fact nearly everything in this section has raised two or more broods; among them Cardinals, Chats, Carolina Wrens, Blue Grosbeaks, Indigos, Prairie Warblers and Orioles, besides those already mentioned. This year I have tried one or two test cases with the birds. Last year I had a pair of Orioles (orchard) and Kingbirds build a nest in a Dogwood tree near the front porch. This spring I watched for them to return and wasn't surprised to see what I took to be the same pairs of birds commence building on the same limbs as the previous year. These sets I took to see results, and both species began building again in the same tree—each on the limb above where the first nest had been located. The Oriole not only raised this second setting, but two more, all in the same tree, nine birds in all. The Kingbird raised two broods of three each. I think this clearly demonstrates that there is little harm in breaking up a setting, providing the old birds are not molested. All these young birds since leaving the nest have been busily engaged in keeping my garden and orchard free from in-

sects, the young Orioles though destroying a large amount of grapes by picking a single hole in many of the grapes in each bunch. This loss though I'm willing to stand, as I know I gained in other ways. On the 31st of May I found a nest and three eggs of the Swainson's Warbler. The nest was placed between two or three upright shoots of a second growth bush about 5½ feet above ground; ♀ flushed. The nest was about 100 feet from the head of a mill pond in clump of second growth bushes. Two weeks later I again visited this locality and found a finished nest which I presume had been built by the same pair of birds, but although I didn't touch the nest or any branch within several feet of it, the nest was never occupied. This is the first breeding pair of Swainson's Warbler I have seen in this section, and is, I believe, a record for north of James River. On May 23d my father secured at the place a set of two eggs and female of Chuck Wills. Since then I have seen several pair flying about at dusk, but previous to this date we have never found them breeding on the peninsula. I believe this to be another record for north of James River. The Bob Whites are now all large enough to fly well, the dry season allowing full covies, and we expect a record number in this section.

Aug. 17th, 1908.

H. H. BAILEY,  
Newport News, Va.

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 Birds of Maine.
 

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"Birds of Maine," published by the author, Ora W. Knight, B. S., Bangor, Me., 1908, 693 pp., cloth, \$3.50 post-paid.

Written somewhat in Key style but supplemented by a mass of valuable notes for which the author admits his

indebtedness to about 50 correspondents, in addition to his own notes.

The work is much more than a mere state list with key and notes. It contains analytical key to families and key to species occurs as an introduction to each family.

Following the text of work proper is a hypothetical list, chapter on Faunal Areas, Biography and an exhaustive index.

Illustrated by a faunal map of Maine, two plumage charts, and 28 half-tones, some unusually good. It is by far the most pretentious of state lists published, and reflects much credit on its author, though it may not prove as successful financially as its merits deserve.

E. H. SHORT.

#### Carolina Chickadee in Pennsylvania.

I wish to back up Mr. Miller in his contention (see *Oologist*, July, '08), that the Carolina Chickadee does breed in Pennsylvania.

I have a female of a pair caught in a hole in a birch stub under Campbell's Ledge, Luzerne Co., Pa.

It was taken by Harry C. Schooley when with me hunting Duck Hawks eight years ago. They were nest building late in May.

Mr. Schooley is still alive. Dr. B. H. Warren in "Birds of Pennsylvania," pp. 320, gives records of takes of this bird as follows by Dr. Hartman:

In 1866, Willow Swamp, Street Road and later in same swamp which female was identified at Smithsonian for John Krider.

I was talking this matter over with Dr. Hartman on Sept. 4th last.

E. W. CAMPBELL,  
Luzerne Co., Pa.

#### The Editor Has Lately Noted.

First, a Black-crowned Nightheron flew over our head one smoky, foggy

morning in mid-September—a very rare bird in Western New York.

Second.—In a neglected school-yard on Sept. 14th, I found an Olive-backed Thrush that was a victim of some unexplained accident. The right wing had been thrown clear forward so that the bird's head protruded between the three outer primaries and the balance of the wing. The bird was unable to fly and could not extricate itself from the embarrassing predicament.

Glad I happened to pass along before Mr. Tom Cat. On drawing the wing further forward, the bird promptly drew its head out and flew away and a tragedy was averted.

Third.—New York State gives its new Pheasant Law its first trial next month. This law allows a licensed hunter to kill male pheasants every Tuesday and Thursday in October.

Mr. E. H. Short, Chili, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—We had what I consider a curiosity here last month. A Yellow-billed cuckoo nested along the Susquehanna River here the middle of September. The two young birds were incubated on September 13th or 14th. I enclose a very poor print which I snapped on September 18th—you can just make out the young birds reaching up with mouths wide open. The nest was built in a low tree which was covered with a grape vine and was situated about six feet from the ground. Nest was of the usual loose construction of twigs. We are situated on the northern boundary of Pennsylvania. Is it not very unusual to find this species or any other species nesting so late?

H. E. BISHOP, Sayre, Pa.

The print sent was too poor to admit of use for half-tone. Such late nesting is unusual, but is occasionally reported of such species as Mourning Dove, both Am. Cuckoos, Song Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, English Sparrow and the introduced Pheasants.

E. H. SHORT.



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**Dugan May Ride Abroad.**

C. E. Durnell makes the announcement that he has received a telegram from A. J. Joyner, trainer for Harry Payne Whitney, inquiring at what figure Durnell would sell his contract on Eddie Dugan, the jockey. Durnell says he sold only first call on Dugan for the present New York season to Mr. Whitney a year ago and that his contract on the boy runs until May 15, 1909. He has telegraphed to Joyner that he would take \$7,500 for the remaining time the contract has to run. Durnell believes that Joyner is planning to take Dugan to England with him.

**Moran Wants Another Chance.**

Owen Moran's manager was not satisfied with the outcome of the battle with Abe Attell recently, in which the men fought to a draw, and is seeking another go with the featherweight champion. This time he wants the

fight to be at forty-five rounds. He thinks the Englishman can dispose of the American in a longer battle. Attell is willing to sign articles again, but refuses to agree to battle more than twenty-five rounds, which he says is sufficient for him.

**Samse to Star on the Stage.**

Leroy Samse, formerly world's champion in the pole vault, intends to enter the theatrical world via the vaudeville route. The ex-Indiana university star, whose great feat of 12 feet 4 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches at the western interconference meet at Evanston in 1906 stood as the world's mark until broken by Gilbert of Yale, is looking for a partner in the triple parallel bars.

Judge—You said the defendant turned and whistled to the dog. What followed? Intelligent Witness—The dog.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

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The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1, 1908 will be dropped.

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VOL. XXV. No. 11.

ALBION, N. Y., NOV., 1908.

WHOLE No. 256

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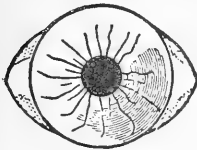
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 11.

ALBION, N. Y. NOVEMBER, 1908.

WHOLE No. 256

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### EDITORIAL.

We regret being unable to use at present many valuable photos for half-tone work.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to several of the friends of The Oologist who have gone to extra

lengths to help our little periodical along during the past year, and sincerely deplore the fact that lack of time to devote to the matter, has resulted in injustice to them in some instances.

In presenting some extracts from an article by C. L. Rawson, in Norwich, Conn. "Bulletin," appearing some time ago, we would add that we hope to present an old timer's view of some recent legislation in our next issue, which will be a personal issue.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

### Around the Flambeau.

My trip in 1905 to this country was one of a scouting excursion which served to acquaint me with the insectivorous and seed-eating birds that occupy the coniferous forests in upper Wisconsin near the Lake Superior region. Upon returning to this territory in June, 1908, I felt fairly confident of success, having acquainted myself previously with the lay of the land, and the songs and notes of these birds, while contrary to the water fowl, are particularly shy and evasive while nesting.

