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# THE OOLOGIST,

FOR THE

# STUDENT OF BIRDS

# THEIR NESTS AND EGGS



VOLUME XXVI



ALBION, N. Y., AND LACON, ILL.  
R. MAGOON BARNES, PUBLISHER,  
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VOL. XXVI. No. 1.

ALBION, N. Y., JAN., 1909.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

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ALBION, N. Y. JANUARY, 1909.

WHOLE No. 258

## THE OÖLOGIST,

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

**ERNEST H. SHORT, Editor and Publisher,**  
Correspondence and items of interest to the  
student of Birds, their Nests and Eggs, solicited  
from all.

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### ECHOS FROM FLORIDA.

Nov. 26—Found set of Ground Dove  
to-day which makes a record of nest-  
ing for every month in year here in  
Florida. Heretofore November has  
been only month that I did not find  
birds nesting. Last year, Oct. 28,  
was last date I noted eggs in nest of  
Ground Dove, and February 5th was  
first date for this species. To-day I

noted Fla. White-breasted Nuthatch  
making a hole in old pine stump.  
Watched her for 1-4 hour and she  
would come to opening and drop out  
a piece of wood every minute. Am go-  
ing to watch this and see when she  
will lay.

The following are some notes copi-  
ed from my field book for 1908 and  
might prove of interest to Ornitholo-  
gists in general.

March 1st visited a colony of Ward  
Heron, to-day, and found every nest  
with young in. This is two weeks  
earlier than I ever found them hatch-  
ed. Found several Black Vulture just  
starting to set, a little early for them  
also. I have noted that Black Vul-  
tures that nest in the pine woods  
raise two broods. (They are partial  
to a nesting place, using the same  
place of repeatedly disturbed. I know  
of one nest from which two sets were  
taken exactly 30 days apart and in 5  
weeks to the day found the old one  
setting on two more eggs. This last  
set was allowed to hatch but was the  
handsomest set of the three. I am  
positive all are from same bird as  
they showed the same type of mark-  
ings and were all of same size.)

April 6, up before day and after a  
long ride with my companion arrived  
at edge of swamp. After struggling  
along through mire and dense under-  
brush, some places where the sun  
never shone through the gloomy mass  
crawling over partly submerged cy-  
press logs that were as slimy and  
slipery as an eel, slipping off these  
into the mire below into places that  
had no bottom for 10-foot pole. We  
alternately pulled each other out of  
these bogs and a man by himself  
would surely have perished. My  
cracker companion remarked that this  
place would Bog a Buzzard's shadow.  
Not far wrong I thought. All of this  
trouble because I saw a pair of Ivory  
Billed Woodpeckers fly to this swamp  
a couple of months before and I want-  
ed to find their home. We passed  
through a small colony of American

Egret and saw full sets that were near the hatching stage. Also noted a large number of Water Turkeys nesting and a few Yellow-crowned Nighthérons nesting with the Egrets. Also found a very few Fla. Cormorants. While up a small cypress looking at a nest of young Anhinga I cast my eye through the swamp and spied my Ivory-billed leaving a hole in a sizeable cypress about 60 feet from the mire. I was so elated that I shouted, of course, and nearly lost my balance. Hastily coming down we arrived at base of this cypress and after a very arduous climb rammed my arm down the cavity and found 5 young Ivory Bills nearly full fledged. To say, I was delighted at finding this nest is putting it mildly and to say I was disappointed in not getting a set is also using mild language. I stayed up the tree for full 30 minutes and never saw any more of the old ones, although I heard one a little distance in the swamp. These noble birds are sure scarce, in all my rambles through swamp and in several parts of the state do not think I have ever seen more than a dozen adult birds.

This is my first nest of this bird, but I hope not my last. The cavity was fully 20 inches deep and dug out of the live tree. While up this tree I counted 8 nests with old one on of Osprey. But was too tired to investigate any nests to note the stage of incubation.

April 10, I was hastily called to-day to my small colony of American Egrets that I had been trying to protect. Word was brought me that shooting had been heard there for a full hour. When I got there I found that the murderous Plume Hunters had found my birds and had left them. But left them dead on the ground. In a couple of instances the plume had been stripped from birds not yet dead. But Buzzards were right on their job alright and Crows and Hawks also were around. The nests almost all contained young, for the most part just hatched out, these little innocent things left to starve and become the prey of Vultures and Crows, etc., all because heartless women want to adorn their hats with some plumes. It looks hardly possible that any one living in this day of enlightenment would want an ornament

that caused so much ruthless destruction in obtaining. It is sure a sad sight to visit a murdered roost, and I want no more of it in mine. But I am more fully determined than ever to save the few that are left in this locality. Three years ago there were 500 pairs, now about 30.

April 19, I found some nice things today. A pair of wary "Lord Gods" (Pileated Woodpecker) kept me guessing, but I was a good guesser myself and beat them. I found their abode in a dead pine snag about 30 feet up, cavity contained a badly incubated set of 4 eggs. Visited the old home of my friends, Aix Sponsa, but some one else had visited it first and had pushed the snag over and I counted the remains of at least a dozen fresh eggs mixed with the down. Another home I found undisturbed and left it so. To-day I found my first Florida Duck nest in this part of the State. Wild Turkeys seem to be pretty plentiful to-day, and all with nice large sets in and if "varmints" do not get the eggs, think there will be lots of this game for the hunters this Winter. The female turkey is a wise old lady for fair, makes her nest in a briar tangle and the leaves match her plumage so well that one will almost step on her before she will move. I stood for fully five minutes within 20 inches of one, to-day, listening to a pair of Lord Gods' in the woods. Happening to glance down I espied her eye and away she skidded as slick as a snake, disclosing a nice nest of weeds, leaves and feathers from her body and a large set of 12. They will usually desert their nest if you handle the eggs, but not always. Last year I found a set of 16, and thinking the poor hen could hardly cover so many eggs, I generously borrowed 6 of them and hatched them at home. Later I visited the nest again and found that she had hatched only 9, which shows, you see, that 10 eggs are really too many for one hen to cover anyway. Found Chuck-Will-Widows with fresh sets to-day and Brown-headed Nuthatch and Florida Wren. Arriving at the lake I was soon among my old favorites, the Gallinules, especially the handsome purple ones. They are locally known by many names as Pond Chicken, Indian Pullet, Bonnett Walkers and Prairie

Hens. They cackle like a hen, somewhat, when they lay an egg or leave their nest. They like nest building, I am sure, because one will find 3 to 5 good nests to one that is occupied. Some of them are frail and shabby while some are works of art. Snakes, I am sure, are their worst enemy, because their breeding places are inhabited by huge moccasins. Had a very narrow escape from one to-day. It was coiled up in nest of Gallinule and through the grass I first thought Mrs. Gallinule was at home, my hand was within a few inches of it when my companion saw its head raised to strike me and hollered "snair" so loud that I nearly fell out of the boat, after dispatching it I skinned it and took out a fine set of 4 fresh Purple Gallinule eggs which I saved for my cabinet. This reminds me of an experience I had one year ago to-day on Bird Island here on the lake. In rambling around the Island I suddenly found myself standing straddle of a 6-foot moccasin which measured 12 inches in circumference. In making a skin of this fellow I found 6 Reddish Egrets, just hatched, and 8 fresh eggs of same species, 4 of which had been so recently swallowed that I saved them for my cabinet. Snakes in here surely had a snap. There must have been 4,000 that occupied nests on this island, of the small Herons, sometimes as many as 8 nests in one bush. Snakes crawl from one nest to another and take their choice. Killed at least a dozen and all were fair-sized ones. Sighted a wild cat there, too, that must have been living a life of ease. It was so hot in this island that birds were not on their nests at all, but eggs were pipping and hatching all about us. This was a paradise for an Ornithologist. But, Oh my, the malarial bearing mosquitoes and fish flies, they nearly pestered the life from us.

O. E. BAYNARD.

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### PRO AND CON.

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#### An Old-Timer's View of Some Recent Legislation and Its Enforcement.

No one whose love for the birds in their native environments will, after 14 hours of hard farm work, lead him to walk three miles to the woods

without his supper, brave a horde of blood-thirsty mosquitoes for an hour, and then walk the three miles home again, simply to verify a new breeding record, as I have done, is going to knowingly do anything to exterminate the birds, if he can avoid it, and no one knows better than such a person the actual effect on the birds of every natural or imposed condition his birds contend with.

When the wild bird protective clause was first incorporated in the New York State Game Law in 1897, we who had the interests of the birds as much at heart as anyone in the Audubon Societies, found no fault. The restrictions it placed on us were not unreasonable and we were not in sympathy with the millinery trade.

In 1906, however, the law was amended so that the Game Commission might or might not grant the permits for field collecting, as it chose.

And we soon found out that unless you had a big "pull" somewhere they chose to turn you down.

My application was promptly turned down on the ground that "There are enough permits in existence to meet all scientific requirements."

And yet the Assistant State Zoologist since has complained that he cannot use certain records of mine because I have been unable to verify them by collecting specimens.

Does their theory work out satisfactorily?

Again, I have been notified by a representative of the Audubon Society that the sale of a scientific skin of any wild bird native to the state would be considered a violation of the law, no matter when or where collected, or what purpose it were purchased for.

What do you think of that? One teacher writes: "I shall simply have to get a permit to go and kill some birds to provide our school with the specimens we need in class work."

Which is to be preferred? Allow the nature study supply man to buy old collections and distribute them to do duty over again or force the teacher to go to the woods for his material?

I knew that a certain large Taxidermy Est. in my town was selling bird skins freely, so I asked the head

of the concern how he kept "right" with the powers that be.

He said "Oh, we got a certificate."

"But," I said, "The certificate only gives you permission to collect. It does not state that you can buy and sell commercially. If it really be a violation of the law to sell these skins I cannot see that the certificate protects you in any way."

"Oh," he said, "We don't have any trouble over that."

He is a prominent politician, an Alderman representing the party in control in the state.

Could that possibly have anything to do with it?

A short time ago an enthusiastic bird man said to me, while speaking of a certain colony of breeding Wood Duck, one of the very few colonies left in Western New York: "You see those fellows," pointing to two men; "Well, they spend a lot of time fishing in that swamp, and if you happen to be close enough you will hear the report of a gun every now and then.

"I am satisfied that they are shooting the Wood Duck when they get a chance. I could catch them at it, but they would watch me days, nights and Sundays for a chance to hit back at me.

"If I take a bird or a set of eggs while following up my bird studies I am branded as an outlaw."

This same party, when he had a permit, considered three sets of eggs from as many different pairs of birds as a satisfactory season's work, and would have disdained to take anything he did not need in his studies.

I honestly believe that the present restrictive policy in several states is preventing the co-operation of the most energetic and effective class of bird protectionists we had.

They were for bird protection for love of the birds in their native environment, and did not need the lure of a possible fine or the fear of losing their position to drive them into the field.

The National "Lacey Act." covering these matters states that its provisions shall not effect material for scientific purposes.

Why should the states refuse to recognize a principle passed upon as tenable by the nation?

A year ago New York added two

new features to the game law, and we have had a season's experience under their provisions.

First the Gun License Provision:

One point I would call attention to. By provision of the Penal Code of the State, it has been, for some years, illegal for any alien to carry firearms of any description, and this had practically stopped the horde of Italians who wandered over our fields, ostensibly hunting woodchucks, but in reality shooting about every bird or small mammal they came to. Sec. 242 (See Art. XIII of last Game Law), states that nothing in said law shall be construed as repealing any part of the Penal Code.

Section 104 states that the Town Clerk shall issue a license to any alien on payment of a fee of \$20.50, allowing him to hunt with firearms anywhere in the state.

Has New York state gone in to the "Gold Brick" trade?

Owing to the lack of definiteness of certain sections of the law there have been many unpleasant complications. Many hunters failed to understand that no state license could set aside the owner's right of domain, or excuse deliberate trespass on posted grounds, or when ordered off.

The section creating an open season for Pheasants was so worded that the majority thought the hen birds were not protected at all, and one dealer in sportsmen's supplies in Rochester issued game cards so worded. When I remonstrated with them they stoutly contended that the law admitted of such a construction.

The County District Attorney finally published an opinion that cleared up the point, but not until hundreds of hen Pheasants had been sacrificed during the first two days of the open season in violation of the law.

One party of two hunters I know of personally, killed seven hen birds and three cocks during the first two days.

Owing to the fact that the past unusually dry season was very favorable to the young Pheasants they increased beyond all records, and there are probably enough left yet to insure a reasonable increase next season under favorable conditions, but an unfavorable, wet, cold season, followed by such persecution as they were sub-



jected to this fall, would leave them sadly depleted.

Before the law was passed last winter there was much published in the daily press regarding the farmers' opposition to the Pheasants, owing to their destruction of crops and grain.

After careful examination I am convinced that they do much less damage than the American Robin, and much more good, and that more than a majority of the farmers really favor a close season, as they like to see the birds around, and believe them to be of benefit, owing to the immense quantities of grasshoppers they consume between July 15 and Oct. 15.

My inspection of the crops of a number of birds this fall demonstrated beyond a question that even where the birds were taken in fields of unhusked corn, as late as Oct. 22nd, their crops contained grasshoppers almost exclusively.

My experience with the Robin is very discouraging, for, while I am not allowed to take any birds for dissection, I am satisfied that, outside of the immense quantities of small fruits they destroy, their diet consists mainly of earthworms, and I considered this of questionable benefit, probably an actual damage to the agricultural interests.

I believe the great weight of opinion in favor of the present Pheasant law comes from the sportsmen, and that most of the flagrant violations were their work also.

While I find here and there a farmer who admits taking one, two or three birds, I have had authentic reports of city parties with 7 to 12 birds in their bags, and one Rochester taxidermist admits mounting 347 Pheasants during October.

The law expressly prohibits the disposal of any Pheasants commercially, yet one party from Rochester made in extenuation of their taking a large bag of Pheasants, (they showed 12), the statement that a certain large hotel in that city was paying \$1 each for them.

There may be here and there a Pheasant that becomes educated to the point to where it becomes a nuisance. A provision similar to that in the Rabbit section, permitting the killing on one's own premises to prevent damage would cover these cases.

If the section enacting a close season for Skunks in New York is needed at all it should also be amended to read like the clause in that relating to Rabbits, as there are, and always will be, individual Skunks that get educated to the possibilities of the hen-coop to such an extent that they can not be tolerated, and it should not be necessary for anyone to violate the law to compass their removal.

Yours in favor of a fair and square deal for all.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

Newport News, Va.,  
Jan. 1, 1909.

My dear Mr. Short:—

In the December issue I note you are going to cover the Grebe family with short articles, this coming year, pray allow me to contribute my mite.

#### PODILYMBUS PODICEPS.

##### Pied-billed Grebe.

On one of my collecting trips during my stay in California, I came across a small pond or sink hole on the outskirts of an apricot orchard. Things looked good to me and stripping to the waist, began my hunt in the tall rushes or tules with which the banks were lined. Rails, Ducks, Blackbirds and Salt Marsh Yellowthroats were found, but the hardest of all was the nest of the above species. The nest was a compact mass of tule stems and blades, two inches above the water and eighteen inches below the surface. The water came well above my waist line and had I not seen the parent bird nearby, I should have passed it, as the eggs were covered as is their usual custom. The eggs lay in a slight hollow in the center of this floating platform and their weight had almost sunken them level with the inside lining. On lifting up the eggs these cavities filled with water, while all the nest material was soaking wet. It has always been a wonder to me how this family of birds manage to produce heat enough to hatch their eggs under such difficulties.

H. H. BAILEY.

Isle of Pines, Cuba,  
Dec. 18, 1908.

Mr. Ernest H. Short,  
Albion, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—Having changed my place of residence to the Isle of Pines from Toledo, O., and taking the trip through the everglades and over the keys of Florida, I thought that the birds identified from the train and during stops on the way would be of interest to you, so I am sending my data. There was a total of 31 species. If you are interested in birds of the Isle of Pines, Cuba, you will hear from me later as I intend to do some extensive collecting. There are said to be about 350 different species of birds in Cuba and quite a few are to be found here. Now, I have seen several of the Warblers that we find in the north, such as Maryland Yellowthroat, (Maryland or Northern?), Blackburnian, Magnolia, Louisiana Waterthrush and Water-thrush.

Yours truly,

A. C. READ.

McKinley, Isle of Pines, Cuba.

(Formerly of 2105 Robinwood, Toledo, Ohio., U. S. A.)

Birds seen on my trip from Toledo, O., Nov. 29 to Havana, Cuba, Dec. 3.

Fostoria, O., Nov. 29, about 3 p. m., Sparrow Hawk

Knoxville, Tenn., Nov. 30, 7:00 a. m., Crow, Mourning Dove, Robin.

White Pine, Tenn., 10:00 a. m., Bluebird, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Martin, Carrion Crow, Turkey Buzzard, Bob-white.

Ashville, N. C., 12:45, American Goldfinch.

Columbia, N. C., Dec. 1, 7:00 a. m., Crow, Meadowlark, Catbird, Mourning Dove.

Allendale, S. C., Bob-white, Carrion Crow, Crow, Meadowlark, Great Blue Heron.

Savannah, Ga., 12:00, Meadowlark, Carrion Crow, Bob-white.

Miami, Fla., 7:35 a. m., Dec. 2, Knights' Key, Fla., 3:15 p. m., Sparrow Hawk, Grackle, American Bittern, Black-billed Cuckoo, Ground Dove, Crow, Carrion Crow, Killdeer, Bob-o-link, Little Blue Heron, Great Blue Heron, Snowy Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Sandhill Crane, Prairie

Warbler, Black Duck, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Florida Cormorant (5), Great White Heron, Caspian Tern, American Brown Pelican (2).

Havana, Cuba, Dec. 3, Man-o'-War Bird.

Chicago, Dec. 14, 1908.

Ernest H. Short, Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—Regarding the clutch of 18 eggs which Mr. Miller, of Frankford, relates as having found in one nest of the Florida Gallinule, I do not believe this is unusual. These birds are sociable and inclined to breed in small communities. My experience has been extensive regarding this water fowl, and it is not an unusual occurrence for two hens to deposit their eggs in the same nest. Several times I have observed one nest containing 17 or 18 eggs and very frequently 14.

The fact that Mr. Miller mentions that the eggs varied considerable in size and incubation would tend to show that they were not the product of one bird.

Even the Rails, including the King, Virginia, and Sora, which are considerably different in both size and appearance, have been known to deposit their eggs in each others nest, and I know of one instance wherein a King Rail's nest contained not only the latter's eggs, but several of the Virginia and Carolina Rails eggs were in the same structure.

GERARD ALAN ABBOTT,  
Chicago, Ill.