It is not unusual to find our various Warblers and Sparrows frequenting our shaded trees and parks during the semi-annual migrations, when they are of a fearless attitude and quite tame. The water birds, especially ducks and geese, are exceedingly wary while stopping on their northern and southern flights, but to meet them during the period of nidification, they seem little concerned regarding the presence of man and frequently appear

in habited sections, from the upper United States, northward.

The Flambeau River is used extensively for floating logs, and like many of these northern streams, is excellent for trout fishing. About the edges of the timber and in the wild berry bushes, in rather open situations, the Chestnut-sided Warbler was almost as conspicuous as our summer Yellow-bird in Illinois. Shaded portions of the second growth timber seemed fairly well populated with the vivacious Red Start, and his notes were intermingled with the peculiar tell-tale song of the Oven Bird.

I was working with both hands to ward off the ever present mosquitoes, and as I passed among a dense growth of ferns, adjoining the blue-berry marsh, a Peabody bird, White-crowned Sparrow, hopped to a dead limb and chirped saucily. I parted the vegetation and found five extremely handsome eggs of this large sparrow, in a nest imbedded in the long green moss.

In my efforts to follow a Ruffed Grouse, who had been "drumming" at early morn on a poplar ridge, I attempted to locate the female. Progress was very laborious for this part of the timber contained many fallen tree trunks piled cross-wise, four to ten feet high. A Canadian Warbler flitted from beneath the fallen branches ten feet ahead and from the way he moved about twittering nervously, I felt tempted to search for the mate, although the verdure was very dense. I moved about on my knees for half an hour and finally parted the green fern stems on the bank of a little ravine only to discover that I had put my hand on the mother bird who was incubating five of her delicately speckled eggs.

Slate-colored Juncos, Yellow-bellied Sap Suckers, Magnolia Warblers, Scarlet Tanagers and Chimney Swifts

were all breeding in the heavy timber which was composed of spruce, hemlock, pine, cedar, balsam, tamarack, maple and elm. In two instances I noticed the male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks sitting on nests. Several Brown Creepers were in evidence, and I observed one Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker. The Vireos were always in evidence, particularly the Warbling and Red-eye varieties.

In the afternoon, I was strolling leisurely near a lake of considerable size, my eyes were attracted by a Mourning Warbler as he moved about among the swamp grass and reeds in a manner typical of our Yellow-throat.

Suspended from a horizontal limb of a wild plum tree at a height of ten feet above the ground was a new Vireo's nest that I could look into, when standing on a fallen log. The nest contained but a single freshly laid egg. I visited this nest several times at subsequent dates, and on each occasion found a pair of Philadelphia Vireos in possession of this domicile. Either of the birds sitting on the nest showed no suspicion at my approach and would allow me to touch them before vacating their treasures. This nest contained three eggs, when the birds commenced to incubate.

The Olive-back and Wood Thrushes were about equally distributed and both were partial to extremely thick places where a little sunshine reached the earth. The beautiful Black-burnian Warbler could be seen gleaning about the foliage where the thrushes had their nests. In a springy soil frequented by the red deer, I secured my first clutch of Water Thrush. The eggs were imbedded in the deer moss on a little embankment dampened by a spring pool.

One of the first birds that I became acquainted with was the Black-throated Blue Warbler. The song of the male

is very distinct and original. Open places in the woods, where the maples grow from one to ten feet above the ground, seem to be infested with something edible and particularly fascinating to this daintily-hued bird. I had almost resolved that the woodlands contained nothing but bachelors of this strikingly handsome warbler until with the aid of opera glasses, I discerned a female Black-throated Blue acting suspiciously about a clump of maples. After carefully searching, I found a large, bulky, but artistic nest containing four eggs of this variety.

My companion visited a place some miles to the east, but in the vicinity of the same rivulet. He had the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with the Myrtle and Black-throated Green Warblers, also the White-crowned Sparrow. His red letter day was brought to a climax while "still fishing" in the shady portion of a little bay, late one afternoon. A large Buff-breasted Duck flew past his boat, skimming the water's surface and arriving upon a dead pine stub (imbedded in a gravelly part of the beach, on a little point), her feet dangling in the air, she dropped out of sight into the old stump. On examining this old remnant of a once stately pine, the bark was found to be in such a state of decomposition that it was easy to remove the exterior of the stub, and the parent bird could be seen sitting on a level with the eye, and probably three and one-half feet below the entrance. There were twelve eggs of the American Merganser in this hollow, and indications showed there were numerous layers of down, and the bird had evidently resorted to the same place for years.

GERARD ALAN ABBOT.

## THE QUAIL TRAP.

C. L. Rawson.

In Norwich, Conn. Bulletin.

The Quail Trap, Oct. 15.—If over one hundred men with shotguns are to be legally turned loose yearly in every country village in Connecticut there are reasons worth mentioning why the season should not open till Oct. 15. The few young quail are not large enough to shoot, the fall flight of woodcock from the north has not begun, the second litter of gray squirrels are only half grown, and rabbits are not in prime condition for the table till the green summer food is eliminated by heavy frosts.

The most convincing argument to the true sportsman is that leaves are now too thick to allow them to properly sight and kill ruffed grouse. The snap shots taken by ear or guess through screening foliage, wing or wound many partridges that are left unretrieved to slowly die of their hurts. On October 1st, the day the law was off, a grouse raised in the town limits, was driven from the woods bleeding with gunshot wounds to die on a piazza on Beech street. Two badly wounded and dying chicken partridges were taken from the stone walls here, driven afield by hunters who could not follow their line of flight on account of leaves. I have in mind a house near here between two leafy swamps where grouse were raised this year and last season. Driven from one grove towards the other by dogs and guns, some of these birds, blinded by terror, are dashed to death against this house. Some old local shots, because of inability to see flushed grouse, say they will not go into the woods till the last of October. They say it has been too hot in the fields for the dogs and too close in the woods.

Still more to the point this year, young quail at the north are too small to shoot. The New London gunners who crossed the ferry Oct. 1, 2, and 3, into Cedar Groton, Long and Bushy Points and Poquonnoc Plains, report some covies of quail half grown, some two-thirds grown, and one big bunch no larger than sparrows. But 600 unscrupulous local shots are licensed to go out Oct. 1 and kill these bob-white fledglings, which when brought to bag are only tiny bunches of feathers. Full grown young robins, wacups and meadow-larks, fat and fit for the table, are protected by law all the year, while a half-grown quail which could do more good to the farmer than a dozen thrushes, can now be legally plown to pieces.

..Seventy-four hunting licenses and three non-resident were issued in Stonington up to Oct. 7, and there were many more applications. I personally know of a few immature quail in the north part of this town which are now legal game for this licensed crowd. They can also slip over into Groton after the tiny quail reported by the early gunners from New London. But up to the 8th, Groton itself had licensed 150 people to help on this work of extermination. The Groton ferryboat daily carries across some of the 214 New London licenses, including a number of aliens. Up to the 6th of October Woodstock had sent into our woods 66 licensed shooters, and still a big demand for more blanks.

Norwich should be very proud of her work in this line on sending 383 resident hunters into her fields and woods with 3 non-residents so far and 8 aliens! Mr. Holbrook adds, "If they all go and can hit anything, there won't be much game left." Too true, alas! But suppose each one of this regiment kills the 35 birds allowed by

law, any bird-lover can figure out the frightful result.

A respectable squad go out only for fox and coon, but 9 out of 10 gunners shoot at every useful hawk or owl they run across. They one an dall disdain to touch a red squirrel—the most pestiferous enemy of small breeding birds. Some licensees may never use their permits; and no doubt in the general scramble others take out licenses simply because they somehow feel that the yare to be deprived of a privilege they never before cared to exercise. This last sophistry impels the same class to drink in strictly no-license towns. I find in the list of licensees the names of some aliens whom the law was passed to exclude. An unlicensed Italian was last week fined on Fishers Island for shooting a Belgian hare. But what shall we do with the licensed Italians who are sure to fill their bags with small birds?

Our own half-mile strip of home woods, near the Massachusetts line, is overrun by gunners from East Woodstock, Village Corners, West Parish, and Southbridge. With this hot cross fire and the leaves still on, it is not prudent to go chestnutting just at present. I am not overfond of picking No. 11 shot from my skin and clothing, saving still too vivid remembrances of being twice pricked in the old autumn days when every No-ank boy on Fort Hill or Long Point blazed away at everything from a swallow up to a bar-post on the side of a barn.

Some of the younger licensed recruits appear to think that they can now shoot anywhere at will. They should be reminded that neither governor nor president armed with 20 licenses can shoot on my land or your land without permission. A farmer with no papers can shoot game in his own cabbage patch, but he may not

follow his quarry over on his neighbor's territory.

I repeat that the present shooting license gives no privilege that a gunner did not have before. It will not excuse trespass of any kind. Only Saturday last, although he had been warned, an alien Quinebaug factory hand persisted in shooting gray squirrels in a dooryard. In two instances near us small groves near houses, which have hitherto been held immune and protected by common consent, have so early this season been completely cleaned out of gray squirrels. Several times lately, when the graytails were roaming the fields for nuts and sweet apples. I saw gunners sitting in the public road waiting for this small game to come and feed. I lost control of my horse by a sudden shot from one of these men. A village farmer had a partly tame gray squirrel living in his unused old gristmill, and one of these sidewalk gunners deliberately came and shot it. A little too promiscuous and too short range, my friends.

On Long Island the season for quail, grouse, rabbits and squirrels does not open till November 1. As I write on the 15th of October, dense foliage still fills the local woods and swamps. On proepr presentation of these facts, it would seem as if the legislature would proclaim close game season till October 15, and the act would surely be approved by all true sportsmen throughout the state.

C. L. R.

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#### How to Make an Automatic Egg Blower for 50 Cents.

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Every one who does much oological collecting should have an automatic egg blower and take blowing easy, instead of using up all his breath with

one set of eggs. The first thing to do is to secure the following materials:

A small block of wood will not cost anything.  
 One rubber syringe bulb.....\$ 25  
 Two feet of glass tube..... 10  
 One-half foot of rubber tube  
     large enough to fit the brass  
     and glass tube..... 5  
 Small piece of brass tube..... 10

Total .....\$ .50

All these things can be purchased at a drug store except the brass tube, which can be purchased at a hardware store. Take the block of wood and bore a small hole in it. Then get a square piece of wood  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$  inches square, and 3 or 4 inches high, bore a hole through it large enough to insert the brass tube, then whittle the other end small enough to stick it in the hole in the block of wood. Attach the bulb to one end of the tube and a piece of the rubber tube an inch long on the other.

Then take a foot of the glass tube and heat the middel of it red hot in the gas jet, (this will only take a minute); then pull on each end of the tube; it will pull out thinner and thinner as long as you pull. When it is as thin as you want it take it out and break it in the middle, then hold the thin part where you want to bend it up, in the edge of the gas until it bends down by its own weight. Then take it out and fit the large end in the little piece of rubber tube. By this method you can make your blowers much finer than you can buy them, and you can keep the hole in your eggs very small. Then the machine is complete. Be sure to get the air through the end. If you do not have it this way it will not work, because it cannot take air through the small blow pipe, which is in the egg. I hope this will save many collectors some money, and also their breath.

P. G. HOWES,  
 Stamford, Conn.

### Large Set of Florida Gallinule.

On July 10, 1908, I collected a nest and 18 eggs of the Florida Gallinule at Port Richmond, Philadelphia, Pa., which I believe is the largest set on record, at least it is the biggest I have any record of.

As generally happens with big sets it could not be preserved entire, as incubation was advanced in the majority of the eggs, being actually piped in some, and with the most careful and liberal use of caustic potash, I could save only nine and two of these were rotten.

Two of the eggs were of abnormal size, one of these was rotten and was blown, but the other was lost, being pipped; they being fully one-third larger than average-sized eggs of the Water Hen.

Several others were below the average size, but not small enough to be considered abnormal. In shape and color they exhibited the most uniformity, precluding the possibility of their being the product of two females. Furthermore, only one pair of birds inhabited that part of the marsh, which was a small one between an unopened street and a dump, and the birds' two previous sets were collected by me in May and June. These were precisely like the last in shape and coloration, none of the eggs exhibiting a tendency to abnormalism.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Frankford,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

### Malformed Bill of Catbird.

On July 5, 1906, I saw a female (?) Catbird at Frankford, with a malformed bill. The upper mandible was bent entirely backward into the air, the point rising straight upward from the forehead in a perpendicular position.

The bird was well seen at its nest

and from observation, the curious formed bill seemed to have been the result of an accident.

I intended to secure the bird, but boys rifled the nest before I could return and the bird deserted the locality as I couldn't find it afterward. Consequently, I lost an opportunity to study the cause of the malformity and ascertain how it was done.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Frankford, Philadelphia, Pa.

### The Wood Thrush.

Editor Oologist.

Dear Sir:—Last spring a pair of Wood Thrush (No. 755) built a nest and reared a brood of three young in an apple tree about 30 feet from our door, and the birds gathered the material for the nest and food for the young from the garden and dooryard. The nest was of the usual structure, leaves, weeds and a rag, which were formed into the nest wet. This is the first nest out of dozens that I have examined in which no eggs of the cowbird were deposited. The birds were very tame and paid no attention to me when I worked in the garden. This is inside the city limits and I think a little unusual, as I have always found them breeding in dark thickets along the creek, and are rather shy.

W. C. P.,  
Crawfordsville, Ind.

January 1, I had brought to me an adult male Am. Goshawk. The crop was empty, but the bird could hardly have been any fatter.

I have been informed by a correspondent that in the season of 1907, there were collected in Florida fourteen sets of eggs of the Swallow-tailed Kite, more than were ever taken before in one season so far as is known. This was possible only because of the

great drought which rendered regions, ordinarily impenetrable, accessible to collectors.

Wishing you all success for 1908, I am,

Very truly yours,  
B. G. WILLARD,  
Millis, Mass.

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### Three Freaks.

During the past summer I added three interesting freaks to my collection.

The first was a perfectly white woodchuck. It is a half-grown fm; is snow-white, not a dark hair anywhere. Its eyes were pink; even the toe-nails and bottom of its feet were pink. It was killed in an old slashing back in the mountains nearly five miles from the nearest farm, by a dog belonging to a friend, who at the time was on his way to attend to some gas wells.

The second was also a woodchuck. This one was black. It was seen by a friend who told me about it. So, a few days later I went to that locality and lay in ambush in the edge of a piece of woods along the river. After spending the best part of the day the chuck came out and I shot it. This one was an old fm., black as a bear, except the face, which is gray.

The third freak is a meadow-lark. It is very light-colored and has a faded-out whitish appearance. Its wings are dull white.

R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

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### Notes on the Black-billed Cuckoo.

(*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*).

The Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*), is in my opinion one of the most beneficial birds, as it consumes a great number of the apple-tree tent caterpillars, (*Clisiocampa*

*americana*), a hairy species which many birds will not try to feed upon. These caterpillars do a great deal of damage to the young buds of apple and cherry trees, the eggs hatching so early that the young larvae feed upon them before they have time to open, thus destroying all the leaves in each bud.