### New York State Records.

Male Redwing seen Dec. 14, in Monroe county, by the Editor.

Thermometer close to zero and several inches of snow on the ground. Bird not in good condition and seemed weaker when last seen the next morning.

Flicker seen at same place on same date, and again Jan. 12th, with 8 inches snow. Seemed to be doing nicely.

Four Tufted Tit reported by Mr. Guelf on shore of Lake Ontario, Monroe county, during first week in January, '09. Seemed to be resident. This is a noteworthy record.

Mr. Smith reports Canadian Warbler as having bred in Wyoming coun-

ty during past season.

We are not surprised, as they are not uncommon in Yates county.

Snowy Owl records coming in quite plentifully, all referring to well-bared records. Females seem unusually so this winter.

Two Albino Grey Squirrels taken by Mr. Ritenbergh, in Orleans county, are unique specimens of an unusual pinkish color and taken near same point, suggesting a possibility of their being from the same family.

We regret the removal from our ranks by death of Mr. H. K. Sedgwick, of Palmyra, N. Y.

—EDITOR.

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### EDITOR'S COLUMN.

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In Pennsylvania State Zoological Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 4-5, Mr. Surface presents a comprehensive report on the Turtles of Pennsylvania, with special reference to economic features. Like the past issues of this series, it is nicely illustrated, and, even if some of us think Mr. Surface has overestimated the economic value of some species, there is no question as to the scientific value of the book. We heartily concur with his conclusions regarding the Snapping Turtle as being far more harmful than beneficial and, while the matter is in mind, would mention that the New York law protects them. Why?

Prof. W. K. Moorhead, of Phillips Academy, Massachusetts, announces that Houghton, Mifflin & Co., will publish his long expected treatise of Indian stone implements, "The Stone Age."

J. Warren Jacobs, of Waynesburg, Pa., has made a special study of bird colonization, especially the Purple Martin, and has issued two brochures on the subject. He now sends us a neat booklet describing these birds and their habits, and incidentally showing nine styles of bird houses in attractive designs, that he is ready to furnish.

The scope and size of the work has evidently increased with the delay, as he now asks for subscriptions for two volumes of 500 pp. each, at \$5.00 per set.

Mr. J. P. Norris, Jr., the prominent Philadelphia oologist, has taken a life partner, Miss Mary Brady, of Baltimore. Congratulations.

Better get his last treatise on the subject, which he mails at 50 cents, and see what you can do. We note with regret his statement that adverse weather conditions have caused his colonies to shrink one-half since 1904.

The responses to our notice have been gratifying, so far, as touching renewals, and a few of the Oologist's friends have struck the true note when they state their determination to start out on a hunt for new subscribers.

A recent modification in Post-office rulings makes it possible for us to keep the subscriber who has not renewed on our list this month, but if we do not hear from him and the delinquent 50 cents at once, we will have to drop him.

Many suggestions are coming in.

Nearly all the adverse criticism relates to the falling off in exchange notices.

The Editor would suggest that this must be remedied by the subscribers themselves.

Every subscriber has the privilege of one free notice. Evidently they do not use them as in the past. Ask yourselves why.

The verdict is all against changing the series.

The vast majority are satisfied with present form of mailing and there seems to be no considerable demand for a consolidated index.

We are obliged to caution everyone against dealing with C. P. Forge, of Carmen, Man., Can. Of late many crooked deals have been reported to us and he fails to make any attempt to straighten them up. In fact, he now seems to ignore everything. Until we are notified that he has equitably adjusted old scores the use of our advertising columns will be denied him.

E. H. SHORT.

The collection of mounted birds of H. C. Higgins, Cincinnati, N. Y., has been turned over to the Cortland Museum of the Cortland Science Club, of which Mr. Higgins is an honorary member. The Club is to be congratulated upon securing so fine a collection, which embraces several hundred specimens mounted by the best taxidermists and are all arranged in large oak cases. The collection is of especial value to Cortland county, as it contains nearly all the birds native to the county, including such rare takes as Summer Tanager, Brunnich's Murre, Barn Owl, American Goshawk, Northern Pileated Woodpecker, and others. The collection is valuable from a scientific standpoint because of the careful and complete data with each specimen.

Eureka, Cal.

Editor Oologist.

On Dec. 7, 1908, a friend of mine, (one, Jas. Robertson), came to me with a part albino, or Spotted Western Robin (*Merula migratoria propinqua*). It was taken from a flock of robins in an open field, where my friend informs me it has been for several weeks. It is spotted and blotched with white, over its entire body, excepting under tail coverts, which are nearly white. The sixth tail feather from the left side is snow white.

It is a male. The specimen measures: Length 10 9-16 inches, tail 4 3-8 inches, extent 16 1-4 inches, tar 1 5-16 inches, wing 4 1-8 inches, bill 3-4 inch.

Taken on morning of December 7, 1908.

Albinos have been quite frequent here this season. I have seen another part albino robin and a snow white Tree Sparrow, mounted, and I have also seen amongst a flock of English Sparrows, an Albino.

On December 26, 1908, a fine specimen of the Snowy Owl was taken near town by an Indian. This is the first record of a Snowy Owl I know of in Humboldt county since October, 1895, when some three or four dozen owls came here in a flock. Most of them were shot by hunters and were mounted. I have one fine specimen in my collection.

C. IRVIN CLAY.

We are informed that one Florida collector took over thirty sets of Everglade Kite the past season. Unless Florida stops drying up we shall be up against a shrinkage in the list price of this Kite.—Ed.

#### Birds Singing on Nests.

That note on Finley's "American Birds" was all right. Whether Finley ever heard birds singing on nests I do not know, but I have seen and heard Western Warbling Vireos, Western Goldfinches and McGillivray's Warbler's singing while on their nests within the city limits of Portland.

S. JEWETT,  
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The balance of the work is divided into eight parts: Travels About Home, four subjects; Atlantic Coast Islands, treating of Gardiner's and Cobb's Islands; Florida Bird Life; Bahama Bird Life; Three Western Groups; California; Western Canada, and England.

While some parts of this work have appeared before in magazine articles, particularly the Flamingo matter in part, the greater part is new.

Emphatically it is the most noteworthy of late Bird books—(Ed.)

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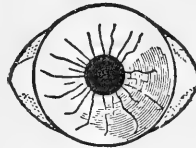
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### THE QUAIL TRAP.

A Falconer of Today—C. L. Rawson,  
in Norwich, Conn., Bulletin,

The Quail Trap, Dec. 15, 1908—In  
an article last spring on the present  
dispersion of birds of prey in New  
London county, I said that I could  
take an even hundred eggs of Red-  
shouldered Hawk in the month of

April around this city, notwithstanding  
the great loss of timber. Charles  
Richards has not only backed up this  
statement by a series of eggs of this  
buteo with exceptionally bright mark-  
ings, but he has taken sets of Great  
Horned and Barred Owl, Red-tailed  
and Cooper's Hawk, and an exquisite  
series of sets of Sharp-shinned and  
Broad-winged Hawks. The useful  
marsh harriers were not disturbed.

In his systematic and exhaustive  
search, Mr. Richards has proved sev-  
eral other important things hawk-wise  
and his voluminous and accurate field  
data accompanying these sets is not  
only of interest to the local bird lover,  
but establishes facts on the habits of  
many birds not clearly shown before  
in any of the so-called life histories.

He has confirmed my old claim that  
Norwich is in the center of the best  
breeding section of the three species  
of eastern buteos. His observation  
agrees with my country notes that  
there are two hundred birds within a  
radius of a few miles of a suburban  
city like Norwich, where one can ob-  
serve but fifty in just as large a sec-  
tion of rural Windham county. When  
I can find only a dozen Red-wing's  
nests up here, he can show one hun-  
dred and twenty-five breeding pairs  
not six miles from town. In local ra-  
vines where I have not found a sin-  
gle nest of Louisiana Water Thrush,  
Mr. Richards acquired knowledge of  
this Warbler's habits and his educated  
eye and ear led him to a dozen of  
these hidden homes every year.

The Sharp-shinned Hawk was once  
abundant around this city, commonly  
breeding within easy reach in low

hemlock and pines; the birds were shot by farmers and the eggs taken by every school boy. So of late years this accipiter is deemed rare here, and I have not seen a new nest for ten years. But this trained observer found that the birds were here only much shyer, and had chosen very much higher and better building sites; in three days he took seven sets of these desiderata.

The Broad-winged Hawk, unknown to most people, is the smallest of our buteos. Not one farmer in fifty has ever seen this bird to know it and he can tell you nothing about its nest and eggs and every-day habits. Even the Lillibridges, whose homestead has long been between the two best breeding stretches of chestnut timber in many a furlong, did not know it, though they have shot, trapped and robbed nests of all other local birds of prey. In leafless woods the big Hawks' nests are easy targets for the farmer, but this small buteo, with an inconspicuous nest when foliage is advanced and country hands all busy planting, has escaped general observation. Even skilful collectors rarely secure its much prized eggs. Our hawker has made a special study of this bird and its ways, knows and imitates all changes in its peculiar call, its alarm note and voice, has seen it mating, quarreling and at play, knows what streams it haunts, and just how far from the water its nest is likely to be placed. Hence his unparalleled success with Broad-wings.

How many writers have foreshadowed Mr. Richard's notes which show that red-shouldered hawks place their nests within sight of a farmhouse and farmyard, which they seldom raid; that the redtail's eagle eye is sure always to command every approach to its eyrie; that the broad-wing nests within sight of water; and

that the sparrow hawk has shown its adaptability by leaving hollows and clefts in trees and breeding commonly in the sawdust between the sheathing of the dairyman's icehouse. Not a pair this season, according to this mass of data, has proved an exception to this general rule for sites.

Our modern falconer or hawker, before the resident hawks appeared and while snow covered the ground, was in the woods locating every pair of all species on its arrival, saw it mate, build, and breed, and patiently followed the family movements till the last goldfinch was sitting in its thistle-down cup in August. Wonderful in extent and remarkable for endurance were these long tramps through the corners and remnants of standing timber yet left in Preston, Ledyard, Bozrah, Franklin, Salem, Lisbon, Sprague, Lebanon and Norwich suburbs. No horse was used and no irons came into play. And right here I challenge any living collector to show such an extensive series of hawks' eggs, taken in one season and one county by one man, by straight, honest shinning. Few sports are as dangerous, and no work so exhaustive as long, hard climbs to the nests of rapacious birds without the aid of spurs.

Again I say that the eggs of Broad-wings have always been scarce in collections, and no cabinet could show a large and authentic series. Yet, in a restricted locality, Mr. Richards has taken seven sets this season. But, I repeat, it has only been done by intelligent study, astonishing patience and tireless activity. In two short weeks he has marked down more breeding pairs of *Buteo latissimus* than most collectors have found in ten years. His large 1908 cabinet, filled with this season's clutches only of these three species, is note-



ing account of this species in Warren Co. Pa., (Oolog., June, '07).

I found the species in a small woods northeast of Johnstown, N. Y., on Jan. 1, 1909. One moderate-sized flock was observed and possibly other flocks were in the woods. I watched them for hours and took several observations on their habits.

There were at least sixty birds in the flock that I saw, and the sexes seemed to be about equal in number, or the males even slightly prevalent. They frequented the medium-sized hemlocks, *Tsuga canadensis*, L., extracting the seeds from the cones with their wonderful beaks. The presence of the birds in the trees was shown by the continuous dropping of these tiny cones. They secured the seeds, either by sitting upon the twigs and bending down to the cones, or else by clinging with the head downward, chickadee fashion. They seemed to extract but one or two seeds from a cone, and owing to the abundance of cones, they would only take two or three out of a large cluster.

They had a soft call, approaching that of a goldfinch, but much lower and sounding far distant. While I was watching the flock, two males, at two different times, flew to a nearby elm, and took up in their beaks, snow that had gathered in the crotches. They flew back into the hemlocks, almost immediately.

They did not seem to mind the firing of a gun, or the falling of their mates, at all, but occasionally, the whole flock would scurry away without apparent cause, and almost immediately return to the same clump of trees—very queer actions. They were quite peaceable but two males had a brief flurry while I was watching. I did not see the cause but I believe it was something about the food.

The males are really beautiful when

worthy in general showy contrasts and individual brilliance. Every type of Red-shouldered is presented, some examples of sharp-shins are unusually falcon-like in markings, some look like pigeon hawks, while the rarely beautiful series of Broadwing would be a revelation to any up-to-date oologist of to-day.

Dr. Coues, Dr. Brewer and Captain Charles Bendire all wrote to me about the eggs and habits of this small buteo. Now Frank L. Burns of Berwyn, Pa., who is busy with a monograph of the broadwinged hawk, has written me in regard to its breeding range and local dispersion in Connecticut. This author contends that its nest and eggs are often mistaken for small examples of red shouldered. But not by any ghost of a chance is there any confusion by the close observer whose attainments and superb record we chronicle in this short notice. But though this series of eggs will be sure to long attract attention, the many facts and substantial inferences recorded in the field while collecting, would, if published, (by their accurate, authentic and original observation) place Mr. Richards in the front rank of writers on the habits of eastern raptors.

C. L. R.

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#### The White-winged Crossbill in Eastern New York.

The White-winged Crossbill, *Loxia leucoptera* gmel; is a rather irregular winter visitant throughout central New York, to judge from the records of its occurrence. C. F. Posson includes it as of unusual occurrence in Orleans Co., N. Y., ("Auk, April, 1899"). C. F. Stone reports it as of comparatively rare occurrence in Yates county., (Oolog., Dec., '99). W. W. Judd states that it visits Albany Co., in extremely cold winters. Mr. R. B. Simpson gives a very interest-

seen with the light and dark green of the hemlock for a background, the fine rose-red color, with the great white wing-patches, showing off to great advantage. I secured two males and a female and as I believe accurate detailed measurements and careful description are of value to a bird student, I append the notes.

Measurements of ♂ 's., all respective; length, 6.44, 6.38 in.; extent, 10.94, 10.63 in.; wing, 3.63, 3.44 in.; tail, 2.52, 2.48 in.; bill, chord of upper mandible, .63, .64 in.; chord of lower mandible, .49, .51; tarsus, .62, .63 in.; 1st toe, .34, .34 in.; claw, .40, .39 in.; 2nd toe, .31, .31 in.; claw, .25, .22 in.; 3rd toe, .44, .47 in.; claw, .36, .32 in.; 4th toe, .31, .31 in.; claw, .26, .22 in. Measurement of ♀ L. 6.23 in.; ext., 10.25 in.; w. 3.38 in.; tail, 2.32 in.; bill chord of upper mandible, .65 in.; chord of lower mandible, .50 in.; tarsus, .62 in.; 1st toe, .32 in.; claw, .35 in.; 2nd toe, .31 in.; claw, .22 in.; 3rd toe, .47 in.; claw, .32 in.; 4th toe, .31 in.; claw, .22 in.

Measurement of claw is the chord of the claw, shortest distance from base to tip.

Description:—Bill, metagnathus in form, the upper mandible long, with the culmen very convex and curving to an acute point; sides of tip of upper mandible flattened; nostrils basal, rounded, and completely covered and protected by thick plumules; lower mandibles, broad at the base, gonys strongly curved to the tip which is deflected to the right so that the point of the lower mandible projects above the culmen. Bill, slaty-grey, except along tomtia, and around base of the gonys where it is paler. Irides brown. Tarsus moderately stout shorter than 3rd toe with claw; 1st claw, 3rd toe longest; all parts of feet dull black; wing moderately long, 2nd primary longest, 1st and 3rd nearly equal; tail moderately long, rather deeply fork-

ed; tail coverts very long.

Description of ♂ 's:—Lores and forehead dusky; head, neck and back deep rose-red, the feathers black beneath giving a spotted appearance if the feathers do not lie smooth; lower part of back, black; rumps light rose; the upper tail-coverts black, a few of the longest tipped with buff; tail black. Sides of head and auriculars rose-red, a black mark on posterior edge of auriculars; throat, breast and sides, light rose-red; belly, greyish-white, tinged toward the breast with red; lower tail-coverts black, with a very broad white edging to the feathers; wing black; the middle coverts the white about evenly distributed on each feather with large white tips to the feathers; greater coverts with a band of white, the innermost feathers having the most white; the three innermost secondaries also have white tips to the feathers; the white on the coverts of my specimens is strongly tinged with rose, especially on the middle coverts.

Description of ♀: Forehead grey with tiny spots of black; crown, nape and upper back, fuscous olive with dark centers to the feathers giving a mottled or spotted appearance; lower back more greenish, the black centers larger giving a dusky appearance; rump bright, yellow ochre; upper tail coverts and tail, exactly as in ♂ of color. Auriculars brownish-fuscous, dusky on extreme margin; throat and breast ochrous strongly tinged with yellow on the breast, the sides tinged with yellow and with dark centers to the feathers, giving a streaked appearance; lower tail coverts and belly as in ♂ except that wings have the lesser coverts strongly tinged with olive-green on outer margins, and the white bands are pure white.

The American Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra minor*, Brehm, is a rare

bird in Fulton county. The only specimens that I can really vouch for were noted by myself, June 23, 1903, south of Gloversville, N. Y. There were two males and they were feeding on the seeds of some species of deciduous tree.

On Jan. 1, 1909, I noted several other birds, of more or less interest to a bird student, in the woods where the Crossbills were found: Pine Siskin, *Spinus pinus*, Wilson, about 25 were feeding in hemlock trees; Redpolls, *Acanthis linari*, L., about 50 were feeding on birch seeds at edge of woods. Brown Creeper, 5; Chickadee, 30; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; and Blue Jay, 6, were observed here.

CHAS. P. ALEXANDER.

The Crossbills appear common or rare in New York State in winter, just according to the status of hemlock trees. From personal observation I would put them as rare in Monroe Co., but common in Orleans Co. in the North Hemlock district, and a common winter bird in Yates Co., practically confined to the hemlock lined gullies. I have also noted their erratic flitting and return when feeding.—Editor.

### The Kind We Want.

Warren, Pa., Feb. 2, '09.

Editor "The Oologist."

Dear Sir:—January "Oologist" received, which reminds me that my subscription has expired. I take pleasure in renewing and as you offer a few specials, I would like a copy of "Penikese."

A brief review of some of my most interesting finds during 1908 may be of interest to some of the readers of the Oologist.

To begin with it was a poor year

for birds. Spring arrived early. There were no large flights at all, and all of the different northern nesters were much scarcer than usual. The fall migrations were a fizzle, owing to the dense smoke from the fires that burned over most of the wild lands in this part of the state.

Added but few birds to my collection; nothing really rare except a Yellow Rail that was sent by a friend at Erie.

I found a Horned Owl's nest March 22, and after a hard climb found two young just hatched and a third just breaking out; also a freshly killed rabbit and a large brown rat lying on the nest. I never disturbed them again and hope soon to climb to the nest with better results. Found a stub that had blown over and crushed two fresh eggs of the Barred Owl. Also found several nests of the Red-shouldered and one of the Red-tailed Hawk.

The most interesting thing in the raptore line was the discovery of a pair of Goshawks in May. These birds were located in the wildest part of our county. They were in a heavy tract of virgin forest of mostly hemlock and beech, consisting of eight or ten thousand acres, lying mostly on a large stream (The Four Mile) and its tributaries and owned by the trust (Pennsylvania Tanning Co.) I paid two visits to the particular place frequented by the hawks and both times both birds were very ugly and aggressive, flying all about me and constantly screaming. They certainly must have had a nest nearby, although I failed to find it. I saw a Goshawk in the big timber New Year's Day, so this season I will look them up in time. While looking for their nest in May I found Winter Wrens not uncommon and four two fresh nests and several old ones underneath logs in the gullies. I was in hopes

of getting a set but no eggs were ever laid in either.

Messrs. Jackson and Sharples of West Chester, paid me a visit the first of June. We found some good sets and Mr. Jackson got some good photos in situ of a number of nests including Junco, Bobolink, Savana Sparrow, Solitary Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler and best of all the Mourning Warbler. Two nests of the Mourning Warbler were found but for some reason the female was sitting on one egg at the first nest, but the second nest contained a fine set of four and excellent views were taken of it. Mr. Jackson was well pleased with this find, as one of the objects of his trip was to study up the Mourner, which is a rather uncommon summer resident here. We also found two pairs of the Olive-sided Flycatchers, a very rare bird in this state and seldom noted even as a migrant. By watching the birds both nests were found. One of these nests was deserted, but later on I secured the other and a handsome set of three eggs. It was fully 12 feet out on the horizontal limb of a young hemlock and I had much trouble in scooping them safely. Both old birds were very bold and repeatedly came within a few feet of my head. A few pairs of Pileated Woodpeckers were nesting, but as there is so much wild land and the birds roam about so it is a hard matter to find the nesting site. I also noted several pairs of Yellow-bellied about during the summer. Besides these mentioned I found nests or Hairy Woodpecker, Hummer, Rough-winged Swallow, Warbling Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Parula, Black-throated Blue, Magnolia Warblers and a lot of common stuff. Got a nice male Carolina Wren Sept. 29th, a bird seldom seen this far north.

This winter bird life is rather

scarce. Besides the few common winter residents, a few flocks of Am. Crossbills and Pine Finches are about. A Snowy Owl was shot a few days ago. No water fowl have appeared as yet, the river is too open and slushy. A number of bear were killed this fall. One fellow got eight, another 5. A friend borrowed a bear trap of mine and landed a 250 lb. bear in a few days near the big timber on Four Mile.

At present I have four or five pairs or Horned Owls spotted, also several very large nests and hope to land a set or two soon. ,

,Wishing you a prosperous year, I remain,

Yours sincerely,  
R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

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#### The Biota of the San Bernardino Mountains.

JOS. GRINNELL, 1908.

Univ. of Calif. Zool., Vol. II, No. 1, comprising 170 pp., 2 colored maps and 24 plates, showing 31 fine half-tones, \$2.00.

One of the most readable and valuable biological lists the Editor has seen. Chapters on the Plants, Birds, Animals and Reptiles; Colored Life Zone maps and a fine series of illustrations.

Of special interest to readers of the Oologist are the articles on Townsend's Solitaire, Sierra Creeper, Gray Flycatcher and Dwarf Flammulated Screech Owl and the plates showing colony of Cliff Swallows nesting on a pine tree near Bear Lake.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

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#### GREBES.

These birds are all water-fowl, expert swimmers and divers, and known locally as Waterhen, Dab-chick, Hell-diver, etc.

The most common and widely dis-

tributed is the Pied-billed.

The color is nearly plain drab-black above, showing brownish shades in winter plumage.

Below, white, silvery in summer, duller in winter. Bill whitish, more so in summer.

By the novice the bird is sometimes mixed with Gallinule and Coot.

It may easily be distinguished by the legs placed way back near the tail and by the spot on the bill with a blackish band across the center, most prominent in summer, while the Coot's beak of similar color, has the markings on tip, and the Gallinule's beak shows more or less reddish in life.

The nests are usually in the water, being floating platforms of flags and weeds moored to the surrounding vegetation.

The other members of the family within our limits are the slightly larger Am. Eared and Horned Grebes, species whose males have tufts on sides of head, and occur in local colonies throughout the Great Lake region and the West; the Western and Holboell's Grebes of the Northwest and Canada plains, much larger birds, and last and least, the little St. Domingo Grebe of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and southward.

The Grebes have a habit of covering their eggs with rotting vegetation when leaving them. Some contend that incubation goes on apace under this cover; others deny this and assert that it is simply for concealment.

Be this as it may, it is a well-established fact that the eggs of the two larger Grebes are certainly incubated from the time the first one is deposited, as comparatively fresh eggs of the Western Grebe are found in sets containing eggs so badly incubated that they can hardly be saved.

All the Grebes' eggs are plain blu-

ish-white in color, quickly becoming much stained.

Articles treating the Grebes will be found in Oologist's Vol. V, pp. 43, 122; Vol. VI, pp. 76, 168, 205; Vol. VII, pp. 45, 137, 183; Vol. VIII, pp. 81, 186, 246; Vol. IX, pp. 5, 16, 177; Vol. X, p. 226; Vol. XII, pp. 3, 22, 163; Vol. XVI, pp. 132; Vol. XIX, pp. 4, 50; Vol. XX, pp. 9, 24; Vol. XXI, p. 101; Vol. XXIII, p. 23; Vol. XXIV, p. 87.

### Large Sets of Least Bittern.

By RICHARD F. MILLER.

On June 26, 1907, Mr. Richard C. Harlow and I had a "red letter day" with the Least Bitterns in the Port Richmond, Pa., marsh; not that we collected many of their eggs, but in the large sizes of the sets taken. In less than an hour we collected four sets of six and one of seven, the only set of seven probably on record.

Sets of six Least Bittern's eggs have always been regarded as rare, and neither Davies' or Reed's excellent books mention a set of that number, but a set of seven we have never heard tell of.

Naturally, we felt jubilant over our good luck, and I was greatly delighted and exulted over my take of seven, (for I found it), but my exultation turned into chagrin as the water blower cracked the first and second eggs of the set. Discarding that otherwise useful assistance, I blew the eggs in the old and best way yet discovered—with the mouth. I have the set of seven straight, and even if two of the eggs are cracked I wouldn't part with that set for "love of money." Nay, nay, Pauline! for sets of seven are of too rare an occurrence and such strikes only happen to a collector once in a life-time.

To dispel any fears entertained by the incredulous as to the genuineness

of the set being the product of one bird, it is only necessary to mention that the eggs are all of the same uniform shape and size, which precludes any possibility of their having been laid by two females.

Least Bitterns' eggs when incubated—as this set was—are often exceedingly fragile and require great care to blow them, hence the fate of two eggs of this set, as the water pressure in the blower was too great and cracked the eggs.

The set of seven and the two sets of six, together with two smaller sets, were taken within a radius of a hundred feet of each other, from a small colony of birds occupying one end of the marsh.

The honors were divided between us as regards the sets of six eggs, each having found two sets.

On one nest I captured the male bird that remained on the eggs which he was brooding, simulating the rushes so closely that I failed to detect him until I was within two feet of the nest.

His stupidity or maternal love, however, cost him his life, for he was captured and killed ala David McCadden fashion—by powerful pressure with thumb and fingers on the ribs. There can be no doubt as to the sex, as Dick skinned and preserved the bird, carefully noting the presence of testes, which is indicative of the male bird sex.

On July 12, 1907, I collected another set of six eggs in the marsh, and during previous years have taken two other sets of that number, so altogether I have found five sets of six, one of seven, and two nests containing six young.

From these large sets I am becoming convinced that sets of six eggs of the Least Bittern are not as rare as commonly supposed (in this locality at least). Although not mentioned in most works on ornithology, but I am positive that sets of seven are of extremely rare occurrence.

However, I would like to hear from

others regarding their experiences with sets of six eggs, to learn whether a set of this number can be termed rare or common. Perhaps "ye editor" can shed a ray of light on the subject; anyhow, let us hear from him and others concerning large Least Bitterns' sets.

RICHARD F. MILLER,  
Harrogate,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

September 9, 1907.

## EDITOR'S COLUMN.

### ERRATA

By an error of your printer in making up the form the two tiems below got badly mixed up in our last issue.

Apologies are due to Friends Jacobs and Norris.

Prof. W. K. Moorhead, of Phillips Academy, Massachusetts, announces that Houghton, Mifflin & Co., will publish his long expected treatise of Indian stone implements, "The Stone Age."

The scope and size of the work has evidently increased with the delay, as he now asks for subscriptions for two volumes of 500 pp. each, at \$5.00 per set.

J. Warren Jacobs, of Waynesburg, Pa., has made a special study of bird colonization, especially the Purple Martin, and has issued two brochures on the subject. He now sends us a neat booklet describing these birds and their habits, and incidentally showing nine styles of bird houses in attractive designs, that he is ready to furnish.

Better get his last treatise on the subject, which he mails at 50 cents, and see what you can do. We note with regret his statement that adverse weather conditions have caused his colonies to shrink one-half since 1904.

E. H. SHORT.

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VOL. XXVI. No. 3. ALBION, N. Y., MARCH, 1909. WHOLE No. 260

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269 Dec., 1909

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 3.

ALBION, N. Y. MARCH, 1909.

WHOLE No. 260

## THE OÖLOGIST,

A Monthly Publication Devoted to  
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### LOONS.

Following the nomenclature of the  
A. O. U. we find next after the Grebes,  
treated briefly in our last issue, the  
Loons. They are closely allied to the  
Grebes having their legs set way back  
by their tail making them exceedingly  
awkward travelers on land though  
the most expert of swimmers and div-

ers. They differ from the Grebes in  
their greater size and in having no  
lobes on the toe webs. From the next  
following groups, the Auks, they dif-  
fer in structure by having 4 toes. The  
Auks have only three toes.

Of the five N. Am. Loons two are  
Western species, the Yellow-billed  
and Pacific; two are small species of  
nearly circumpolar distribution while  
the type only; nests within the United  
States occurring from Gt. Lakes east  
to Maine and northward.

The plumage varies according to  
the season. In full spring and sum-  
mer dress the Loon is black above  
with blackish throat. Balance of under  
parts white. White dots and streaks  
on throat and back. Beak black, long,  
stout and sharp. In winter all colors  
are grayer and markings less distinct.

They frequent the smaller lakes or  
the neighborhood of islands along the  
Great Lakes. Their wings are short  
for the bird's weight and it requires a  
great amount of flapping to raise them  
in full flight hence they are averse to  
leaving the water. They can swim  
under water for long distances and  
dive at the flash of a gun. The cry is  
oftenest heard in the early night and  
is loud and weird, its affect heighten-  
ed by the hour and the solitudes they  
frequent.

The nest is built close to the water,  
preferably on an islet and usually in  
growth of flags, etc. The bird soon  
wears a distinct trail to it when wad-  
dling to and from the water.

It consists mainly of flag stalks and  
sedge sod arranged around a hollow  
in soil, sometimes hardly anything  
but the depression and again quite

bulky, or it may be a depression on top of a muskrat house or heap of drift rubbish.

In breeding season only one pair is apt to be found in the vicinity as they appear to be exclusive in this respect.

The eggs of all the Loons are among the most showy of Birds Eggs. The ground color is olive brown varying in degree and they are more or less spotted with black, lighter specimens often showing heliotrope shell marks. Full sets are almost invariably two. I have heard it said that three have been found but have never seen such a set. The eggs vary in size with the species. Shape elongate ovate normally. Have seen pyriform specimens.

Common Loon, wing spread average 15 inches, eggs 3.58 x 2.27 in.

Often called Gt. Northern Diver and locally, Call-up-a-storm or Laughing Bird.

Yellow-billed Loon of Nor. Pacific is a slightly larger bird. Eggs similar but averaging larger. Known as White-billed Diver.

Black-throated Loon only migrant in United States. Smaller wing spread about 11½ in. Head grayish on back of neck. Eggs average 3.20 x 2.05 in., and so far as my observation goes they are inclined to run darker in ground color than the other Loons. Known as Black-throated Diver.

The Pacific Loon of Western coast is similar. Eggs average still smaller, about 3.08 x 1.90.

The Red-throated Loon is the smallest, wing about 10 1-2 in., and throat shows chestnut, more or less according to season, in males; pure white in females and young. Eggs average 2.86 by 1.80 in. Known as Red-throated Diver. Migrant only in United States.

Articles treating of the Loons will be found in Oologist as follows: Vol.

IV., 79; Vol. V, 105; Vol. VIII, 81; Vol. IX, 103, 148, 164, 217; Vol. X, 171, 229; Vol. XI, 283, 359, 364; Vol. XII, 188; Vol. XVII, 103, 150; Vol. XIX, 5, 49, 104; Vol. XX, 24; Vol. XXI, 60.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

#### Some Notes from Michigan.

While strolling in the woods Saturday afternoon, Nov. 7th, 1891, I met some boys who knew that I was interested in birds and their eggs, who said they had a curious egg. Thrusting his hand into his pocket, one of them produced an egg of the Cow-bird (broken, of course,) perfectly fresh. The yolk was fresh and of a bright yellow; the white of the egg was in good condition. It had no odor except that common to eggs. They said the egg was warm when they found it. Have any of the readers ever heard of a Cow-bird laying eggs in Michigan, or any place so far north, in November? Can anyone give an explanation?

While passing through a field on May 2nd, 1891, I noticed a bird a little larger than a Sparrow, which appeared very uneasy about something. I looked for the nest and for the cause of her uneasiness, but found nothing. It was a brownish gray, with black throat and black stripe along the side of the head. It kept to the ground and would only fly a short distance. It ran and hopped at intervals. When flying it spread its tail. The two or three outer tail feathers were black and the rest brownish gray; legs rather long. What was it?

On June 18th, 1891, I found quite a curiosity in the way of a set of Black-bird's eggs. They were Red-winged Blackbird's; nest in a bush over water in a marsh; the first was exceedingly large, markings as usual; the second was of an average type; the

third was about one-half inch in diameter, without the markings in the usual number, they being few and faint. This last was perfectly round and spherical.

On July 13th, 1891, I found a nest about eleven feet from the ground, on the horizontal limb of a small oak, and about ten feet from the river. The nest was very neat, resembling a Robin's, but lacking the bits of rag, etc., and the mud. The bird on the nest was about the size of the Robin, and resembled a Wood Thrush, except in having brownish-black spots on the breast, tail slightly shorter, and there was some peculiarity in the appearance of the cheeks which I cannot accurately describe. The eggs were three in number; about the size of, perhaps a little larger, than the Robin's, but having a greenish tinge, reminding one of a Cat-bird's. Of what species was it?

The game law has done much to make Quail tame in Michigan. Last night I saw about 13 of them in our back yard, at No. 55 No. Union street, in the city of Grand Rapids. They were very tame and allowed me to approach within about 15 feet of them before taking flight. But as the Quail season, under the Act of 1891, is now open, I presume that this handsome game bird will soon become more shy.

Grand Rapids, Mich, Nov. 10, 1891.

R. G. FITCH.

We have lately come across this; undoubtedly the last contribution of that enthusiastic ornithologist, Roy G. Fitch, before the untimely accident that cut short a career of great promise.—(Editor.)

### The Birds of a City Yard.

A list of birds observed in a 60-foot lot, in the residence district of Springfield, Illinois, between the first

of December, 1907, and the first of September, 1908:

1. Mourning Dove. Occasionally heard in the summer.
2. Screech Owl. Heard on two evenings during the summer.
3. Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Not uncommon among the shade trees and has been seen in the yard. First heard May 14th.
4. Downy Woodpecker. A frequent visitor to the premises.
5. Red-headed Woodpecker. Present almost every day during the summer.
6. Flicker. Not so common at last. They occasionally bathe in a pan of water near the pump.
7. Chimney Swift. First seen Apr. 22nd. May be seen almost any summer evening.
8. Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Appeared on several occasions, among the flowers.
9. Blue Jay. Common in the garden and shade trees, where one pair nested.
10. Baltimore Oriole. A not infrequent visitor. A pair observed feeding their young, in the garden, on June 29th.
11. Bronzed Grackle. First spring arrival noted March 1st. About Aug. 20th the Grackles appeared in large flocks, assembling for the fall migration.
12. American Goldfinch. One was seen in the garden, late in the summer.
13. White-throated Sparrow. A single individual visited us early in the morning, for several successive days, during the first part of spring. He rummaged about on the ground, pausing frequently to whistle his limpid "peabody" song.
14. Tree Sparrow. Seen in the yard but rarely, during the winter.
15. Slate-colored Junco. Appeared

several times, usually in company with the tree sparrows.

16. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Common, though not much in evidence. On June 29th, a full-fledged family was found in the garden eating the tender peas from the pods.

17. Purple Martin. Two or three individuals were seen in flight.

18. Yellow Warbler. One in peach trees on June 29th.

19. Ovenbird. One in garden on May 10th, but it did not appear again.

20. Northern Yellow-throat. One individual appeared on May 11th.

21. American Redstart. One observed May 11th, in fruit trees.

22. Catbird. Common, but arrived very late. First observed on 10th of May.

23. Brown Thrasher. Common, singing lustily early in the morning. A pair fed their young in the garden.

24. House Wren. First arrived April 19th. One pair reared a brood in a bird box on the grape arbor. They left the nest July 2nd, able to fly remarkably well.

25. Tufted Titmouse. Occasional winter visitor. For a week or more in the late winter, a titmouse whistled his loud clear notes every morning before sunrise.

26. Chickadee. Only one was noted during the winter, though doubtless others were present.

27. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Observed in plum trees during spring migration.

28. Am. Robin. Very common. One pair nested in shade trees. Others brought their young to garden to feed.

29. Bluebird. One heard March 1st; the first arrival and the only one observed. In former years they nested in the bird boxes.

30. English Sparrow. Always present.

### Long Island Notes.

For the past ten years I have made my home at Greenport, New York; about 10 miles west of Orient point, the jumping off place on the north side of Long Island. During that time I have been able to give more or less of my time to the study of Birds and their habits.

With one or two exceptions the birds in the list given below were recorded within a radius of 5 miles from Greenport.

The Wilson's Petrel was seen in the middle of L. I. Sound directly north of my home, but several miles from shore. This bird I believe is of rare occurrence in this locality and I have but the one record.