I once watched one of these cuckoos feasting upon a horde of the caterpillars, and so fond of them was he, that I approached within a foot of him before he noticed my presence, and venting his anger with a loud "kow ou," retreated to the nearest tree.

The birds arrive in the locality during the third week in May but do not commence to build until the first week in June, although I have a set taken May 23rd, 1894.

The nest is a rather loosely constructed affair of small twigs, leaves, and sometimes a feather or two, and in my experience has always been lined with maiden-hair ferns. It was a great surprise to me when I found a nest lined with this material in a locality in which I have many a time looked in vain for this fern. This seems to show that they sometimes take their material from some little distance from the spot selected for the nest.

The place selected for the nest is a small tree or bush usually in a fairly dry location and is built from six inches to twenty feet above the ground, and is of such small size that it is not at all conspicuous.

The nest which I mentioned above, I found in a scrubby apple tree at the foot of a hay-covered field, while out searching for meadow-larks on June 12th, 1907. I happened to look up and among the foliage noticed a small nest at the extremity of a limb about 15 feet above the ground, and on climbing up, saw the female bird leave the nest, which contained two eggs.

These, of course, I left, and on returning on the 16th of June, found no more eggs so I concluded that it was a full set.

The eggs are either elliptical or globular in form, and are about the color of those of the Blue-birds, and sometimes covered with a yellowish-brown stain.

The song of this bird, though not considered beautiful; to me in the early morning hours, while starting on a collecting trip, is one of charm and fascination. Two sets which I measured are as follows: Set No. 1, two eggs, 1.02x.80 and .95x.79. Set No. 2, three eggs, 1.05x.77; 1.03x.74 and 1.01x.76.

The birds leave for the south the last week in September.

P. G. HOWES,

Stamford, Conn.

#### The Distance We Dance.

Dancing is a strenuous exercise. Calculations show the distances negotiated in a night by fan enthusiasts and their partners to be worthy the performance of athletes. Thus the average waltz turn will require a dancer to travel over 1,300 yards. Other round dances in their accomplishment involve: The mazurka, 1,050 yards; the polka, a trifle under the thousand; the pas de quatre, barely 900 yards. Quadrilles, however, hold the record, since dancing of one entails on each of the eight persons in the set the achievement all unwittingly of a constitutional a mile and a quarter long, while dancing the full card, inclusive of the cotillon, at a ball beginning, say, at 10 o'clock at night and winding up at 5 o'clock the following morning necessitates the taking of 28,000 steps, or a total distance covered of over eleven miles.—Harper's Weekly.

#### Pewter Colored Brass.

A pewterlike appearance may be imparted to brass by boiling the castings in a cream of tartar solution containing a small amount of chloride of tin.

#### ADAM AND EVE.

**W**HEN Adam was created  
He dwelt in Eden's shade,  
As Moses has related,  
And soon a bride was made,

He had no conversation,  
But seemed to be alone  
Till to his admiration  
He found he'd lost a bone.

Great was his exultation  
When first he saw his bride;  
Great was his elevation  
To see her by his side.

He spoke as in a rapture,  
"I know from whence she came;  
From my left side extracted,  
And woman is her name."

The woman she was taken  
From under Adam's arm,  
So she must be protected  
From injury and harm.

The woman she was taken  
From near to Adam's arm,  
By which we are directed  
That they must never part.

Likewise that he should love her  
And treat her as a friend;  
Prize nothing else above her  
Till life shall have an end.

The woman was not taken  
From Adam's head, we see,  
So she is not to rule him,  
The meaning seems to be.

—Anonymous.

#### A Mathematical Puzzle.

Most people are fond of good puzzles, and many are not entirely happy until they have solved them, but the man who resolves not to go to bed until he has found a divisor without a remainder (other than 1 and itself) for 1,111,111,111,111,111,111 will be able to earn a good living afterward as a sleepless wonder. For nobody in the world yet knows whether that number has a divisor or not.

#### Traveling Toothbrush Case.

A traveling case for a toothbrush is within the powers of unskilled fingers. In making this use a piece of rubber cloth two inches wide and more than double the brush length. Form it into a long, narrow bag to be slipped into a second bag fashioned from silk or ribbon. The mouth of the second or outer bag is finished neatly, and there is a drawstring of narrow cord.



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## FARM FOR WOMEN ONLY.

### Fruits and Flowers to Be Grown Each Month by Electricity.

Long Island is to have an "Adamless Eden," Mme. Davidoff, a native of Russia, but now a resident of New York city, is establishing an experimental farm at Bellecrest, near Northport, N. Y., which will be operated by women. Men will be barred from the greenhouses, where fruits and flowers are to be grown every month in the year by the aid of electricity. While similar experiments have been made by this and other governments, Mme. Davidoff believes her experiments will prove more successful than those carried on by the bureau of plant industry of the department of agriculture.

Mme. Davidoff is a writer for magazines. She says the experiments will be based on the theory that the growth of vegetable matter, which ceases at sundown, will continue through the night if proper artificial light is supplied to stimulate the developing powers of plants. Fruits and flowers that are grown near New York only in the spring and summer months, she believes, can be cultivated during the entire year by supplying the necessary artificial heat through the electrical process that will be adopted.

"This is not intended as a money making enterprise," said Mme. Davidoff the other night. "While, of course, we expect the experiments to prove successful and the farm to be self supporting, yet my object is to make it a philanthropic enterprise with the view of helping members of my own sex as well as to prove the scientific value of the plan with which I have been experimenting for several years. There is no connection between my venture and the utterances of Sir Oliver Lodge, the English savant, relative to the influence of electricity on plant life. The two systems differ chiefly from the fact that all of my experiments are made under glass and under certain conditions a static machine is used in addition to dynamos."

Active work on the farm at Bellecrest will begin, she says, within one month, upon the completion of the necessary buildings and the installation of the electrical apparatus.

## CHURCH BUSINESS MANAGER.

### Innovation to Be Tried by Methodists In Cleveland.

The Epworth Memorial Methodist church in Cleveland, O., has decided to try a new system of church management. A business manager has been appointed, who will give his entire time and attention to the finances of the church. As executive secretary he will collect the benevolences, dues of members, subscriptions, etc., and pay all expenses. He will serve as secretary of the standing committees of the church and keep a record of their business for transmission to the official board. This, it is expected, will leave the pastor free to give attention to the larger plans of the work and to his pulpit and pastoral duties.

Epworth Memorial has the largest membership of all the Protestant churches in Cleveland. It has an extensive charity work and handles over \$35,000 in contributions every year. Dr. G. K. Morris, district superintendent, strongly commends the innovation. "To my mind," he says, "it is the ideal of church government. I expect to see the plan adopted in many other cities."

### Jerusalem Pudding.

Stir into one pint of heavy cream that has been whipped stiff a half package of gelatin which has been soaked for a half hour in one cup cold water, then dissolved over the kettle. Add one-half cup pulverized sugar, one-half cup boiled rice, one-quarter cup chopped figs, one teaspoonful vanilla and preserved ginger and hickory or almond nut meats to taste. Mold and allow it to become perfectly chilled. Serve in high glasses with candied cocoanut balls and candied ginger. Set the glasses on a plate with a dolly between glass and plate.

# NEW POLICY

## Subscribers, Advertisers

### —NOTICE—

FIRST. In line with the decision recently published by the "Condor" and for the same reasons, i e. That the provision for scientific collecting under the Song Bird Law did not contemplate commercial collecting.

The Publisher and Manager of this paper, the "Oologist," hereby announce that, beginning November last, they will, hereafter decline all advertisements or sale notices offering to buy or sell, N. American bird skins or eggs for cash except skins of game birds and birds of prey.