So far as I have been able to determine the Starling is a new arrival in this locality, a friend having first located them near Orient, L. I., in May 1907. Since then there has been occasionally one or two seen in that vicinity. I have but two records of them myself both in 1907.

In the latter part of May, 1906, several Turkey Vultures appeared between this place and Orient and remained for about two weeks.

A. O. U. No.

- 2 Holboell's Grebe.
- 3 Horned Grebe.
- 6 Pied-billed Grebe.
- 7 Loon.
- 11 Red-throated Loon.
- 44 Glaucous Gull.
- 47 Great Black-backed Gull.
- 51 Am. Herring Gull.
- 58 Laughing Gull.
- 70 Common Tern.
- 109 Wilson's Petrel.
- 129 American Merganser.
- 130 Red-breasted Merganser.
- 131 Hooded Merganser.
- 133 Black Duck.
- 146 Redhead.
- 148 American Scaup Duck.
- 149 Lesser Scaup Duck.
- 151 American Goldeneye.
- 152 Barrows Goldeneye.
- 154 Old Squaw.

A. D. DU BOIS.

- 163 American Scoter.  
 165 White-winged Scoter.  
 166 Surf Scoter.  
 172 Canada Goose.  
 173 Brant.  
 190 American Bittern.  
 191 Least Bittern.  
 194 Great Blue Heron.  
 201 Green Heron.  
 202 Black-crowned Night Heron.  
 212 Virginia Rail.  
 214 Sora.  
 228 American Woodcock.  
 230 Wilson's Snipe.  
 234 Knot.  
 242 Least Sandpiper.  
 248 Sanderling.  
 255 Yellowlegs.  
 263 Spotted Sandpiper.  
 264 Long-billed Curlew.  
 270 Black-bellied Plover.  
 272 Golden Plover.  
 273 Killdeer.  
 289 Bobwhite.  
 325 Turkey Vulture.  
 331 Marsh Hawk.  
 332 Sharp-shinned Hawk.  
 333 Cooper's Hawk.  
 337 Red-tailed Hawk.  
 339 Red-shouldered Hawk.  
 352 Bald Eagle.  
 360 Am. Sparrow Hawk.  
 364 American Osprey.  
 366 American Long-eared Owl.  
 368 Barred Owl.  
 373 Screech Owl.  
 387 Yellow-billed Cuckoo.  
 388 Black-billed Cuckoo.  
 390 Belted Kingfisher.  
 393 Hairy Woodpecker.  
 394 Downy Woodpecker.  
 406 Red-headed Woodpecker.  
 412 Flicker.  
 417 Whip-poor-will.  
 420 Night Hawk.  
 423 Chimney Swift.  
 428 Ruby-throated Hummingbird.  
 444 Kingbird.  
 452 Crested Flycatcher.  
 456 Phoebe.  
 461 Wood Pewee.  
 474 Horned Lark.  
 474b Prairie Horned Lark.  
 477 Blue Jay.  
 488 American Crow.  
 490 Fish Crow.  
 493 Starling.  
 494 Bobolink.  
 495 Cowbird.  
 498 Red-winged Blackbird.  
 501 Meadowlark.  
 506 Orchard Oriole.  
 507 Baltimore Oriole.  
 509 Rusty Blackbird.  
 511 Purple Grackle.  
 511b Bronzed Grackle.  
 517 Purple Finch.  
 521 American Crossbill.  
 528 Redpoll.  
 529 American Goldfinch.  
 533 Pine Siskin.  
 540 Vesper Sparrow.  
 542a Savanna Sparrow.  
 549 Sharp-tailed Sparrow.  
 550 Seaside Sparrow.  
 554 White-crowned Sparrow.  
 558 White-throated Sparrow.  
 559 Tree Sparrow.  
 560 Chipping Sparrow.  
 563 Field Sparrow.  
 567 Slate-colored Junco.  
 581 Song Sparrow.  
 584 Swamp Sparrow.  
 585 Fox Sparrow.  
 587 Towhee.  
 598 Indigo Bunting.  
 608 Scarlet Tanager.  
 611 Purple Martin.  
 612 Cliff Swallow.  
 613 Barn Swallow.  
 616 Bank Swallow.  
 619 Cedar Waxwing.  
 622 Loggerhead Shrike.  
 624 Red-eyed Vireo.  
 627 Warbling Vireo.  
 628 Yellow-throated Vireo.  
 636 Black and White Warbler.  
 648 Parula Warbler.  
 652 Yellow Warbler.  
 654 Black-throated Blue Warbler.  
 655 Myrtle Warbler.  
 659 Chestnut-sided Warbler.  
 660 Bay-breasted Warbler.  
 662 Blackburnian Warbler.  
 671 Pine Warbler.  
 672 Palm Warbler.  
 672a Yellow Palm Warbler.  
 674 Oven bird.  
 675 Water Thrush.  
 681 Maryland Yellowthroat.  
 687 American Red Start.  
 697 American Pipit.  
 704 Catbird.  
 705 Brown Thrasher.  
 721 House Wren.  
 722 Winter Wren.  
 725 Long-billed Marsh Wren.  
 726 Brown Creeper.  
 727 White-breasted Nuthatch.  
 728 Red-breasted Nuthatch.  
 735 Chickadee.  
 748 Golden-crowned Kinglet.

749 Ruby-crowned Kinglet.  
 755 Wood Thrush.  
 756 Wilson's Thrush.  
 758a Olive-backed Thrush.  
 759b Hermit Thrush.  
 761 Robin.  
 766 Bluebird.

K. B. SQUIRES,  
 Greenport, Long Island, N. Y.

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From Nebraska.

North Loup, Valley Co., Neb.

Jan. 27, 1907.—A flock of about 80 Bohemian Waxwing, (*Amphelis garrulus*), appeared in the village, feeding on seed of the hackberry. The flock became broken up in a few days, a part remaining until the 11th of March.

Feb. 8, 1907.—A male Robin was singing as lustily as though it was spring.

Jan. 2, 1908.—With three inches of snow on ground saw a Robin that seemed to enjoy life.

There have been N. Flickers, (*Colaptes auratus luteus*), around every winter except one of the four winters I have lived here.

A Cardinal, (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), came into my garden Dec. 30, 1907, and remained about the village until March 24th. It was a male. He began whistling about the first of March and could be heard nearly every morning until the date last seen.

G. M. BURDICK.

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213 College Ave., Ithaca, N. Y.,  
 Feb. 27, 1909.

Mr. Ernest H. Short,  
 Editor, *The Oologist*,  
 Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—I am sending you inclosed, a list of birds of a city yard, which I thought might possibly be of interest to the readers of *The Oologist*. Springfield is a city of some 60,000 inhabitants, and the residence district referred to, is about midway

between the business center and the western limit of the town. The district is almost entirely built up, the lots being about the same size, in general, as the one referred to. There is a park six or eight blocks away.

If you find the list of sufficient interest, you are welcome indeed to publish it.

Yours very truly,  
 A. D. DU BOIS.

---

Three of Our Old Friends Go to Africa.

Among the corps of naturalists who will accompany ex-President Roosevelt to Africa will be, according to present advices, three of the *Oologist's* friends, Maj. E. A. Mearns; J. Alden Loring, and Edmund Heller.

A glance at our books for past years demonstrates Major Mearns' experience as a traveller as well as our efforts to keep the *Oologist* with him.—Editor.

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Denver, Colo., Feb. 10, 1909.  
 Mr. E. H. Short, Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—Mr. Abbott's remarks regarding large sets of eggs of the Florida Gallinule in the January *Oologist*, calls to mind a set of seventeen eggs of the coot which I found May 26th, 1906, at Barr, Adams County, Colo. This set of eggs lay in two distinct layers in the nest and even in this arrangement was much larger than the parent could cover, and while I cannot detect enough difference in the ground color or markings of the eggs to base an opinion upon, I am satisfied that this set was the product of more than one bird.

I think the habit of more than one bird laying in a nest is of rather common occurrence among several species of birds that nest in communities. In a small colony of about 50 pairs of breeding Forster's Terns at Barr,



Adams county, Colo., which I watched closely for two seasons, sets of five and six were not at all uncommon, and usually the ground color of two or three eggs in a nest was very different from that of the rest of the set. In view of the fact that there was an abundance of suitable nesting sites in the vicinity and very few nests, as compared with the total number of birds; it seems reasonable to assume that in most of these large sets more than one female contributed.

In this same locality I found several nests containing more than one kind of duck's eggs. The Ruddy's seemed to have a peculiar predilection for nests of the Red-head, and I also found one nest containing nine eggs of the Ruddy and two of the Red-head. At another time I flushed a female Blue-winged Teal from a nest in a muskrat house which contained four eggs of the Teal and five eggs of some big duck (probably mallard), all heavily incubated.

It would appear that the Cow-bird is not the monopolist that he is pictured.

Yours truly,  
ROBERT B. ROCKWELL.

July 17, 1908, while picking blackberries, I nearly smashed a Bobwhite and her 12 eggs by stepping on them; the bird fluttered away. I took a weed and straightened up the nest as best I could and went on. I happened back that way again the 23rd, so approached carefully to see if Madam Quail was at home; she was not. I returned about four hours later on my way home and again looked at the nest. The bird was nowhere to be seen, so I decided she had deserted the nest. I returned the 28th with a box to take the eggs. I again approached carefully, but no bird was in sight, so I began to pack

the eggs, when I heard a faint peep. I examined the eggs carefully and found five were pipped, so I unpacked what I had and returned them to the nest and went away. I could not return again until the 31st, when all the eggs had hatched and the young gone. I could see no signs of them anywhere and never saw the old bird, but the first day. I would have seen her leave the nest I am positive if she had returned. I am therefore led to believe the eggs hatched by the heat of the sun. Have you ever heard of a like instance?

C. B. VANDERCOOK,  
Odin, Ills.

Have seen this claimed to have happened before, but have always been skeptical. Two years ago a mowing machine uncovered a nearly hatched set of Ring Pheasant near my home. I watched them thinking this might occur, as weather was favorable, but they cooked instead of incubating. Perhaps too much exposed.—Ed.

Aug. 28, 1908, I shot a Brown Creeper at Taunton, Mass. I was returning home, at dusk, from a tramp in the woods and had stopped to watch some Red-breasted Nuthatches when my attention was attracted by the wiry notes of a Creeper. I soon located the bird in an oak and shot him. He appeared to be alone, as a hurried search in the fast approaching twilight showed no others in the vicinity. My earliest previous record of the arrival of this species in the fall is Sept. 18, 1900, when I took a partial albino at Lakeville, Plymouth Co., Mass.

On Nov. 26, 1908, I took a male Northern Yellow-throat in the Fresh Pond Marshes at Cambridge, Mass. The bird was feeding on the ground at the time in company with Song and Swamp Sparrows, was in good

plumage and very fat. I have never before noted this species later than the middle of October.

A small number of Swamp Sparrows have spent the past winter in the Fresh Pond Marshes at Cambridge.

F. SEYMOUR HERSEY.

Editor, The Oologist.

Dear Sir:—Is it the custom of The Bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*), in winter, to go into holes under rocks or in the ground, at night?

On three occasions I have caught Bob-whites in unbaited steel traps, which I had set in holes known to be inhabited by Opossums or Skunks.

On two of these occasions, when I went to the trap the next morning I found the ground strewn with feathers, the bird having been killed and eaten by the Opossum or Skunk which lived in the hole. It seems to me that had the bird escaped being caught in the trap and had entered the hole it would have met the same fate.

J. F. TAYLOR,

The Editor has not had the personal experience with Bob-white to intelligently answer this question.

The fact that we have seen only four specimens of this bird wild in this locality in past eight years, will explain.

Will some one else answer? We will gladly give space.—Ed.

“Condor,” Vol. XI, No. 1.

Mr. Bowles, of Tacoma, chronicles an interesting, unexplained and very fatal epidemic of tape-worm in Pacific Coast birds.

Mr. Claude Cummings, of Pinole, Calif., for many years a subscriber to the Oologist, was accidentally killed by the discharge of his gun while cleaning it.

#### Records of Note.

The Editor has received reports of the finding of Lomita Wren breeding in Los Angeles County, Calif., in 1907, and the discovery of an adventitious egg of the Dwarf Cowbird in Ventura County, Calif., the past season (1908).

The records appear to be authentic, and we believe them to be unusual.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

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VOL. XXVI. No. 4.

ALBION, N. Y. APRIL 15, 1909.

WHOLE No. 261

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## THE REASON.

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I have purchased THE OÖLOGIST and now own the oldest publication in America devoted to Oology. It is only proper to give my reasons for making this purchase to the patrons of the publication.

For more than thirty years I have been a student of our birds and for more than twenty years I have been engaged in gathering together a collection of their nests and eggs. During all of this time I have had much correspondence with leading students along these lines in almost every state in the Union. Always I have felt the necessity of a medium of exchange and inter-communication between those similarly interested. And an old subscriber to the old and loved "O. & O.," I always regretted not having purchased it and thereby rescued it from an untimely grave. I became convinced that THE OÖLOGIST was about to follow the "O. & O." into innocuous desuetude, so have secured control thereof in an endeavor to preserve to us all this one tie that binds.

THE OÖLOGIST, in the future will be, I hope, as good as it has been in the past and much more, for it is my purpose to make it a representative of us all. It is not now published in the interest of any one person, nor of any dealer in anything. I have never sold a bird skin or a bird's egg in my life and never expect to. I will treat all with equal fairness and recognize that to succeed, one must deserve success. It is not possible to bring THE OÖLOGIST up to the standard where it belongs without the co-operation of those it serves, and of those who are interested in it. Earnestly I solicit this co-operation; every new subscriber you send in will help some; every advertisement you send will help more; and every bright, fresh, crisp bird note or article will, I assure you, be fully appreciated and properly accredited.

That you may all meet me, face to face, I refer you to the next page.

R. M. BARNES,

Lacon, Ill.

DIED IN THE HARNESS.

In going over the subscription ledger of THE OOLOGIST, the foregoing are noted as "dead," having passed away while subscribers to this magazine. What a flood of memories these names bring forward. What a fund of bird knowledge they carried with them to their graves. Who knows had they all been spared to continue their chosen research in the field of Ornithology, but that their names might have adorned some of our foremost pages of bird literature.

The name of George Noble is specially saddening to the editor. I knew him so well and so long and can testify to his accurate, painstaking observation of bird life, as well as to the care in the preparation of his specimens. Had he lived, there is no question but that his impress would have been left upon our literature. The entire collection of Mr. Noble is now the property of the writer. It holds an honored place in my cabinets; and no data stands higher in my estimation.

Many of the names in this list were well and favorably known to us, and many highly prized specimens have we received from them. Only a short time before the death of Percy Selous and Claude L. Cummings, did they enrich our cabinet of specimens.

George F. Brenninger,	Phoenix, Arizona.
J. B. Lewis,	Petaluma, California.
Claude A. Cummings,	Pinole, California.
Prof. T. Gruber,	San Francisco, California.
George Noble,	Savannah, Georgia.
Max Boewe,	Taunton, Massachusetts.
Dr. F. N. Danion,	Scituate, Massachusetts.
Dr. Morris Gibbs,	Kalamazoo, Michigan.
Percy Selous,	Niles, Michigan.
E. W. May,	Detroit, Michigan.
Lewis W. Hahn,	Silver Creek, New York.
H. K. Sedgwick,	Palmyra, New York.
John Livermore,	New York City.
Isaac S. Kirk,	Nottingham, Pennsylvania.
August Koeh,	Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

The First.

To Robert E. Johnson, of Ivoryton, Connecticut, falls the honor of being the first renewal subscription to reach the new management.

Kind Words.

The following from H. E. Bishop, secretary of the Game and Fish Protective Association of Sayre, Pa., has the true ring to it. It is the first letter received by the new editor relative to our venture into the realms of journalism:

"I note from THE OOLOGIST for March, which has just come to hand, that you have purchased 'THE OOLOGIST.' Let me be among the first to wish you success with your new undertaking, and I assure you of my support in every way possible. I have been a subscriber to the paper for nine years and am therefore interested in its future. I am sure new life will help the paper out of the rut it has sometimes been in. One very bad feature has always been, we never knew when to expect it. Can't we hope to have a date of publication now and always get the paper within a reasonable time after that date. \* \* \* \* \* It would seem to me a big improvement to have the pages of live matter only numbered consecutively, so that the ads. could be torn out when bound."

We will say that hereafter the publication day of THE OOLOGIST will be on the fifteenth day of each month, except when that day falls on Sunday; then it will be issued the Monday following. Manuscript and all advertising copy must be here ten days before the publication day, or it will go on to the next issue. As to paging only the reading matter, the idea is a good one and will be carefully looked into.

We should be glad to have further suggestions from our subscribers.

The Blue Martins.

The splendid birds arrived at the new home of THE OOLOGIST at Lacon, Illinois, April 5, 1909. They have arrived at their boxes on my home place, beginning during the past years, on the following dates:

1895	.....April 2d
1896	.....April 6th
1897	.....March 29th
1898	.....April 1st
1899	.....April 9th
1900	.....April 3d
1901	.....April 12th
1902	.....April 16th
1903	.....April 3d
1904	.....March 23d
1905	.....April 3d
1906	.....April 6th
1907	.....April 16th
1908	.....April 5th

There are few birds that will pay rent in larger return of song and actual service than the Martin. A box of Martins will decrease the insect pests, as house flies, mosquitoes and the like around a house amazingly. While the sprightly, bubbling song and quaint mannerisms of the birds are a source of almost continued pleasure during the season.

Winter Song Sparrows.

A pair of Merrill Song Sparrows are spending the winter around my home feeding on crumbs and chicken feed.

On the afternoon of January 3, 1909, the sun came out bright and warmed the west side of the building where currant bushes are standing and on these bushes was perched the male bird singing away as though he was singing to his mate in June. Several times since I have noticed the same bird singing on a bush or fence when snow covered the ground two and three inches.

The morning of February 8th, a light snow storm was prevailing and, to my surprise, I heard a familiar

song; and on investigation it proved to be the same bird perched on a picket trying to welcome the falling flakes.

I never knew of a bird whose winter home should be in the Sunny South, to sing in a snow storm before. Probably others have.

PERCY L. JUDD,  
Rathdrum, Idaho.

#### Early Song Sparrows.

On February 25, 1909, I was out for one of my usual walks and saw a sparrow fly across the road. I stopped and went over to see what it was and it kept hopping around in the bushes and limbs by the creek, and then I caught sight of another one. I soon saw that they were song sparrows, so left them and went away on my walk; and the next day, thought I would go back and see if they were still there. After looking around a still there. After getting there and looking around a bit, I found the same two birds eating

I never thought any more about them, until about a week afterwards, was passing there, and saw the same two birds, and they looked just as comfortable as though it was summer.