SECOND. Hereafter the "Oologist" will be sent only to subscribers whose subscriptions are fully paid in advance.

All premium offers except as printed in this issue or hereafter are hereby withdrawn. A statement of account to date will soon be sent all who are in arrears and those who have not settled in accordance with terms thereon by January 1, 1908 will be dropped.

**Canadian Subscribers Notice.** Owing to the increased Canadian postage, combination and premium offers will not apply to Canada subscriptions unless accompanied by 12 cents per year extra.

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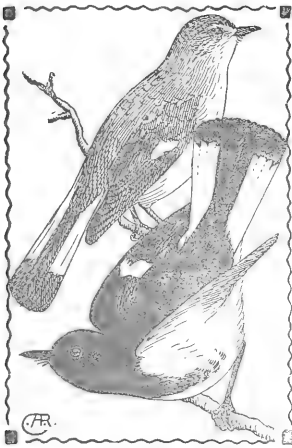
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VOL. XXV. No. 12.

ALBION, N. Y., DEC., 1908.

WHOLE No. 257

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Examine the number following your name on the wrapper of this month's Oologist. It denotes when your subscription expired or will expire.

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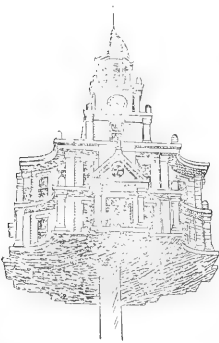
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXV. No. 12. ALBION, N. Y. DECEMBER, 1908. WHOLE No. 257

## THE OOLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
OOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY AND TAXI-  
DERMY.

FRANK H. LATTIN, Publisher,  
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ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Manager.

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### BETWEEN US.

With the New Year, the ownership  
and control of "THE OOLOGIST"  
passes absolutely to the undersigned.  
For the past three years it has been  
purely a "labor of love," and for part

of that time has been issued at a pos-  
itive financial loss.

During the past year it has been  
my intention to discontinue it with  
this issue.

My many other interests have often  
delayed its issue, sometimes simply  
because I could not devote enough at-  
tention to it to see that it was gotten  
out in its order after I had sent the  
copy to our printer; and again errors  
and oversights, aggravating to both  
contributors and advertisers, as well  
as the manager, crept in, usually at-  
tributable to my not being able to  
personally oversee the final make-up  
before going to press.

But on mentioning the probable fate  
of our little journal to several corre-  
spondents, I called forth a universal  
protest, and in some cases, the Oolo-  
gist's friends, old and new, refuse to  
consider such a fate as possible.

Again too, I am in receipt of much  
interesting material, original articles,  
photos, etc., that would seem to indi-  
cate more interest in its welfare than  
I anticipated.

Therefore, I have decided to place  
the Oologist in the hands of its friends  
for at least one year.

All the five, four and three-year spe-  
cial offer subscribers with few unim-  
portant exceptions, expire with this  
number.

No copies will be sent to anyone  
unless paid in advance. Recent pos-  
tal rulings make this necessary.

All subscriptions must be at 50c.  
per year in United States and 62c. in  
Canada and Europe.

I will still give the 25-word adv.

coupon with each year's subscription.

A few changes have been suggested.

Many wish it mailed flat. If I get financial support sufficient to warrant this I will do so.

Some desire it to be issued as a new series, to begin all over at Vol. I, No. 1.

I hardly see how this would add to its value.

Others ask for a complete index from Vol. I. to date. This would be too bulky to mail as one issue, and would entail considerable extra expense.

How much demand is there for it?

In the immediate future, at least, I expect to be able to give the *Oologist* more of my personal attention.

I hope to present through its columns a new check list of N. Am. Birds, giving the changes and additions since 1906; to use more of the excellent photos now in my hands for half-tone illustrations, and also to begin at the beginning of the A. O. U. list with the Grebes, and devote about one page each month to the description of one or more birds, showing habitat, nesting and eggs and index to contributions, treating of same, in back issues of the *Oologist*.

There are three back numbers that I experience great difficulty in getting enough for files wanted. I hope to be able to reprint these in the near future.

I have always tried to protect our readers from unscrupulous advertisers. I have a few cases under investigation now. It will not do to rush into print with matters of this kind, as there is often another side to such complaints.

In a few cases, where actual fraud seems proved, the aggrieved party has not consented to publication of the facts.

It is needless to state that unless we are assured that restitution has been made such persons, further advertising will be declined.

If during the past year you have failed to receive a copy or more due you, I will gladly supply you with a duplicate on demand.

Any one whose subscription expired during the past year, and who sends me \$1.00 for two years in advance, can have the intervening issues of 1908, from the last copy received up to December, sent free by mentioning the fact when sending in subscription.

In closing I repeat that the "*Oologist's*" future is entirely experimental, and its fate rests with you. I do not care for promises. I want cash subscriptions, fresh, breezy notes on up-to-date subjects, patronage for our advertising columns.

If I get these the *Oologist* will be self-supporting, and I ask no more.

Hereafter all communications of any nature relating to the *Oologist* should be addressed to me at Box 173, Rochester, N. Y.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

Petersburg, Va., Sept. 17, 1907.  
Editor *Oologist*.

Dear Sir:—On June 5, 1904, I found a nest of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird with a newly hatched bird in it. The nest was situated on a small limb of a cedar tree, about twenty feet up. Returning to the nest a few days later I secured the young bird, and as it was so young, I took the nest also. I kept it for about a week and a half, when it became strong enough to leave the nest, and as soon as it did so, I placed it in a small cage. The bird became very tame in a short time and would come from the cage and sit upon my finger to drink the sweetened water with which I fed it, and would chirp very loudly when it was hungry. It

soon proved to be a very fine male with an exquisite plumage. Several times during its captivity it escaped to the open air, but never went too far away for me to catch it and return it to the cage. As the bird grew larger (it now being two months old) I thought that some honey would be more suitable food for it, but I soon found to my disappointment that I had made a mistake, for it died after being fed only a few times on it.

I would like to know if any other subscriber has had an experience in raising hummingbirds, and how he succeeded.

Yours truly,  
D. H. BURGESS,  
Petersburg, Va.

---

#### The Henslow's Sparrow in Philadelphia County, Penn.

---

There are no records of the Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodronus henslowi*) being seen or taken during recent years in Philadelphia county, Pa.

At least, I have heard tell of none, and offer the following two records as the only ones to my knowledge of the bird's occurrence in this small county.

On September 29, 1903, one was observed near the Friends' Asylum, at Frankford, in a railroad cut, perched on a dead willow sapling branch, several feet up, not ten feet away from me, where it alighted, when frightened from a small stream that flowed through the cut, where it had been drinking. It flew away into a near-by field, when I approached too near, as I did, to obtain a better view, and it was well seen and identified positively.

The other bird was seen on April 20, 1906, at Holmesburg, in a grassy field, over a mile from the Delaware river, and on high ground. It was

flushed out of the grass by my Fox-terrier and alighted onto a bare wild cherry branch, where it afforded a clear, unmolested view, with its recognition marks plainly discernible in the clear light, and at the close proximity of about five feet. It remained perched barely half a minute, but I was so near that I could readily distinguish it and not mistake it for a Grasshopper or any other Sparrow, then flew into the bushes (a row of shrubs, etc., in a field), where it was impossible for my dog to flush it.

These two birds are the only ones I have positively identified as *Ammodronus henslowi*, for I have seen several other of the Fringillidæ that looked like this species, but was always unable to secure a good, clear view of them, as in these two cases, consequently they cannot be included on account of their doubtful authenticity.

On October 6, 1908, my brother, William Mc K. Miller, shot at Harrogate, Philadelphia county, Pa., with a sling shot, a Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodronus henslowi*), thus establishing an authentic record of its occurrence in this small county. The bird was a male in fall plumage and its skin is now in my collection. On two other occasions I have seen and positively identified the Henslow's Bunting in this county, but the capture of a bird places beyond all possibility of a doubt the authenticity of its occurrence.

RICHARD F MILLER,  
Frankford, Philadelphia, Pa.

---

#### A Raven's Nest in a Barn.

---

One nice sunny day in April, a friend and myself went on a collecting trip, using a horse and buggy for convenience. We had not been gone over an hour before we came to a

large oak tree, where a Pacific Horned Owl had its nest, and my friend climbed the tree and found two large young owls.

Then we started on, and came to two large oak trees. A Western Red-tail flew off a nest and I went up to the nest, which was placed 80 feet up, and found two eggs, badly incubated.

Then we soon came to an old barn from which a Raven flew out, and I looked at the corner of the barn and saw a good looking nest. My friend went up to it and found five fresh eggs. I saw a Barn Owl come out of a box, and went to the box and found eight eggs, five fresh and three with incubation just started.

We then went over the hills to some large cliffs, and got a set of six Raven.

I also found a nest of Am. Raven in a barn with young. Is that not a queer place for Ravens to nest?

I also found a set of Desert Sparrow Hawks in a pigeon box, and a set of Eagle's eggs in an old hawk's nest.

I have been interested in Oology for several years and these are new records for me.

I have a set of 6 Ark. Kingbird, and took a set of 8 Calif. Shrike, but they were badly incubated.

Please let me know if this is a new place for ravens to nest, or is it common?

FRED TRUESDALE,  
Shandon, Calif.

The Am. Raven could hardly be called a common breeding bird anywhere in the United States.

Their utilizing barns was undoubtedly a matter of convenience, as with the Chimney Swift, Phoebe, and Cliff Swallow.—EDITOR.

### Here and There.

On board S. S. Rappahannock, Liverpool, off the coast of Ireland, July 11, 1906. I was awakened this morning about three o'clock by the scream of a gull; and it was not long till I was on deck, eager for my first glimpse of land. To the northeast, like a cloud, was the coast of Ireland, dim in the morning twilight, but growing larger and plainer as we drew nearer. As yet there were few gulls, but when within a mile of the shore—along which we coasted most of the day—they circled around the ship by the thousands, and hovered in countless numbers over the rocks. It was a fine sight for the bird-man; and anyone else would find interest in the little white villages nestled away in the valleys; or in the grim castles and watch towers clinging to the rocks. The gulls were very bold and I succeeded in "snapping" one, but the weather was too cloudy for good results. The gulls almost entirely disappeared with the Irish coast, a few ducks being about all that was seen in passing Wales.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thursday, Aug. 2. About 500 miles from land. About 10 a. m., Wilson's (or Stormy) Petrels made their appearance by the dozens, fore and aft. Sailors call them "Mother Cary's chickens." They are graceful birds, long-winged and medium legs; they appear to stand on the water sometimes and never fly high over it, generally keeping to the lee side of the ship, though they seem to have no difficulty in flying against the wind. Flight is quick and easy, usually soaring, with quick wing-beats of short duration every few seconds.

\* \* \* \* \*

Are Phoebes common in other localities? They have almost entirely disappeared here. A few years ago

**FRANK H. LATTIN,**  
**Albion, N. Y.**

January 1, 1909.

Kind Friend:

Altho' it has been over five years since I have issued a list I still have hundreds of dollars locked up in my old line of business. I need this money for other purposes and the material in which it is now locked up I know would be appreciated by others. This material I shall offer for sale monthly, during 1909 regardless of value. I shall endeavor to make the prices so low that the bulk will be sold nearly as soon as offered. However if anything is left, 30 days after issuance of list, **make me an offer** and you may secure it at your own price, for if I can not sell at my low rates I shall accept and sell at the best price offered.

I wish to call your attention in particular to Capen's Oology. I have only 15 copies left and last winter I advised a list of 100 bird-men of my **find** and sold them 36 copies. **Quick if you want a copy.**

If you **know** of a school or Public Institution desiring anything in the line of collections just call their attention to what I offer. They go at less than one half value.

If you wish to conduct a Curio, Souvenir and Natural History store (exclusive privilege) at Chautauqua during July and August write me for particulars. Only a few hundred dollars required.

Faithfully, FRANK H. LATTIN.

N. B. If you want or can use anything offered on the following pages, order quick.

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they were found to be breeding in almost any out-house, and under bridges, but they disappeared with the Blue-birds. The Blue-birds came back, and are now as common as ever, but the Phoebes still remain away. It is a pity, too, they are such friendly birds; here, a forerunner of spring rather than the Blue-bird, which remains during the winter; and among the first of the smaller birds to breed. I have found them as early as March 7th. I found only one nest last year; this year none, and don't remember of having seen a single bird.

\* \* \* \* \*

As to whether birds in general are growing scarcer is a hard question. It seems to me that there is little noticeable change. Perhaps, though, the decrease of one species is more marked than the increase of others. As I have said, the Phoebe has almost entirely disappeared, while the Wood Thrush is much more abundant than formerly; and may this tribe continue to increase, for the Mocking-bird in all his glory, cannot compare with the Wood Thrush in song. All the semi-domesticated birds, Chipping Sparrow, Cat-bird, Brown Thrasher, Humming-bird, etc., seem to be holding their own in spite of that "rat of the air," English Sparrow.

JACOB BOSTIAN,  
Statesville, N. C.

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#### More Notes on the Swamp Sparrow.

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In reply to Mr. Miller's article in the June Oologist, I desire to make the following statement.

First, I believe the Swamp Sparrow to be a more common resident in Virginia than in any other Atlantic state, for the reason that it is nearer the center of the breeding territory, and has a greater number of rivers and marshes than any eastern state.

As Mr. Miller seems to fear somewhat that I have mistaken the Song Sparrow for the Swamp Sparrow, I can assure him that there is absolutely no doubt about the identity of this species, as nearly all the nests I have were taken from tall grasses, partly submerged by several inches of water; and none of them over ten feet from water; moreover, female birds were often flushed from nests, afterward alighting on the ground in some nearby grass.

The nest of the Swamp Sparrow is generally composed of dead marsh grasses entirely, but at times it varies widely, using almost anything available, such as leaves, sticks, bits of paper and the down of cat-tails. On several occasions I have found nests lined carefully with fine grass and horse-hair. The depth and construction of these nests vary immensely. Some are so loose and fragile as to nearly drop to pieces when removed from nesting site, while others are heavy and compactly built. The earliest date I record is a set of five eggs taken May 6, '06; while the latest set contained four eggs, taken July 12, '06.

Out of a series of nine sets in my collection, all collected from Chesterfield county, in 1906, five sets contain four eggs, and four contain five. I believe in a large series sets of four and five would be equally common, although a collector recently stated that the only three sets he had ever found contained five eggs each. Sets of three are unrecorded in this locality.

Mr. Miller's wholesale robbery would be very slight compared to a heavy freshet washing down the river. In June and July, especially, the water often raises 8 or 10 feet in the James River after a heavy rain and often leaves the high grass flat on the marsh. Then what becomes of the

ness? There are often several weeks of dry weather and just as the season is in its height a heavy rain washes everything away and when the high grass is leveled out, empty nests can easily be found that were entirely out of sight before.

I take the James River marshes as an example, as the Swamp Sparrow appears to be commoner, and a larger colonizer here than any other marsh I have visited. Just after sunset a large number of these birds can be seen running along the ground, and making short flights among the cat-tails.