STUART CLARKE.

#### Mourning Doves.

E. W. Graves, of Clay Center, Kansas, reports twenty-five nests of this species in a two acre orchard near Abilene, Kansas, on June 4th, one of which contained three eggs. On July 29th there were still four occupied nests in this orchard, and during the first week of September still another nest was found there with eggs. The species must be more plentiful in the West than further toward the Eastern coast; or perhaps less persecuted by so-called sportsmen who shoot this beautiful and innocent bird, even during the nesting season as "game."

#### From Virginia.

H. H. Bailey, of Newport News, Virginia, reports the arrival of the Osprey at "El Rancho," February 17th; also the presence of an American Goshawk there the same day. He also says his semi-domesticated Mallards began laying in February, and Blue Birds with eggs in their nests March 24th of this year; and Carolina Wrens and Brown-headed Nuthatches with finished nests at the same time.

#### From Pittston, Penna.

E. W. Campbell, the well-known taxidermist of this place, reports the following:

No. 533, Pine Siskins, here on Friday, February 12; about a dozen; six or seven miles back of town, back of Campbell's Ledge. They cannot come any nearer town as the lumber hog has been here and done his work of destruction. In a little while there won't be a tree standing for a bird to sit on; let alone build a nest in.

Redpolls are here also; both kinds, the Greater and Lesser.

511b, Bronze Grackle; a flock of seven of these birds, October 17, 1908, East of the Alleghany Mountains. Three of these decided to remain with me.

The largest Great-horned Owl came to me November 14, 1908. It is nearly black, and the wing spread is 58 inches.

#### A Blue-winged Warbler's Nest.

On June 6th, 1908, while mowing brush for a neighbor, I had the good luck to find the nest of a Blue-winged Warbler, situated fourteen inches from the ground in a small clump of blackberry bushes. Nest composed of very fine grass, lined with horse hair. It contained six fresh eggs. The bird flushed from nest. I watched her for some little time afterwards. This is the first nest of this Warbler I have known being found in Ashtabula county, Ohio.

But oh! the fate of this treasure; it was unfortunate. For while moving to another house the load of goods upset, and this with some others, vanished, and is now only a pleasant dream.

Owing to the very late spring of 1908, several species of Warblers that go further north to nest remained here during the summer; so of course must have nested here, although I found no nests. I saw at times all summer, both the Blackburnian and Blackpoll Warblers.

S. V. WHARRAM,  
Geneva, Ohio.

#### Vaux's Swift Nesting in Chimneys.

I recently learned of an unused chimney in a farmhouse near here where a colony of the Vaux's Swift have built their nests and reared young for a number of years; while I, all unsuspecting, watched every hollow tree in the neighborhood for the past two seasons, hoping to find a nest, as the bird is not rare here.

Do any of our western readers have knowledge of this swift becoming so much civilized? It's new to me.

STANLEY G. JEWETT,  
Sellwood Sta.,  
Portland, Ore.

#### From California.

R. M. Pertz, of Los Angeles, California, reports a nest of a California Shrike found ten feet up in an Eucalyptus tree with six fresh eggs, February 2, 1909. Rather early for this species, we should say.

#### Good Beginning.

The season of 1909 opens propitiously for Ye Editor, with a set of four Great Horned Owls, March 6th, and a set of five Barred Owl, March 15th. This is the third set of four Great

Horned, and the first set of five Barred that have come under our personal observation in a collecting experience of over thirty years. Another set of Great Horned Owl was taken March 28th.

#### Unusual.

Last spring and summer, there was at the edge of the street in front of my house, a pool of water caused by a leak in the water connection. Naturally this made a great drinking and bathing place for the birds, and at different times between May 1st and August 1st, found the following eggs, which had been deposited on the ground near the water.

English Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 2; Robin, 2 (one about the size of Catbird's egg), on July 28th).

Is not this an unusual occurrence? I did not know that it was customary for birds to drop eggs in this manner.

K. B. SQUIRES,  
Greensport, L. I.

It is not very uncommon to occasionally find an egg of some of these species dropped away from the nest, but it is quite unusual to find so many dropped at one place.—EDITOR.

#### From the Isle of Pines.

The Oologist:—

A short time ago I sent you a list of birds which I identified on my trip down here, and I promised that you would hear from me later. Every day now the warblers are becoming more plentiful. Up to this date I have identified forty-five species of birds most of which I had met before in Ohio, and there are about as many more which I have seen, and have been unable to name. The Ground Doves are beginning to nest. I have run across five of them on our place since January 20th. Quail are fairly plentiful and go

in larger flocks than they generally do in the North, and are very tame.

The list which I have seen here up to date is as follows:

- 197 Snowy Heron (Several).  
 120a Florida Cormorant (3).  
 444 Kingbird (Common).  
 Black Parrot (Abundant).  
 Cuban Sparrow Hawk (Common).  
 316 Mourning Dove (Common).  
 289 Bob-White (Fairly common).  
 Carrion Crow (Several).  
 Green Parrot (Very common).  
 320 Ground Dove (Abundant).  
 Grackle (Species not determined).  
 681 Maryland Yellowthroat (Several).  
 409 Red-bellied Woodpecker (Common).  
 662 Blackburnian Warbler (1).  
 Red-legged Thrush (Abundant).  
 325 Turkey Buzzard (Abundant).  
 501 Meadowlark (Not common).  
 509 Rusty Blackbird (Several).  
 657 Magnolia Warbler (A few).  
 676 Louisiana Water-thrush (1).  
 675 Water-thrush (Common).  
 206 Sand-hill Crane (A few).  
 704 Catbird.  
 201 Green Heron (A few).  
 636 Black and White Warbler (A few).  
 673 Prairie Warbler (Several).  
 Cuban Wood Pewee (Very common).  
 317 Zenida Dove (1).  
 207 Limpkin (2).  
 663 Yellow-throated Warbler (2).  
 758a Olive-backed Thrush (1).  
 445 Gray Kingbird (Common).  
 390 Belted Kingfisher (Several).  
 191 Least Bittern (2).  
 456 Phoebe (Several).  
 648 Parula Warbler (Common).  
 672 Palm Warbler (Abundant).  
 636 Prothonotary Warbler (Common).  
 654 Black-throated Blue Warbler (A few).  
 687 American Redstart (1).  
 118 Anhinga (1).  
 423 Chimney Swift (2).  
 314 White-crowned Pigeon (1).  
 640 Bachman's Warbler (1).

There are several different species of pigeons here which I have not identified; also some flycatchers and hummers. Of course this list is not very

complete as I have been here only a little over two months, and have been busy most of the time. The majority of these I have seen on our own tract. You will hear from me later if this proves of interest to you.

Feb. 7, 1909.

A. C. READ.

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#### Newspaper Ornithology.

The following delightful sample of the serious and dangerous effects of spring fever is dished up by a well-known publication. Later in the season the malady will be more malignant and will escape by means of snake stories, and later, fish stories. Finally, late in the season, when it really becomes serious and dangerous, the sea serpent will appear at all the well-known summer resorts:

---

#### The Last of C. L. Rawson's Quail Trap Eagles.

Attracting considerable attention at the Norwich and Worcester railroad station were the Quail Trap eagles, mounted with wings extended and uncrated, on their way to North Woodstock. They were all New London county examples and the whiteheads were from the pair that used to breed in a swamp 12 miles from Westery. An adult female golden eagle in nuptial plumage is an unusual occurrence in Eastern Connecticut, the records being few and far between.

Among other local varieties going to the Quail Trap museum were horned larks, grebes and red-headed woodpeckers from Preston, hooded merganser from Spalding's dam, Barrows' goldeneyes from Trading cove, oystercatchers from the Thames river, loon, snowy heron and eider duck from Noank and Carolina rail, Florida gallinule and rough-winged swallow, all picked up dead in the suburbs of Norwich.



## SILLY!

The Outing Magazine for April announces that it is about to undertake a militant campaign for the conservation of our natural resources. Following this is an article by the editor on "A Pernicious Collecting Mania," wherein he excoriates without limit the collecting of birds' eggs, and announces that parents should "make clear to their children that for every egg they take they are subtracting one from the number of future birds which are doing their best to make the outdoors a pleasant place to live in."

This is all very well in its way, if it were consistent. But coming as it does from a man who has spent his life largely in the destruction of our wild creatures, pursuing them into the uttermost recesses of their furthest habitations; and coming as it does from a magazine, a very large portion of whose advertising columns is taken up with the exploitation of murderous paraphernalia ranging from trout flies to repeating shot-guns and automatic fire arms, and a very considerable portion of the cuts and plates appearing therein are pictures of wild animals and wild fowl stricken unto death by the tremendous efficiency of the engines of destruction therein exploited, leads one to believe that this militant campaign against the boy who desires to make a collection of birds' eggs in his vicinity, is largely for the purpose of raising dust behind which to hide the greater offense—the destruction of the bird that laid the egg.

True, the taking of the bird's egg may decrease the number of future birds one; the chances are that it will not; for the mother bird almost invariably selects another site and lays another clutch of eggs. But the taking of the life of the mother bird so heartily pursued by the editor of

Outing, and so expressively exploited in the columns of Outing, would most certainly reduce the number of present birds one, and reduce the number of future birds, many.

The collecting of birds' eggs for scientific purposes is just as legitimate as collecting in any other line of natural history. Nearly all the birds' eggs collected by the boys of the country, ultimately find their way into permanent quarters, either in large private collections or in public museums. Many of our leading scientists in the line of ornithology have commenced their life as collectors of birds' eggs in early days. This is true of Charles E. Bendire, William Brewster, John M. Thayer, Frank M. Chapman, T. S. Palmer, Otto Widman, Julius Grinnell, and Walter Emerson; as well as many other lesser lights.

Mr. Chapman, in his latest book, says that egg collecting has been practiced in England almost from time immemorial, without appreciably reducing the number of birds. The small boy goes into the woods and makes his modest collection of eggs, and thereby acquires a healthy love of investigation along natural history lines, fills his young lungs with ozone, and builds real red blood, as the result of his outdoor exercise; and the enthusiastic action of his mind.

It belittles a magazine of the standing of Outing to make war on the boy, because the boy may remember that the writer of the article is the very man who spent nearly all of one winter wandering through the Arctic snows of Northwestern American in an effort to kill off and destroy at least a portion of the very limited number of wild bison left in the entire world; and thereby endeavoring to hasten the complete extinction of this noble animal.

Outing had better commence its militant campaign at home; clean its

own house, and reform its own editor before commencing to make war on the small boys of the country, because they may be disposed to commence the scientific pursuits of their life in the manner in which many of our most learned men along these lines began.

One repeating shot-gun sold as the result of an advertisement in *Outing* will reduce the number of wild fowl or upland game birds likely to be upon the face of this earth ten years from today, a hundred fold more than all the collecting that any egg collector is likely to do.

To begin a militant campaign against the egg collector because he takes the egg of the bird while endeavoring to further in every way by advertisement and the like, the destruction of the bird that laid the egg, appears to the mind of the writer, as silly—simply silly!

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

##### Summer Birds of Shaw's Garden.

We are in receipt of a separate from the 20th Annual Report of the Missouri Botanical Garden, by Prof. Otto Widmann. It is ample recommendation that the paper is by Mr. Widmann. That at once entitles it to high rank, for Mr. Widmann's attainments in the line of Ornithological knowledge are well known and highly respected.

The paper shows a remarkably careful preparation, and painstaking investigation, as well as a very unusual number of birds to be found in so small an area, in the very midst of a great commercial city of upwards of 500,000 people.

The birds noted that nest within the garden are as follows:

- 289 Bob-white.
- 316 Mourning Dove.
- 373 Screech Owl.

- 387 Yellow-billed Cuckoo.
- 388 Black-billed Cuckoo.
- 406 Red-headed Woodpecker.
- 412 Northern Flicker.
- 423 Chimney Swift.
- 444 Kingbird.
- 452 Great Crested Flycatcher.
- 461 Wood Pewee.
- 466 Traill's Flycatcher.
- 477 Blue Jay.
- 488 Crow.
- 495 Cowbird.
- 498 Red-winged Blackbird.
- 501 Meadowlark.
- 506 Orchard Oriole.
- 507 Baltimore Oriole.
- 511b Bronzed Grackle.
- 529 American Goldfinch.
- E. S. English Sparrow.
- E. T. European Tree Sparrow.
- 563 Chipping Sparrow.
- 581 Song Sparrow.
- 587 Towhee.
- 593 Cardinal.
- 595 Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
- 598 Indigo Bunting.
- 627 Warbling Vireo.
- 633 Bell's Vireo.
- 652 Yellow Warbler.
- 681 Yellowthroat.
- 683 Yellow-breasted Chat
- 703 Mockingbird.
- 704 Catbird.
- 705 Brown Thrasher.
- 756 Wood Thrush.
- 761 Robin.

Those who visited the Garden without nesting therein are listed as follows, A. O. U. Nos.:

- 360 Sparrow Hawk.
- 390 Belted Kingfisher.
- 420 Nighthawk.
- 428 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- 611 Purple Martin.
- 620 Cedar Waxwing.

#### Notes on American Woodcock.

In Number 2, Volume 9, of the Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, is a splendid paper on the American Woodcock by that well-known naturalist, Ottomar Reinecke, accompanied by numerous half-tone plates of the birds, their nests and eggs. The name of the writer is a safe guaranty of the thoroughness of the paper, and is a valuable contribution to the literature relating to this

bird. Mr. Reinecke makes the statement that the Woodcock arrives in the vicinity of Buffalo about the last week in March, and immediately begins nesting; and notes the occurrence of five eggs in one nest; which so far as the observations of the writer of this goes, is exceedingly unusual.

As Mr. Reinecke intimates in his paper, the Woodcock is rapidly approaching extinction, and something should be done, not only to afford protection to this bird when wintering in the South, as he suggests, but in my judgment, it should be everywhere protected by a continuous closed season, and the shooting of the Woodcock should be stopped absolutely for at least ten years.

In the early memory of the writer, it was a very common bird along the Illinois River, and it was nothing unusual for a hunter to procure a dozen in a day, and its nest was frequently found. Yet it is so nearly wiped out of this vicinity that the last and only Woodcock seen by the writer in more than five years was one August evening in 1907 within the corporate limits of Lacon. It is a gentle, docile, beautiful bird and should be protected from the fate that seems to await it.

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That a magazine that has existed for twenty-six years must have some usefulness as well as friends?

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**Disasters Caused by a Horned Owl.**

Very recently in Northern California a horned owl in carrying a rabbit to his nest, says a writer in the Children's Visitor, struck one of the high tension wires on the trolley line between Redding and Middle Creek, while the rabbit hit the lower wire. This produced a "short circuit" with the following results:

The short-circuiting caused a fire in the great hoisting works of the White Oak Mines, near Shasta, totally destroying them at a loss of five thousand dollars. It also caused a fire in the Hotel Lorenz in Redding. The hotel was partly burned and many guests had a very narrow escape for their lives. However, the fire was extinguished by the Redding fire department after a desperate fight and a heavy loss.

At the time the White Oak Mine was closed down, and only a single watchman was on the ground. The news of the burning works soon reached Shasta, and a young girl ran to the nearest telephone station and attempted to inform the fire department at Redding of the fire. The short-circuited power line striking the telephone line knocked the girl senseless—in fact, nearly killed her—besides very badly burning her. However, she recovered.

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ERNEST H. SHORT.

March 2, 1909.

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## THE OÖLOGIST

LACON,

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BIRDS--NESTS--EGGS.

Published Monthly, by R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Illinois.

VOL. XXVI. No. 5. ALBION, N. Y., MAY 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 262

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Wanted, Exchange, For Sale, Etc., inserted in this department at 25 cents for each 25 words for one issue; each additional word 1 cent. No notice inserted for less than 25 cents.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 5.

ALBION, N. Y. MAY 15, 1909.

WHOLE No. 262

JOHN FARWELL FERRY

## Returns From Expedition to Coast of Venezuela for the Field Museum.

At least one new species of bird life, innumerable interesting and rare specimens and several new problems as to bird distribution are some of the results of a trip just completed by John Farwell Ferry of the Field Museum of Natural History among the islands lying off the coast of Venezuela. Mr. Ferry arrived in Chicago yesterday with ten cases containing 850 birds, a barrel of reptiles and fish and several trunks of curious specimens.

The trip just completed fills a gap which has always existed between the Dutch West Indies and the Island of Margarita and gives the museum the only complete one as well as one of the largest collection of West Indian bird life in existence. Much new information has been gained and the ranges of several species of birds heretofore believed to be confined to the Lesser Antilles have been extended.

Aside from the scientific significance of the expedition there is a Robinson Crusoe interest attaching to the four months of travel under tropic skies among coral reefs or volcanic, rock-bound islands. Mr. Ferry left Chicago on December 15 and sailed from New York the following Sunday. Just at that time the Venezuelan situation was most fevered, and he did not know whether he would be allowed to carry on his scientific expedition.

A hopeful sign, however, was the

fact that a number of political refugees were on the same vessel returning to their country, among them was General Roldano, Castro's arch enemy. Arrived at Curacao, the noted exile was received with the maddest enthusiasm by the populace and President Gomez greeted him demonstratively at the wharf.

At Caracas, after some little difficulty, Mr. Ferry obtained permission to travel with firearms and returned to Curacao in order to procure a schooner and a crew. There he found that few of the sailors knew even where the islands were located, since they are never visited except by a few adventurous fishermen. After many discouragements the explorer found an intelligent captain and a schooner suited for his purposes.

Again there was delay owing to political complications, but finally the schooner set her prow out into the waters of the southern Atlantic toward the rocky, cactus-grown wastes where men rarely venture.

Many of the islands were found to be but coral reefs, flat and sandy, with no vegetation but cactus and perhaps but a single species of birds. On others the only living things were countless small black lizards, as thick as ants. On one of the islands a sort of animated gargoyle was met, a most repulsive black reptile with horns, fins and scaly claws.

For thirty days the little craft traversed the lonely wastes of the ocean, often becalmed beneath the intense glare of the southern sky, often mak-

ing an island only to discover that no jagged, precipitous coast.

landing was possible because of the

One of the more interesting sights was that encountered at one of the islands forming the group called Los Hermanos. Here the steep heights were people by millions of tern, their nests being so thick that it was impossible to walk around without treading upon their eggs. Their constant cries rent the air, making a deafening din, while their swooping bodies made a dizzy cloud against the sun.

"It was on one of these islands that Mr. Ferry battled his way to the peak through the stubborn cactus. There, hundreds of feet above the sea, with no living object in sight but the birds, he stood alone where probably no human foot had ever stepped before.