The marking of the eggs of this species vary to a great extent. They in no wise closely resemble the eggs of the Song Sparrow found in this locality. Most of the latter are so covered, blurred and splotched with reddish-brown as to give them almost a chocolate color, while the eggs the Swamp Sparrow are clearly and distinctly marked on a pale blue ground color, the markings never covering more than one-third of the entire area, and often less, while I have one set of the Song Sparrow so obliterated with brown as to render the ground color almost invisible. The eggs of the Swamp Sparrow average a trifle larger than the Song Sparrow and do not appear to have the glossy surface of the former. In conclusion I would say the sets of the Swamp Sparrow before me now in their original nests, make the finest showing in my collection of more than two hundred sets, and I believe one particular set contains the most beautiful eggs I have.

THOS. SEMMES, JR.

Blue Rapids, Kas., Nov. 19, '08.

Dear Mr. Short:—

May I comment, as briefly as possible, on the "rounding-up" which Messrs. Rockwell and Warren have

given me in *The Oologist* for current September?

In the matter of the domestic habits of the Western Kingbird, their criticisms are well founded; and I take my medicine, therefore and therefor, with all alacrity. Yet the last word is not said:

That statements, as to outre or little-known nesting conditions are to be found, unverified, in Davie's *Work on Oology* proves nothing. My only confession, in this one matter is, that I did *not* notice, in Davie, the Shields citation as authority for statements as to the domestic nesting-habit of the Western Kingbird. Had I done so, the citation would have been made in my notes in "Nesting Ways;" and my strictures in the *Oologist* would never have been written. The same excuse must maintain as regards the *Life History* citations for the Western Kingbird. With thousands of references to look up, in connection with my current work on the nesting habits of North American Birds, it may be considered fairly excusable that one should overlook important items with regard to species which he, himself, has familiarly studied. My error lay in concluding that the habits of the Western Kingbird in Southern Minnesota, (where it has but recently found a wing-hold), were uniform with those which maintain in regions of settled habitation. This is an error for which one really ought to be ashamed.

In the matter of the Western Kingbird-Say Phoebe ledge-nesting controversy, I am intimately familiar with both birds in question, in their breeding haunts. Yet I would not presume to pronounce on the identity of a suppositious specimen of either, at some little distance, on the wing: (unless the bird's note were heard). Moreover, were I to see, at some distance,

without hearing the bird's call, a nest on a ledge having a bird possibly of either of the above species near by, only the most intimate verification would induce me to pronounce as to the identity in question. Any careful observer would bear me out in taking this position. Contemporary records are so full of snap-shot identifications and second-hand identifications that one is entirely justified in requiring ample verification in any case of doubt. One can well afford to be captious in the quest of truth, that he should occasionally err, through oversight, may be forgiven.

This question is of so burning an importance that I venture to cumber the pages of the Oologist with this explanation. I could tell your readers of items appearing in Condor, Bird-Lore and The Auk which, on the face of them, will not stand for critical scrutiny. The same is true of published records in both Davie and in the later work covering the same field. One can find errors, more or less grave, in almost every other page of these two books. To call attention to these, to run the risk of being considered naggy and over-critical in the incessant demands one must make for verification is deliberately worth the while; if only it lead even a few of our younger bird students to a habitual exactness and criticalness of spirit, with regard to their own investigations. If, as I know to be true, there are a few men of national repute, as bird students, who cannot verify a few of their own past published records, it well becomes the smaller fry among us, (including the writer hereof), to be humble to a degree.

My own estimate of Messrs. Rockwell and Warren needs no other comment than this: Every germane note, published by either, has been incorpo-

rated, long since, in the manuscript of "Nesting Ways." Mr. Rockwell's valuable article on the Western and Cassin Kingbirds had been cited, given full personal credit, some time before the September Oologist reached me. I here tender to both the gentlemen in question sincere thanks for the additions to our knowledge which are made in the Rockwell-Warren article which has called forth the present rejoinder. Neither of these observers need fear any outbreak of what Browning so aptly called "goose-criticism," if only they will take the pains, hereafter, to assure readers of their articles of something more fully entitled to ones respect than mere bird-in-the-bush identification.

P. B. PEABODY.

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#### The House Sparrows as Flycatchers.

Has this plebeian of the city streets aspired to act the role of the aristocratic Flycatcher? Such seems to be the fact, for at times, certain of these individuals can be seen to rise from the chimneys and telegraph poles, hover in the air over some insect, and return to the vantage point in the precise manner of the Kingbird or Pewee, when in search of meals.

If, in conjunction with their services as street scavengers, these obnoxious pests would undertake the duties of followers of aerial prey, although it is doubtful if the house-fly has any aerial aspirations, they would do much to ameliorate the conditions caused by their extreme aggressiveness.

I was witness of a case where two of these tatter-de-malions attempted to capture a June-bug much too large for their efforts. I was apprised of the disturbance by the fall of the insect near where I was standing, followed by the two birds. The defensive

armor of the insect seemed to be impervious to the attacks of the birds, but the arrival of more sparrows finished the career of the helpless insect.

This is the first case coming under my observation in which sparrows were so pugnacious as to attack an insect as large as the June-bug, although I have often observed them attack house-flies upon the wing.

FRED T. THORPE,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Raine's Camp, near Lethbridge,  
Alberta, N. W. C., May 24.

Dear Mr. Short:—

My son and I came up here on a collecting trip, and the best thing we have run across so far is a colony of Richardson's Merlins, nesting in a wood of poplars down on the flats of the Belly River. There appears to be about 20 pairs nesting here. We have found some nesting in old Magpies' nests, others nest in cavities of tree trunks where old branches have broken off, while a few nest in holes in trees like the American Sparrow Hawk. The female sits very close, in some cases allowing me to climb half way up the tree before she leaves her nest. Then she flies out of the nest with a scream and the male bird then appears on the scene, also screaming. The birds are so bold that they are easily shot. The eggs are very beautiful and rich in color and are of the same character as eggs of the European Merlin, but average somewhat larger in size. As you are aware, very few sets of this rare little Falcon have been taken by Oologists, and none have been taken outside of Alberta. This region seems to suit his habits, and the reason this bird breeds in colonies is because trees do not grow on the prairie; the only place trees are found is in the sheltered river bot-

toms. Therefore the birds for miles around have to resort to the river bottoms and the old Magpie nests which abound here seem to offer them suitable nesting sites. This is the reason so many pairs are found nesting so close together.

From here we go to Northern Alberta to the breeding haunts of the Lesser Yellow-legs and Solitary Sandpiper, and after that we intend to proceed to Banff in the Rockies to collect eggs of birds that nest in the mountains, and expect to be back in Toronto about July 1st, when I will write you a short account of our western trip.

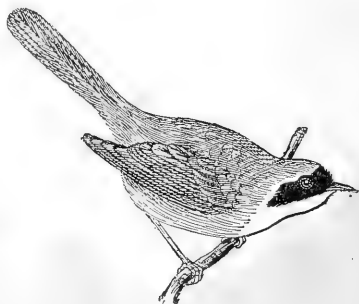
Yours truly,  
W. RAINE.

GAL ONE —Oologist

#### Late Nesting of Song Sparrow.

On Sept. 3, 1908, I found here a Song Sparrow's nest containing one young bird. On Sept. 12th, it was found dead in the nest. Later on Sept. 26th, I found in Sharon a deserted nest of this species, containing 1 egg, which blew as easy as a fresh one, and whose contents seemed quite fresh. This egg, it would seem, must have been laid this month, as its contents were not in the least rotten.

SIDNEY F. BLAKE,  
Stoughton, Mass.