"Then I suddenly felt the power of loneliness," he said in speaking of the experience. "The water about the island was so deep that it had not been possible to anchor, so the schooner had put us off in a boat and was cruising about. I saw her in the distance, heading away from me, and in that moment I was almost overpowered with the terror of isolation.

"Perhaps the most beautiful sight we saw was a flock of flamingoes early one morning. We knew of a marshy cove where they were nesting, and before sunrise we put out in the boat and approached. As we neared the spot the sun rose above the eastern horizon, staining the sky a deep roseate hue. Just at that moment the flock of flame-colored birds rose and fitted across the sky, profiled against the east."

During the thirty days on board the schooner Mr. Ferry traveled some 1,200 miles, visiting the islands spread from Curacoa to Margarita. The islands visited were Bonaire, Aves, Las Roques, Orchilla, Tortuga, Blanquilla,

Los Hermanos, Los Testigos and Margarita.

Although the trip was shorter by two months than was planned the museum authorities feel that it was unusually successful.

#### The Western Winter Wren in Washington.

A number of my correspondents in the eastern United States tell me the Winter Wren (*Olbiorchilus hiemalis*) spends the winter in their locality, but that the nests have invariably escaped detection. Therefore a few notes from my personal experience covering twelve years with the Western form (*Olbiorchilus hiemalis pacificus*) may possibly be of assistance as well as interest.

In the vicinity of Tacoma these little wrens are fairly abundant at all seasons of the year. They frequent much the same locality in winter as they do in summer, and we may be fairly safe in considering them as resident wherever found. Their favorite resorts are deep gulches at the bottom of which runs a fresh water stream, or else we may find them in some dark, heavily timbered piece of woodland. As a rule they prefer a rather wet locality, but this is by no means essential; indeed I have found the nest on a dry hillside at a long distance from water.

With regard to their nesting sites, I know of no other bird that can at all compare with this wren in architectural versatility. The nest may be found almost anywhere from one to twelve feet above the ground, so long as it is in a suitable locality. Perhaps fifty per cent of the nests I have seen were built amongst the upturned roots of some large fallen tree. A crevice formed by some displaced rock is smoothed out by the bird and a face-wall of green moss and dead twigs built completely over the opening. An

entrance not more than an inch in diameter is left near the top of this wall, while the bottom and sides of the cavity are padded with green moss. This snug little hollow, some three inches in diameter, is then warmly lined with feathers for the reception of the eggs. This type of nest is the most common, and also the simplest in construction.

The next most commonly used site is some fallen giant of the forest that has split open upon striking the ground. Hidden deep in some part of the split, the wren builds a rather pretentious little nest, usually somewhat arched over.

Nearly as often as the last named method, these wrens will build a nest precisely resembling that of a marsh wren in all except the materials used. These nests are very bulky, handsome structures, and are usually suspended from five to ten feet above the ground amongst the drooping sprays of some large fir limb. Sometimes, however, it is built in the center of a baby fir only three or four feet high.

Other sites in which the nests may be found are as follows: In some huge bunch of green moss suspended from a tree, very much like many nests that I have seen of the Northern Parula Warbler (*Compothlypis americana usnare*). Again it will be under a large scale of bark that has separated a few inches from the trunk of some fallen tree. Several times I have found it in the roof of an old placer mine, or under the arch of some bank of earth. Indeed, until last summer, I thought I had pretty well solved their nesting affairs, but my lack of knowledge was again made evident by the discovery of a beautiful set of six eggs placed in a hole in a small stump. This was evidently an old boring made by some passing chickadee or small woodpecker, the nest being

placed at the bottom of the cavity in the same manner as a chickadee.

So erratic are they in their habits that it is impossible to say with certainty that more than one brood is reared in a season. It do not consider it as probable, although if the first set of eggs is removed, another set is usually laid in the vicinity. The earliest eggs I ever saw were a set of four on April 15th that were ready to hatch, but most commonly fresh eggs may be found in the third week of that month. In the mountains they breed practically up to the timber line, starting in nest building as soon as the snow gets melted away to a convenient level. At such altitudes as 6,000 feet I have found fresh eggs as late as the last week in June, but I have no reason to think the birds had nested before that date.

The eggs in a set vary from four to six in number, but most commonly five are laid. The ground color is a delicate milky white, rather sparingly marked with dots of pale reddish brown. They vary in shape from rounded to elongate ovate, and always impress me as being very large for such a small bird, averaging in measurement .65 x .49 inches.

These wrens are most often industrious builders of decoy nests. One pair of birds will generally stake out a claim covering about one hundred yards of territory, making improvements here and there in the shape of false nests, often to the number of six or eight. These "decoys" are almost always built entirely of moss, and in this way they may be distinguished from the real nest which has a liberal facing of dead twigs. Should the first set of eggs be taken, a second set is often laid in one of these "decoys," which is about the only use I have ever seen for them! I will not say the only use, because



1. Isaac E. Hess, Philo, Ills. Climbing for Red Tail Hawk's Eggs, April, 1907

when an intruder comes into their territory, both wrens will hop around these false nests scolding at a tremendous rate.

The male bird nearly always sings near the sitting female, as is characteristic of most wrens, but in spite of this a search for the nest is a good deal like the proverbial "hunting for a needle in a haystack." On only one occasion have I been able to see the female on the nest, for she usually leaves at the first approach of danger, and is seldom to be noticed in the vicinity while the intruder is present.

Of all the birds in my acquaintance, these are the most particular as to how their nest is examined. Should a finger be introduced ever so carefully, for the purpose of ascertaining the contents they will invariably desert if the full set is not laid. This is a most distressing habit to the collector, as the nest cavity is always from two to three inches deep, and its contents cannot possibly be known without feeling in it.

J. H. BOWLES.

### Wrens!

Now is the time to put up your wren boxes. The destruction of timber, the decrease in the number of woodpeckers to excavate holes, and the multiplication of the English Sparrows have deprived these little birds of a large percent of their natural homes. No bird will more amply repay the little trouble of putting up a box for them. This should be made of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch lumber—old lumber is the best—any shape will do; and should be tight and waterproof, with a one inch hole bored into one side. A larger hole will admit English Sparrows and then it would be good-bye to the Wren family.

Nail this box up anywhere on a tree, under a veranda, to a gate post or on

to the side of a house and the Wrens will do the rest. All summer long these midgets will be bobbing, fluttering and singing about your premises. The natural food of the Wren is largely spiders. One pair of wrens around a home will prevent more spider webs in a week than a good housewife and a broom can do away with in a month.

Let each of us put up at least one Wren box now.

### The Red Tail Hawk.

There are few more beneficial birds than this Hawk. Its natural food being small furred animals, Gophers, Field Mice, Moles, Ground Squirrels and the like, makes it one of the farmer's most valued friends. Yet it will occasionally kill and carry away a huge bull snake, four or five feet long; or once in a great while, a chicken; though this hawk seldom if ever, takes feathered game, when it can by any possibility, secure a small furred animal. How is this friendship for and actual service to the farmer repaid? Most shamefully! Every time the big splendid bird soars into view, everyone in sight at once notes that a "Chicken Hawk" is abroad. All rush pell mell for a shotgun or rifle and a desperate effort is at once made by all the fools in sight to assassinate the very bird they should protect.

As the result of such persecution, this Hawk is now one-third as numerous in Central Illinois as it formerly was. While the Pocket Gopher, Ground Squirrel and Field Mice have increased ten fold. They are now a positive damage to the crops.

The writer once found a Red Tail's nest thirty feet up in a tree under which an old chicken hen and her flock of young made their headquarters. The owner said he never had lost a single chick.

This Hawk usually nests near the top of a large tree, a leaning White Oak on the brow of a hill preferred, giving a wide outlook from the nest. It is large, and composed of sticks, chips, grass, brush, weeds and rubbish generally. Flat on top with a slight depression for the eggs which are two or three in number, in about the ratio of three sets of two to one set of three; occasionally there is a nest containing four eggs; though I have never seen one myself. The eggs vary in size very much. In my collection the largest set I have is one of the largest of which there is any record. The eggs are exceptionally well marked over with heavy blotches and spots of rusty red, brick red, brown and lavender. They measure 2.45 x 1.99; 2.52 x 2.00; 2.50 x 2.01 inches. The smallest set I have are more oblong in shape; one is almost unmarked, while the other has the markings grouped like a ring around one end. They are the smallest eggs measure 2.29 x 1.64; 2.23 x 1.66 inches. Both of these sets of eggs I personally collected.

My series consists of thirty-two sets, is the result of twenty years attention to these birds, during which time I have not taken one set in five that I have examined in the nest. In this latitude on a bright, clear, crisp day in late March, it makes one seem good to be alive as we break over hill and dale in search of the lordly Red Tail's home. And right well do we earn a new addition to our cabinet by climbing three, four or five giant White Oaks, Elms, or Cottonwoods that we get one set desirable.

The "Bird Doctors" have divided the Red Tail into the following forms:

A. O. U. No. 337, Red Tailed Hawk (*Buteo borealis*.)

This is a bird of medium plumage,

and ranges throughout Eastern North America, West casually nearly to the Rocky Mountains; North to Latitude 60, and South to Eastern Mexico; and it is the common Red Tail of the Eastern half of the United States.

No. 337a, Krider's Hawk (*Buteo borealis kriderii*).

This is the lightest form of Red Tail; in some specimens, being very light, and on parts of the body, pure white. In ranges throughout the great plains of the Western United States, from Wyoming and the Dakotas and Minnesota, South into Texas, and is casually found in Iowa and Illinois.

No. 337b, Western Red Tail (*Buteo borealis calurus*).

This is the dark form of the Red Tail, frequently being very melanic, and inhabits Western North America from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast. South in winter into Mexico. It is casually found as far East as Central Illinois, and is very plentiful in parts of its range in the West.

337d, Harlan's Hawk (*Buteo borealis harlani*).

This is the darkest form of the Red-tail, and is found in the Gulf states, and lower Mississippi Valley, North casually to Pennsylvania, Iowa and Kansas; South to Central America.

In its nesting, it is different from the other Red Tails, in that it usually places its nest in thick timber, where there is no broad landscape that the bird may view from the nest.

Herewith we present a picture of the well known naturalist, Isaac E. Hess, of Philo, Illinois, caught in the act of climbing for Red Tails' eggs in Southeastern Illinois, during April, 1907. Mr. Hess is an authority on the local habits of these birds in his neighborhood.

OLD SUBSCRIBERS, compare this month's issue with some of those in times gone by.



6. Taking a set of Bufflehead Duck's Eggs, Alberta, June 1906. Photo by Walter Raine, his son on the ground Typical Alberta, Muskeg Country

### The Bufflehead Duck.

The "Butter Ball," as this species is usually called, is one of the loveliest of all the Duck tribe. Found, except as a casual straggler, only in North America, we may with pride call this beautiful and sprightly bird all our own. As a picture of loveliness, it takes rank in the same class with our Wood Duck. This species ranges throughout North America from the far Arctics into Cuba and Mexico. It is a cold weather bird, only coming to us when Winter weather may be expected, and returning North with the first rifts in the ice. As a swimmer and diver this duck excels most of the duck family. It generally feeds in deep water, bringing up its food from considerable depths.

Its flight is tremendous. Straight on, with a velocity seldom equalled by birds. Alighting, it plunges into, or rather onto the water with a great splash. It has but a single note—a hoarse guttural, subdued roll.

Carrying a splendid crest and much brilliant, iridescent coloring, set off by large fields of immaculate white, the male bird is a striking figure on the water. The female, like the female of the Wood Duck, is garbed in a subdued grayish brown; a very demure little thing she is until alarmed, when with the rapidity of electricity, she is all motion. Sometimes diving as quickly as a Grebe; at other times hurling herself into the air as quick as thought.

The flesh of this bird is very good for a deep water duck, but is not to be compared with that of a teal or mallard.

The Bufflehead nests in hollow trees after the fashion of a Wood Duck. The nest is placed at varying heights where suitable cavities are found. The eggs are laid on the rubbish at the

bottom of the cavity, and ultimately covered and surrounded with down, pulled from the mother's breast. They are six to ten in number and of a grayish white color.

The little ducklings, short and dumpy, are about the cutest little things imaginable, with their stubby bills and quick movements. The editor found this specimen nesting sparingly along the Goose River in North Dakota in 1893. Eggs of this species are not common in collections.

We present herewith a view of the taking of a set of the eggs of this duck in Alberta province, Canada, in June, 1903, by the well-known Walter Raine, and son. This picture gives a good view of the typical Muskeg country of that region.

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### Bald Eagle.

I have been after Bald Eagle eggs for a long while, but could not locate them to any extent until this year.

I got a fine set of three in 1906 after four or five years of continual effort. This year, after getting out my lines early, I succeeded in landing 1-1, 3-2.

1-1 and 1-2 came from Maryland; 1-2 from Virginia and 1-2 from Delaware. The dates run from February 21st to February 27th.

The weather was fine this year for hunting them, which accounts somewhat for my success. As a rule though, they nest at a time of the year when all the elements are working hard against you. It is generally cold and windy, wet and muddy, and unpleasant to be out doors.

They are very hard to find without some previous knowledge as to their location, and expensive to secure, owing to the great distance their nests are placed apart. The eggs are held very close by those who have been fortunate enough to secure them, and



are becoming more valuable each year.

The old birds are very wary about their homes, and abandon them if molested, more than they consider necessary; besides the high winds blow a great many of the old trees down.

The dates, location and size of each set follow:

2-26-06	Del.....	2.90 x 2.28
		2.88 x 2.30
		2.85 x 2.25
2-22-09	Del.....	2.93 x 2.22
		2.87 x 2.21
2-24-09	Va.....	2.80 x 2.20
		2.70 x 2.20
2-21-09	Md.....	2.65 x 2.12
2-27-09	Md.....	2.85 x 2.18
		2.80 x 2.15

Average for the ten eggs, 2.82 x 2.21  
The eggs from Delaware are much larger than the ones from Maryland and Virginia.

The highest nest was 1-2 from Maryland on February 27th. It was placed in a pine 80 feet up. The tree was ten feet in circumference. The farmer that climbed it said he would not climb it again for \$50.00.

E. J. DARLINGTON.

From the Isle of Pines.

April 25, 1909.

A short time ago I sent you some notes on the birds which I have seen here. The following bring the list up to date:

- White Crowned Pigeon....(Common)
- Cerulean Warbler ..... (1)
- Great White Heron ..... (2)
- Little Blue Heron .....(Several)
- Cuban Martin .....(Several)
- Nighthawk ..... (Common)
- Barn Swallow ..... (Several)
- Black-whiskered Vireo ....(Common)
- Indigo Bunting ..... (1)
- Red-eyed Vireo ..... (1)
- Ruddy Quail Dove .....(Several)
- Black-throated Hummer ..(Common)

These bring the list of birds which I have identified up to fifty-six species. Most of the warblers have now

left here except a few Ovenbirds American Redstarts, and Maryland Yellow-throats. Up to now I have had but little time for bird study, but hope to have a little more in the future.

The birds which I have found nesting are as follows: Ground Dove (6 nests with either eggs or young); Red-legged Thrush (Cuban Robin), and Black Whiskered Vireo.

A. C. READ.

The Henslow's Sparrow In Philadelphia County, Penn.

(A Correction)

In the December number of THE OOLOGIST, I recorded this species occurrence here as unique, but the bird has since been examined by Witmer Stone of the Academy of Sciences, who pronounced it a Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*), in the normal plumage of the first winter. Consequently my record is no record at all. So much for relying upon the identification of a friend!

However I do not place the blame on him, but shoulder it myself as I ought to have had the bird identified in the first place by a competent ornithologist, and before I wrote about it. Thus we learn from experience who is a sad and hard teacher.

The other two records in my paper of the observance of two supposedly Henslow's Sparrows cannot be relied upon, and the whole is a worthless record. Certainly they were not Swamp Sparrows; the Spring record in particular.

RICHARD F. MILLER.

Phila., Pa.

March 13, 1909.

The future has still better things in store. THE OOLOGIST will be bigger and better than ever before.

### Plenty of Birds.

While sitting out in our front yard I counted the following birds in five minutes time:

Chipping Sparrow, 20.  
Meadow Lark, 4.  
Blue Bird, 4.  
English Sparrow, 2.  
Field Sparrow, 3.  
Mocking Bird, 4.  
Mourning Dove, 5.  
Flicker, 1.  
Turkey Vulture, 9.  
Song Sparrow, 2.  
Black Poll Warbler, 1.  
Robin, 1.  
Crow, 1.  
Sparrow Hawk, 1.  
Boat-tailed Grackle, 3.  
Phoebe, 3.  
Maryland Yellow-throat, 1.

A. S. BRAND,  
Culpeper, Va.

April 18, 1909.

### Common Tern in Monroe County, New York.

On April 23d, I found myself in the midst of a flock of twenty of these birds in the beautiful Spring dress. They were fourteen miles south of Lake Ontario.

Have seen scattering birds about the Genesee Falls during migration on several occasions, but this was the largest flock and the farthest from the Lakes that I have ever observed.

E. H. SHORT.

### A Freak Robin.

For the past week I have noticed a pair of Robins nest building on the grounds of the Baptist parsonage at Chili Center, Monroe county, New York. The female, which I have had several opportunities to closely inspect is in at least one respect, the most unique albino I have ever seen.

I have seen many types of albinism from pure white to an isolated patch, but in all cases, except those of com-

plete albinism, there has been no regularity about the markings.

In this case there are two semicircles of grayish-white on each side, apparently exactly alike, an equidistant as to each other, and also the other side. One band is on secondaries, the other on wing coverts on each side. They give the effect of perfectly normal markings, and perhaps I should have a species named after me.

Owing to the strict interpretation of York State Laws on the subject I am not at liberty to preserve this unique specimen, which I presume, will fail to transit its peculiar coloring to any of its offspring.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

April 22, 1909.

### Abnormal Eggs.

I have in my collection two eggs of the Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) taken near Morristown, Tennessee, on June 5, 1906, from a nest in a cavity in a walnut tree, about 40 feet from the ground. The eggs measured respectively  $1.12\frac{1}{2}$  x 1 inch and  $.93\frac{3}{4}$  x  $.68\frac{3}{4}$  inch, the latter being one-third smaller than the first mentioned. I once saw a set of the Meadow Lark (*Sturnella magna*) one egg of which was great deal smaller than the rest. I have also a very small English Sparrow egg which measures  $.68\frac{3}{4}$  x  $56\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

I have heard these abnormal eggs called "Maiden Eggs." Can you assign the cause of this marked difference in the size of eggs laid by the same bird?

J. F. TAYLOR.

Knoxville, Tenn.

The laying of runt eggs or so-called maiden or pullet eggs, seems to be a habit of nearly all birds, both tame and wild. Many causes or theories have been assigned therefor, but none

appealing to our mind as at all satisfactory. During over twenty years of collecting we have secured many exceedingly curious specimens of abnormal eggs of many species. At this time we have runt eggs of the following A. O. U. numbers:

51, Herring Gull; 119, Coot; 144, Wood Duck; 388 Yellow-billed Cuckoo; 393, Hairy Woodpecker; 413 Red-shafted Flicker; 816, Bank Swallow; 631, White Eyed Vireo; 637, Prothonotary Warbler; 761, Robin; E. S. English Sparrow; besides a considerable number of otherwise abnormal eggs of numerous other species. It is our purpose to color plate a number of the rarer of these in due time in THE OOLOGIST if the support given this publication justifies the expenditure. There is also in this place another collection containing splendid runts of 325 Turkey Buzzards; and 373b, Texan Screech Owl.

The laying of runt eggs is more common with domestic fowl than with wild birds, in our observation.—  
Editor.

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### An Apology.

It is unpleasant to admit error, and more unpleasant to apologize therefor; and still much more so to be compelled so to do at the very threshold of an undertaking. A good maxim for public speakers is "never commence your address with an apology—no matter what the excuse you might be able to offer."

Yet we deem it due our readers to explain the wonderful and fearful make-up of last month's issue—our first. The copy of this issue was mailed to the printer with very explicit directions as to the order of printing the copy sent. But the printer being nearly a thousand miles from us, turned the matter over to an employee, without further attention,

and the result is a number of THE OOLOGIST of which we are heartily ashamed.

The portrait of the present proprietor should of course have followed immediately after the article giving the reason for the purchase of the publication by us. The blunder of printing it amongst the advertising matter, and substituting in its proper place, a memorial notice relating to some former subscribers who had passed over, was bad enough; but as it was personal to us, we could have stood for it.

But when we discovered Mr. Printer had taken our humerous reference to the newspaper note on "Disasters Caused by a Horned Owl" on page 61 and transferred it to page 58, immediately preceding the article relating to Mr. C. L. Rawson's Quail Trap Eagles, it appeared to us the extreme limit had been reached. Nothing more foreign to our mind could be possible than any intent to cast suspicion or ridicule upon Mr. Rawson. His standing as naturalist and rank as a collector is too well and too long established to be affected by an error of this sort. It is a pleasure to thus publicly set the matter right.

---

### Look Out!

Editor Oologist:

I wish you would state in the publication and you are at liberty to do so over my name, that there is a party at Livermore, Iowa, who writes under two different names and who is offering some very rare sets of eggs many of them species unknown to science. Sets of Passenger Pigeons and Carolina Parakeet seem to prevail and he seems to be able to supply an unlimited number. I have seen sets of about twenty of these very rare species and I do not hesitate to pronounce them fraudulent. Collectors should be wary.

Yours very truly,  
JOHN LEWIS CHILDS.

**Wirt! Again.**

Our old friend, W. Wirt of Orleans County, New York, addresses at different points under different dates, has evidently fallen back into his old habits.

We gave him a free "write-up" in June, 1904, but after receiving protestations of reform, etc., finally reinstated him on our subscription book in 1905.

I fear that like the old Hebrew, he is "joined to his idols" and therefore have expunged his name from our book for the last time and advise others to "let him alone", as I shall do.

E. H. SHORT.

March, 1909.

**Fraud.**

It will be a pleasure to us to expose any improper, unscientific or fraudulent practices, on the part of any one, relating to the sale or exchange of specimens; of failure of anyone to square accounts in such matters. These things should be conducted along honorable lines

R. M. BARNES.

**That Militant Campaign.**

The militant campaign announced with such a flourish of trumpets in the April issue of OUTING as about to be undertaken by that publication against the small boys of the country for desiring to start a modest local collection of the nests and eggs of our native birds, to which we referred in our last issue, has come to an inglorious end.

It was stated in the press dispatches of April 12th that a receiver was appointed for the OUTING Publishing Company by the United States Court at Syracuse, New York on that day.

We extend our sympathy to the

OUTING people in this, their hour of trouble, but it should be a warning that it is an impossibility to carry water on both shoulders. In their case, this they tried to do, by encouraging in every way the sale of the most murderous implements for the destruction of the bird that laid the egg, while OUTING itself was conducting a militant campaign against the boy who took the egg.

To our mind it is far more important that the bird be not destroyed.

**Exchange Notices.**

After the mailing of this issue of THE OOLOGIST, no exchange notices of later date will be honored for publication unless issued and signed by the present proprietor of this magazine. They will all be consecutively numbered, and a careful record of them kept.

It is our wish to build up the exchange department, for from past experience we know its great value to collecting naturalists. This we cannot do alone, however, Mr. Subscriber, you can assist us by advertising your duplicates and wants. You ought to do so, particularly, when it costs you nothing extra. These specimens do you no good lying idle in your cabinets. They may be just what your neighbor wants.

**Special Notice.**

Inadvertantly in the last issue, there appeared a number of advertisements signed by Ernest H. Short, as Manager. Mr. Short has no longer any connection with this magazine. All correspondence should be addressed to THE OOLOGIST, at Lacon, Illinois. The undersigned is the sole owner, proprietor, editor and manager of this publication.

R. M. BARNES.

**Copy.**

All copy for articles intended for publication in "THE OOLOGIST" must hereafter be plainly written on one side of the paper only. A failure to comply with these requirements will result in the matter going into the waste basket in place of into the publication.

We wish to thank our contributors for their generous response to our request for bird notes. We have a number of splendid articles on hand for future publication.

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Will you help THE OOLOGIST;  
Will you help our collectors;  
Will you help yourselves;  
By sending in your exchange notices, advertising your surplus duplicates, these specimens will not only be gladly received by other collectors, but through the exchange will add to your cabinet. If you do not let others know that you have to spare, how can you expect others to let you know what they have to dispose of? Send in an exchange notice. DO IT NOW!

**Sample Copies.**

This month we are sending out a large number of sample copies. If you get one and like the publication, subscribe. It only costs 50 cents a year. If you don't care for it, give the copy to some bird friend.

\* \* \*

If you like this month's issue, say a good word for THE OOLOGIST to your friends, who are interested in birds.

\* \* \*

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**Prices for Back Numbers of the YOUNG OOLOGIST AND THE OOLOGIST** will, during 1908, remain as below: After which the prices of many numbers will be advanced and possibly not obtainable at any price. Should you desire back numbers to complete your file, NOW is the time to purchase. You can never obtain them for less money and possibly not at any price, as our stock ranges from only 1 to 25 copies of an issue.

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Published Monthly, by R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Illinois.

VOL. XXVI. No. 6. ALBION, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1909. WHOLE NO. 263

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**NESTS** with and without sets wanted, also reptile eggs, common variety particularly.

J. P. BALL, M. D., Frankford, Phila.

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**EXCHANGE**.—I am needing two fine pairs of fresh skins of No. 265 for mounting. Can give in exchange such sets as 207, 293a, 295, 301, 370a, 459, 654a, 639, 730, 749, etc. THOMAS H. JACKSON, 304 N. Franklin street, West Chester, Penna.

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**EXCHANGE NOTICE.**—34 Publications of Cal. Academy of Science, and 11 Publications by Bryant, Belding and Anthony, to exchange for first-class Sets with data. Send lists, also Sets for same. H. F. DUPREY, 919 Morgan street, Santa Rosa, California.

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Vol. XI, 1909

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 6.

ALBION, N. Y. JUNE 15, 1909.

WHOLE No. 263

## THE LURE OF THE CURLEW.

P. M. Silloway, Lewiston, Mont.

The Long-billed Curlew is a game old denizen of the pathless prairies of the northwest. He is no friend of civilization, and agriculture is surely pushing him ahead of its resistless march. Ever at home among the great cattle and sheep ranges of this region, the Curlew is seeing the vast stretches of prairie rapidly transformed by irrigation projects and the steam plow, and at no distant day the immense area of nesting domain will no more resound with the Curlew's mellow whistle or his harsh cackle.

The finding of a Curlew's nest is one of the fine arts. Not the mere stumbling upon a nest, for the cowboy or the rancher often does that; but the location of a nest on a stretch of prairie when the bird gives indication that it is nesting somewhere within a mile of the trespasser. In my experience on the prairies of central Montana, it has given me the keenest pleasure to follow the movements of any male Curlew jealously guarding the vicinity of its home, and thus eventually to flush his better half zealously hovering her treasures despite the commotion in the neighborhood. And there is a commotion, for frequently in the last stages of the quest as many as a dozen other Curlews will join in the outcry, all protesting with angry cackling and swooping about the intruder to mislead him and baffle him in the search. All the while, however, the female of the pair

concerned in the transaction will be sitting sedulously upon the nest, as if she knew that the male were fully equal to the task of caring for the interests of the household. He who chooses may hunt the deer, but for genuine blood-tinkling sport, give me the trailing down of a Curlew's nest from the first angry cackling of the male to the ultimate flushing of the female from her eggs..

To me it appears impossible that a novice, cut purposely to find a nest of the Curlew, should stumble upon one; a cowboy, riding straight on or here and there about his business, will frequently chance on a nest; or some unfeeling stroller of the prairie, regardless of nature's sights and sounds; but an ornithologist, never; for the latter, observing the actions of the male in guarding his domain, would have scarcely a chance in a thousand of not being mislead. Once the methods of the Curlew in manifesting its displeasure and anger are mastered by the bird watcher, however, the Curlew's case becomes hopeless, for sooner or later the collector will stand beside the cluster of four large handsome eggs.

In a recent collecting season I was afield one Saturday afternoon in the second week of May, on the lookout for Curlews. I was descending a long knoll of gentle slope, when a Curlew flapped into the neighborhood and settled on the ground near me, uttering angry cacklings and feeding impatiently on any luckless grasshoppers that might be lurking near him in the

herbage. It was a trifle early in the season, as I was out more to prospect than to make any finds; in fact, I had not brought along my collecting box. From the actions of this Curlew, I fancied that he claimed sovereignty over the neighborhood, and possibly a nest might be begun or a clutch of eggs started. Well, he had thrown out the challenge, and I was sportsman enough not to refuse the gauge of battle. Following my regular tactics, I worked over the long slope on right and left, and gradually descended it, finally working up the opposite slope, which extends ahead of me for nearly a quarter of a mile. All the while the Curlew kept nagging me, but not in the energetic way that meant a nest for sure. Several Curlews were browsing along the top of the knoll ahead, and since the male would not follow up his protestations in a way that meant life or death, I concluded that his female was there making a nest; and as my time was limited that afternoon, I returned home, full of anticipations of results on the following Saturday afternoon. I give these details that the reader may appreciate somewhat the distance from the nest at which the male will begin his demonstrations. I had missed the nest by not going far enough, for I found it the following Saturday by going nearly twice the distance I imagined I should go to find it. I will tell the sequel to this beginning.

Starting in good time the following Saturday, I had the pleasure to attract the male on the slope where I began the preceding week. On the former occasion, having the wrong idea that the nest was then being started, my efforts had been only tentative; now, however, I meant to carry eggs home with me; hence in the ear-

ly part of the afternoon I lost considerable time by concluding that the nest was on the first slopes I covered. Time and again I would excite the male, but getting off the trail, he would leave me and I would have to begin all over. Toward the close of the afternoon, however, I crossed the second slope and saw ahead a long descending basin, stretching a mile long and at least a quarter wide, intersected by several wire fences. Furthermore I saw a native riding a plow across the end of the field in which I was operating. Now, there is no great disgrace in searching for nests of the Curlew but unfortunately for my proceedings, the eggs of the Curlew are protected by our state law, which covers every thing from Robins to Storks. If the farmer knew me I was all right, for I could make him an accessory after the fact; but since the railroad began to boom our great inland empire many strangers have come in and taken up land. Using my field glasses, I determined that the plowman was a stranger from Minnesota, and doubtless absolutely unappreciative of the noble aims of science. The chase of the nest had reached the stage where I generally set up a mark on the prairie, and radiate back and forth from it, tracing spokes of an imaginary wheel with sixty to seventy yards radius, thus covering every foot of the ground in the search. The reader can imagine the result of such apparently insane action upon the rustic on his plow. Every round brought him near me, and he would each time rest his horses about fifteen minutes, all the while regarding me with curious interest. I fancied at times he would come over and investigate, for several times he dismounted, stood as if in doubt about the proprieties of the

case, adjusted some part of the harness, and later started on a new round. When he was near, of course I would regulate my actions to convey the least idea of lunacy, and would frequently sit down and rest while he was doing the same thing. At length the search led me across the fence into another field, and I felt somewhat relieved, for I hoped he might have no jurisdiction there. I had been killing time, hoping that his day's work would end and he would leave the field before I found the nest. From the actions of the male, which had now been joined by several screaming neighbors I knew I was near the nest. Ah, glancing eagerly ahead, I spied the female, flattened close to the ground as usual, about twenty-five feet ahead of me. But look—the native had just finished his last round, and leaving horses and plow standing, he came striding determinedly toward me, grimly ready to solve the mystery which had been troubling him all the afternoon. I quietly backed away from the sitting bird, so that an over-loud altercation might not startle her from her eggs, and went calmly forward to meet the issue.

"Have you lost anything?" inquired the stranger doubtfully, not yet certain that he wasn't dealing with an escaped lunatic.

"Oh, no, I haven't lost anything." I replied, glancing to see that his abrupt intrusion had not startled the Curlew from her nest, though the air was full of soaring, cackling males.

"I thought you was looking for something by the way you acted," he explained.

"I was looking for ova of *Numenius longirostris*," I said by way of information.

"Lookin' for what?" he inquired rather blankly.

"I was looking for ova of *Numenius longirostris*, which are sometimes found out on the prairie at this season."

"And what kind of things are them?"

"Oh, they are quite ovate in form, comparatively capacious in volume, showing washed virid or umber hues, and generally associated in a cluster of four."

"What do you do with them when you find them," he managed to ask.

"Well, I evacuate the interior capacity by pneumatic pressure, leaving the exterior covering intact for indefinite preservation."

The stranger looked at me doubtfully a moment, then slowly turned and walked hesitatingly toward his team. Soon I had the pleasure of seeing him disappear over the knoll, and I made haste to gather in the ova of *Numenius longirostris*.

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#### AMERICAN GOSHAWK NESTING IN PENNSYLVANIA.

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In bygone days when the wild pigeons nested in countless numbers in this region, the Goshawk was a regular breeder according to all reports, and preyed almost entirely on the pigeons.

But when the pigeon became a thing of the past, the Goshawk became known only as a winter visitor.

As the pigeon has become nearly extinct in my day (I have only killed one; that one a fine spring male now in my collection, and have not seen one since 1893), I did not suppose the Goshawk still lingered in summer.

May 25, 1906, in Clearfield County, while looking for Ravens in an immense tract of virgin forest owned by the Goodyear Lumber Company, and now the scene of extensive lumbering operations, I came upon a Goshawk

attempting to drive a grouse out of some laurel. The loud screams of the hawk and the distressed cries of the grouse attracted my attention, and I shot the hawk which was a female, and undoubtedly breeding.

Last Spring in May, while rambling about in the largest tract of virgin forest in this region, I came upon a pair of very excited Goshawks. They constantly screamed and at times darted straight at me, only sheering off when close by. No amount of searching revealed the nest, but as there was any amount of giant hemlock, the nest could easily have been hidden.

I was now convinced that a Goshawk's nest was still a possibility and determined to look for them in the big four mile timber. However, I was to be favored by fortune and did not have to search through the remotest and wildest part of our country. February 22d, I took a long tramp during the course of which I passed through a basin about the head of a mountain stream some four and a half miles from Warren. This basin lies at an elevation of about nineteen hundred feet, and is nearly on top of the mountain. The region is heavily timbered with immense pines and hemlocks, and a good sprinkling of beech. In the densest part of the basin or flat, I heard the loud call of a Goshawk, then saw the bird alight in a big pine. Going that way, the hawk again made a short flight; and about that time I noticed a large nest in a pine about where the hawk started from. As I looked at the nest, the old bird stayed nearby and called. Its actions were exactly like a Sharpshinned Hawk, when the nesting site is approached. I at once left the vicinity and did not again visit it until March 9th, when on quietly approaching the hawk again appeared, and alighting close by, screamed loudly. Visits

on the 14th and 19th still found her guarding the nest. So on the 20th, I determined to go up and see for myself just what the nest looked like. Arriving at the tree, I shed all extra toggle, and after a tough climb peered into the nest and found it all finished and ready for eggs. Twice on my way up the old hawk dove at me like a bullet and the swish of wings past my head warned me that it was her nest all right.

April 2d, in company with my friend, Mr. Norman Spencer, a sort of camera fiend, and an expert with the climbing irons, I started for the nest. It turned into a bad day. There was several inches of snow, and it was snowing all morning, so that we were a little afraid of the picture part of the program.

On the way to the nest we saw five Lesser Scaup on a reservoir about two miles back in the mountains. We tried them with the camera, but the resulting picture was very poor. My gun did much better work, and the result was, we took the five ducks along with us.

We approached the nest quietly and on rapping the tree with a rock, the old lady flew off. We expected trouble, but throughout the operation, neither hawk came close, but sat about in the big pine and screamed occasionally.

Spencer, who is an expert lineman, put on his hooks and soon reached the nest. Peering in he called down "three nice ones." I was more than well pleased as two would have satisfied me. The nest was sixty feet up in a white pine, at a point where the trunk sort of bent out, then continued on up.

At this place several smaller limbs grew out; also one quite large limb. About six feet above the nest a large strong limb put out. To this limb

Spencer tied a stout rope, then tied it around his waist. In this manner he was able to back out of the lower limb some five or six feet from the nest at which distance the accompanying photo was secured. He pulled the camera up with a small handline and after the photo was taken, I sent up a pail in which the eggs were safely lowered. The nest was very large and coarse; almost three feet across. It was snugly lined with leaves, and a few fresh hemlock sprigs. The three eggs were pale blue or greenish-blue, unmarked, and of course were fresh.

Several days later I visited the scene again and was rather surprised to see the old hawk fly from the nest tree. On going nearer I saw a lot of fresh hemlock sprigs around the rim of the nest on top and it looks as if she would try it over. I had intended going up again yesterday, but had an important engagement in another direction resulting in my returning three sets richer. One of Barred Owl, and two of Red-shouldered Hawk, 1-3 1-4.

The photo of the nest which I am sending, although not perfect, is not really bad, and shows the set and nest to good advantage, considering the weather. (But will not make a good plate for the Oologist.—Ed.)