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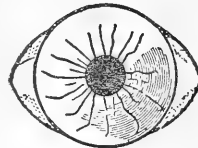
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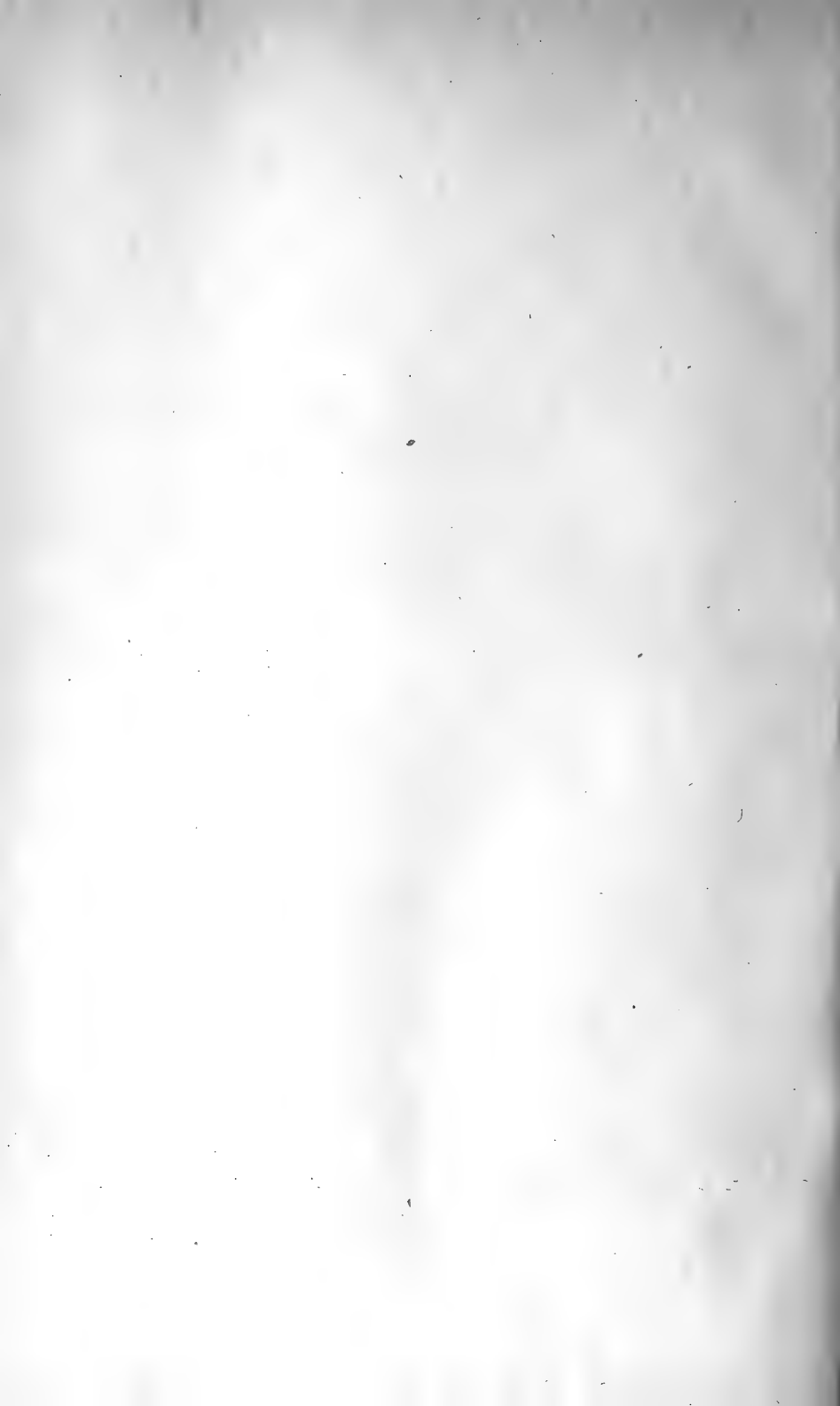
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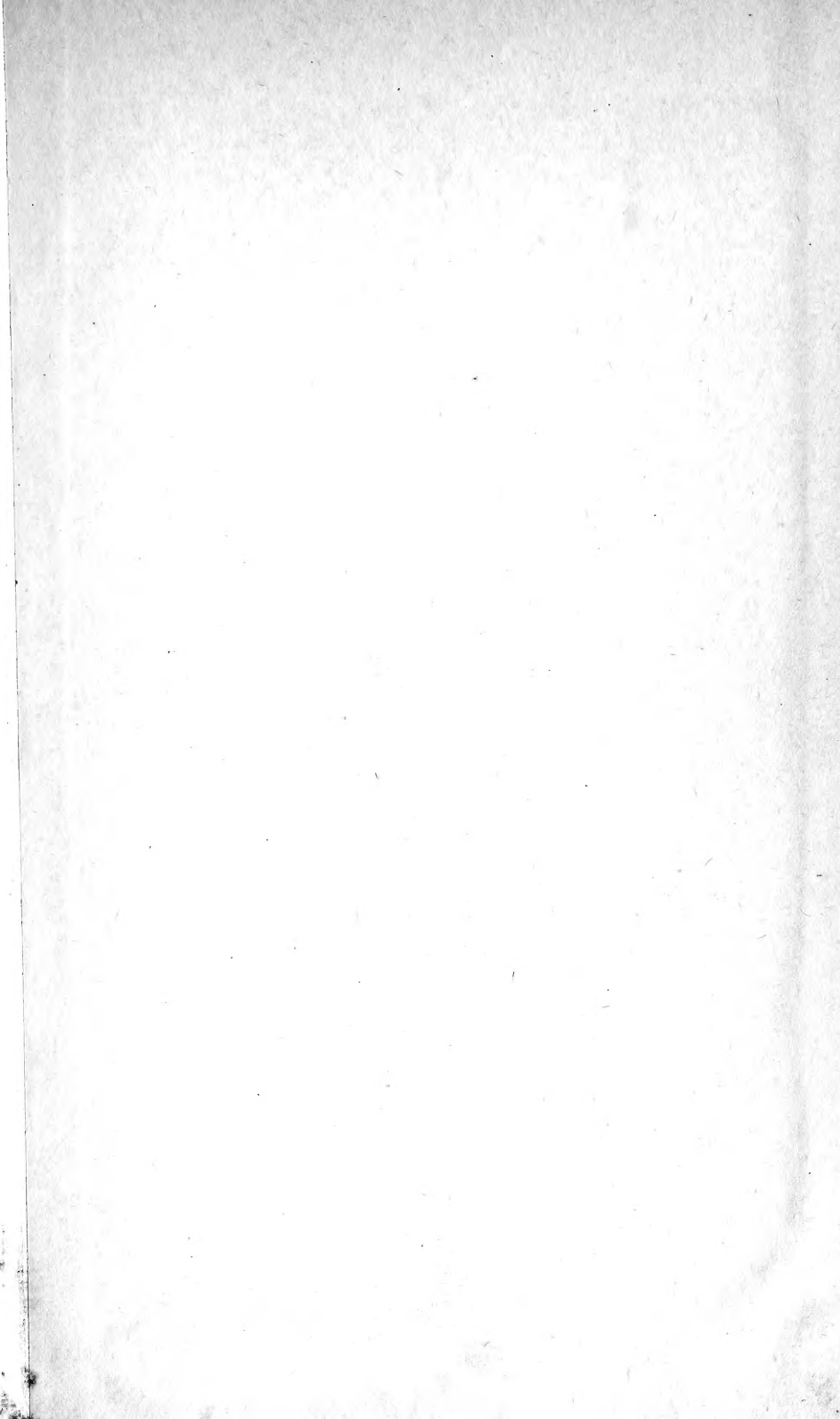












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