R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

#### NESTING OF THE GRASSHOPPER SPARROW.

Every naturalist has his favorites. In the realm of Ornithology this rule proves no exception. Many of my friends spend early April in traveling large sections of woodland for Raptores while others, in early June, search out the nesting places of our native Warblers. All these trips have their fascinations, but none have ap-

pealed to me in such a degree as has the hunt for the homes of the elusive Grasshopper Sparrow.

The Yellow-wing, is, to say the least, local in its habitat and peculiar in its habits. Throughout the southern parts of Pennsylvania, we find it in numerous localities, but never in abundance. Not only in the southern parts but also in the mountains of Pike and Monroe Counties as well as in southern New Jersey, does the insect-like song of the Grasshopper ring lazily out during the nesting season. I have seen them quite commonly in Chester County, but nowhere in such numbers as about my home in southern Montgomery County. Here they are very common, nesting not only in the dry, weedy fields, usually ascribed to them, but also in those verdant with grass and clover.

It is a comparatively easy matter to discover the field wherein the pair is nesting, but to find the nest is a much harder proposition. During the last three years that I have spent in their haunts, but three nests with perfect sets of eggs have been discovered in the vicinity of Philadelphia. An incomplete set was taken at Cape May, New Jersey, and several nests with young have been located about my home; but in the search for sets of this species, I have been singularly unsuccessful. One fact I have demonstrated about my home at least;—it is useless to use a rope in search for the nests. A friend and I wasted several days in dragging over fields, but with no results.

My first nest was found on May 26, 1906, and well do I recall the event. I was on my way home across an old field overgrown with dried grass, when I observed two Grasshoppers fighting on the wing, all the while singing violently—the right term for

their efforts. Pausing to watch the fracas, I was startled to see a little brown bird dart out from under my feet and whirl away. A moment's hunt and the treasure was mine. A beautiful nest it was, composed entirely of dead grasses and completely arched over above. The perfectly fresh eggs were four in number.

Nest number Two differed from the preceding in that it was not found by chance. The only day I could spare with my friends in 1907 was June 3, which I judged to be about the right date on account of the backward weather. I had definitely located a pair in a small field and procuring a horse-whip, started in to hunt systematically, thrashing the grass ahead of me as I traversed the field again and again. It was a laborious method, but I was out to win. First a Meadowlark dashed up, revealing a handsome set of five eggs; then I located a Field Sparrow's nest and at last when I was all but discouraged, my Grasshopper darted off, endeavoring by all ruses known to the bird world, to draw me from its treasure. Though directly above the nest, so cunningly was it hidden, that it was sometime ere I uncovered the exquisitely marked set of five fresh eggs.

My third set came to me on May 30, 1908. Ever will that day be fixed in my memory for not only did I again meet with success among the Grasshoppers, but also was fortunate in making my first studies of the home life on the Blue Winged Warbler. The location was Newton in Bucks County. Early in the morning I tramped off through the dew-bedecked grass in a vain search for Bobolinks. While returning through a green clover field, I nearly tramped on Madame Grasshopper who hurried off, while I joyfully inspected

her handsome set of five well incubated eggs.

To the average inspector of my cabinet, those three trays of crystal-line, red-flecked eggs mean nothing; but to me they represent the achievement of a purpose and the results of many glorious days. At some future time I may describe more fully the habits of the Grasshopper Sparrow to defend myself against the charge of being a mere collector. I have learned much concerning this interesting Will-of-the-Wisp, but I can ascribe the knowledge thus gained, to no other cause than the search for the nests.

RICHARD C. HARLOW.

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#### ABNORMAL EGGS.

Seeing in the last issue of THE OOLOGIST a few sets mentioned with runt or abnormal eggs in them, thought I might add my mite to the list. I have in a set of Cat Bird, a runt hardly larger than a pea. This year I've taken runts in the following:

Belted Kingfisher, Carolina Chickadee, Yellow Shafted Flicker, and Field Sparrow. I also have runts of Bald Eagle and Blue footed Booby; all the above except Eagle my own take,—no fakes.

H. H. BAILEY.

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#### QUITE SO!

May 23rd, I was taking a trip up Peconic Bay in my power boat and as I was passing a sandy point, I noticed a number of barn swallows skimming over the waves. This is not an uncommon sight in that vicinity, but I was surprised to see them alight on the waves and rest after the manner of gulls and other sea birds. I have never noticed this occurrence before nor heard of it, so think it must be unusual; is it not so?

K. B. SQUIRES.



The Cat Bird's Nest.

Photo by W. E. Loucks.

### THE CAT BIRD.

This is one of our common, everyday birds, and is found distributed over the greater portion of North America throughout the United States and the Canadian provinces, more generally towards the East. The Cat-bird comes of good company, standing between the Mocking Bird and the Brown Thrasher in the A. O. U. list and ranks among our best vocalists. But for reasons largely unexplainable, he seems to have acquired a bad reputation and is looked upon either with suspicion or dislike in nearly every community; all of which is clearly wrong, for the catbird lives largely upon the larva of large insects, and in that way well earns our good will.

Where he is undisturbed, he will make himself very much at home and nest almost in the door yard. It is a nervous, jerky, excitable species, brave in the defense of its nest and young; a devoted parent, and a bird that makes the greatest fuss in the world when finally it abandons its courageous defense, and seeks to protect its own, by piteous appeals.

This bird is peculiar for another thing in that it is apt to turn up in the most unexpected places, and under the most unexpected circumstances; being found as a stragler in many wholly unlooked for situations. Its nest is almost uniformly placed in a thick tangle of brush or vines at no very great elevation from the ground, and may be found in the most silent, secluded places; or as before stated, in the very midst of civilization. One pair is now nesting within twelve feet of the dining room window of the editor.

We present herewith a plate showing a nest and five eggs of this species which well illustrates the typical situation of the home of this bird. The photo was made by William E. Loucks, formerly of Peoria, Illinois; now of San Francisco, California.

The eggs are uniformly deep greenish blue, rather rounded in shape, and a trifle larger than those of the Blue Bird; rarely other than five in number, and the bird breeds over practically all of North America East of the Rocky Mountains and South of an

East and West line drawn through the Southernmost point of James Bay. Likewise it breeds in Montana, Washington and some other of the North-westerly portions of the United States.

The bird is noted for its mimicry of the notes of other birds, and while its song is neither loud, boisterous, round nor full as a rule, yet for quality, expression and range, it is exceeded by that of few of our songsters. Indeed any bird fit to keep company with the Mocking Birds and Thrashers, must needs be qualified for Grand Opera in birddom.

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### KILLING THE BIRDS.

The enormous destruction of bird life by the sportsmen and so-called sportsmen of the country is something appalling. Thousands upon thousands of innocent victims to this alleged sportsmanship fall every week.

In the little county where THE OOLOGIST now lives, over one hundred hunting licenses to each of the Congressional six-mile square townships were issued. In Illinois, it averages over four to each square mile. Think of it! four men and boys tramping every section of land, looking for something to kill. If they cannot find game birds, most of them shoot at anything else that flies.

The Illinois River extends about thirteen miles from Northeast to Southwest across this county. In the towns along this river, 711 licenses were issued. This means that there were over fifty-six men and over twenty-eight on each bank of the river to each mile, waiting to slaughter the wild fowl as they passed; more than one gunner to every two hundred feet! Is it any wonder that the river now has less than one-fourth of these birds, that it did formerly? How long can such slaughter continue?

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### A LARGE SET.

While collecting Coot's eggs at Nigger Slough, May 22, 1909, I found what I think to be an exceptionally large set of Mourning Dove's eggs; a set of four. The nest was the usual type, but rather large. The incubation was the same in all four eggs; the dove being on the nest when I discovered it.

DUMO I. SHEPARDSON.





Rough Winged Swallow's Nest.

### THE ROUGH WINGED SWALLOW.

This species is a peculiar bird in many respects. It is nowhere common; nearly everywhere rare, and yet is found in almost every part of the United States. It is distinguished from the common Bank Swallow in that it is lighter, and its throat and breast are of a pale gray without markings. It lacks entirely, the metallic coloring so common to the Swallow family. In hand, the specimen is easily distinguished from the common Bank Swallow, by the minute recurved, hooklike feathers along the edge of the outer primaries, from which it gets its name—"Rough Wing."

It nests nearly all over the United States, but differs somewhat in its home life from the Bank Swallow. Its nests are seldom placed in colonies of over five or six, and sometimes are in crevices of buildings, abutments of bridges or even holes in trees, sites never affected so far as the writer knows, by the common Bank Swallow.

Throughout Central Illinois, the Bank Swallow is of irregular general distribution and is found nesting in the banks and sides of dry creek beds, usually in rather sandy soil, in limited numbers; seldom more than three or four nests being found near each other. More often, not more than one or two in a place. The eggs of this species are as with the Bank Swallow, pure white with a slight yellowish-pink tinge before blowing when fresh; usually six in number, and are laid as a general thing at the end of a burrow dug in the side of a creek bank from two to three feet deep, into which there has been carried, a considerable amount of straw, grass and feathers; it being our observation that this bird builds a much more substantial nest than the Bank Swallow. At times it is even found nesting sparingly with colonies of Bank Swallows.

The nest of a bird nesting in a cavity or bank is always hard to reproduce in a picture, but we present herewith a view of a set of Rough Winged Swallow's eggs in situ, photoed by Isaac E. Hess, of Philo, Illinois.

### SMOTHERED IN A SAND DUNE.

#### Young Naturalist Hunting for Birds Eggs Dies in Cave in.

"NORFOLK, Va., May 24.—Richard P. Smithwick, aged 22 years, a naturalist, lost his life as the result of the cave-in of a sand dune in the "Princess Anne Desert" between Lynn Haven Inlet and Cape Henry, for Kingfisher eggs. A searching party Sunday found Smithwick's body with his feet only projecting through the sand."

The foregoing press dispatch tells of the sad ending of an active, useful life. Mr. Smithwick was an active young worker in his chosen field of science. And had his life been spared, would without doubt have left his mark therein. The manner of his death may well warn others not to incur similar dangers. It is with a feeling of sadness that we take his name from our subscription list.

### MIGRATING CHIMNEY SWALLOWS DESCEND SCHOOL CHIMNEY.

On the evening of May 6th, Philo was visited by a veritable army of Swifts, the air above seemingly alive with these active little birds known to many as Chimney Swallows.

Quite a number of persons in the vicinity of the public school building, were attracted by their evolution about 7 o'clock in the evening and witnessed one of the rarest sights known to nature observers.

The phenomenon has been most interestingly recorded by an old Indian scientist, Chiet Simon Pokagon who has written many articles on the bird life of Michigan his native home. His observation however was in the dense woods where myriads of Swifts entered a big hollow tree to spend the night. Our modern Swifts have accepted the brick chimneys furnished by man and the public school house chimney was the gath-

ering point on the evening of May 6th.

At two minutes before seven, a mammoth black funnel having an almost sinister appearance was observed hanging over the west chimney and for seven minutes or until 7:05 the funnel revolved, with its upper rim high in the heavens and the point or mouth pouring its living creatures in a constant stream into the open chimney.

When the last of the birds disappeared and fully ten thousand little lives were safely sheltered for the night, one observing could not but be impressed with the regular and soldier-like precision with which the whole feat was accomplished, a task might well prove appalling to a human leader with 10,000 human lives in charge.

Before the sun peeped up the next morning the vast army struck camp and continued on their northern journey, to break off in pairs and companies as their old homes in the northern cities and villages hove in sight. Those observing were fortunate for the impressive scene is seldom seen more than once in a life time.

ISAAC E. HESS.

The same phenomenon is noted at the home of THE OOLOGIST at this time (the last week in May) every day; although not to so large an extent; the number of swallows going into the school house chimney here every evening being, according to my best estimate, about five hundred. They have been going in steadily now every night for more than a week. And what is strange, there are two chimneys not over forty feet apart, both of the same size, construction and height. One is used as a down draft ventilating shaft to supply cold air; the other is used as an ordinary chimney to provide draft for the soft coal furnace. The one is clean and neat; the other full of ordinary coal soot. The swallows, surprising as it may seem, uniformly roost in the chimney full of coal soot.—Editor.

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#### FROM CALIFORNIA.

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I thought your readers might like to hear from the collecting trip that I and my brother made into the Cas-

taic Canyon of Los Angeles County this spring. We started out on Tuesday and got to our Bee Camp about 6 o'clock that evening. The next afternoon after having finished working with the bees we looked into some old hawks' nests that were on some cliffs nearby. Not finding any there, while looking for nests on another cliff my brother noticed some sticks sticking out of a hole in the cliff. Climbing up, he found a nest there and then proceeded to chip the edge of the hole away with his knife until he could pull the nest out. In the nest were six eggs of the Rock Wren, all partially incubated. We blew these without much trouble and then returned to camp.

The next day we walked seven miles up Fish Creek to an Owl's nest which my brother had found the year before. When we got to where the nest was, we could see the Owl sitting on the nest. We chopped down a small tree and leaned it up against the cliff to the nest. Then I shinned up. The Owl sat on the nest and blinked her eyes at me. I examined her carefully and came to the conclusion that it was a Spotted Owl because she was marked with irregular splotches of brown and white. I then pulled her off the nest and found two eggs; one slightly and the other more heavily incubated. When I got down we discovered the male sitting in a small bush about fifteen feet from the nest. He was lighter color than the female. The female who had been sitting in a tree nearby now flew down and sat beside the male. Then she reached over, put her bill in the feathers of the male's neck, and ruffled them up, and he did the same to her. They acted like they were kissing each other.

My! but I wish I had a camera then. While the two birds were sitting there they both called several times. The female's call sounded like a small dog barking, and the male's like a larger dog.

The next day we started for home and stopped for dinner about a mile and a half west of Castaic station. After dinner we went to a nest on a cliff which we had found going up. In this we found six incubated eggs of American Raven. We blew these

without much trouble, and then went on home feeling well satisfied with the results of our trip.

LAWRENCE PEYTON,  
Sepe, California.

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### Of Purple Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*).

Rising early one morning in April, 1907, my attention was soon attracted by a male Purple Grackle carrying a large bunch of grass between its mandibles. It was still very early and too dark to follow the direction of his flight, so seating myself on an old stump I awaited his return. This was but fifteen minutes and as the bird again flew off with another mouth full of grass and twigs his course could be easily followed to a large white pine, but a short distance from where I first saw the bird.

Making all haste to the tree, I found that it was not occupied by one pair only, but that a colony of twelve pairs were constructing their nests. This was April 10. After examining a few of the lowest nests I left them and on returning a week later, several beautifully marked sets were secured. The highest nest was fifty-three feet from the ground and the lowest forty-five. They were composed of twigs and coarse grass lined with much finer grass. One or two of the largest ones had a slight mud foundation.

In 1908 this tree contained a colony of ten pairs, but no sets were secured as I did not visit the birds until the young had hatched, (May 5). One of the nests contained a set of four, but they were too badly incubated to take. The old birds at this date were very busily engaged supplying their hideous little nestlings with sufficient food. Several times I noticed the old birds feed them on the young of other smaller birds, but as a general rule the diet was composed of insects and thus they somewhat paid for the damage done to their smaller brothers.

This spring I first visited the tree April 18, armed with a camera, plenty of rope and other collecting paraphernalia. After an hours tedious work one fairly good photograph was secured of a nest containing five eggs.

Fifty-eight feet from the ground, the highest nest of this species I have yet found. The nests this year were all placed at the very tip ends of the branches and in order to get to them, the limbs had to be supported with ropes from those above.

Undoubtedly this tree has been used by the grackles for many years before I found them in 1907 and it would be interesting to know just how long, but every one that I asked, including the owner of the property on which the tree stands, were ignorant, even of the fact that the grackles were nesting there at the time.

B. G. HOWES,  
Stamford, Conn.

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BIRDS--NESTS--EGGS

Published Monthly, by R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Illinois.

VOL. XXVI. No. 7. ALBION, N. Y., JULY 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 264

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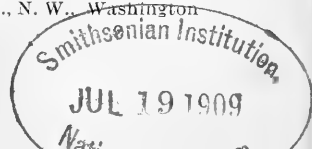
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VOL. XXVI. No. 7.

ALBION, N. Y. JULY 15, 1909.

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**R. M. BARNES,**

**Lacon, Ill.**

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## SPECIAL NOTICE

We want the following back numbers of The Oologist at once: No. 6, Vol. 5, 1888, 50c.; No. 5, Vol. 1896, 25c; Nos. 4, 5, 10, 12,, Vol. 14, 1897, 25c. each; No. 12, Vol. 15, 1898, 25c. and will pay these prices cash therefore. Look over your back numbers and write us.

**THE OOLOGIST,**

**Lacon, Ill.**

### The Eggs of Heermann's Gull Discovered.

Up to this year the eggs of Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*) had never been found. My collector, Mr. Wilmot W. Brown, Jr., whom I have had for over a year in the Cape region of Lower California has just sent me a very large series of this bird. Thinking his letter might interest your readers, I enclose it.

"The expedition just completed, was to the Island of Iddefonso in search of the nesting place of Heermann's Gull. After a long and weary search on the different islands along the coast, on the 2d of April, I discovered a colony breeding. After waiting six days so as to get complete sets, I collected a very large series. With a few exceptions, most of the nests contained two eggs. Some twenty or thirty nests contained three eggs.

The nest in all cases was simply a well formed depression in the ground and had no lining whatever. There must have been over 10,000 Heermann Gulls nesting. On the southern end of the Island of Iddefonso facing the sea, there is a large semi-circular shaped depression which covers about five acres. It is quite level on the bottom and covered with gravel, with here and there, blocks of lava scattered about. It is well protected from the Northwest wind which prevails in March and April.

"At the time I arrived, March 28, immense numbers of Heermann Gulls were congregating, preparatory to laying their eggs. They literally covered the ground; and so occupied were they in their love-making that they paid very little attention to me. Their cries deadened the cries of all the other birds and they kept it up all through the night.

"In the waters close to the breeding ground, large flocks were seen, their breeding instinct making them very sociable. On my arrival they were in immense numbers and the males were constantly seen fluttering over the females on the ground near their nests. No eggs was laid until April 2d, so it seems they spend some time in courtship before settling down to their matrimonial duties. The female when in passion emits a peculiar

squeaky sound as she coaxes the male by squatting down and by going through the most ludicrous motions. I have also seen a couple holding on to each other's bills, then they would break away and go through a suggestion of dance, but all the time talking to each other in low love tones. The appearance of a Duck Hawk would send them all flying seaward, but they soon returned.

"In the niches and caves of the Cliff, I found the Blue-footed Booby (*Sula nebouxii*) breeding. The eggs were in all cases laid in a depression in the floor of the cave. Most nests contained one egg each, well incubated. Only two nests contained two eggs. In most cases the old birds stoutly defended their nests, striking vigorously at me with their sharp beaks. Several nests contained young, well grown and in downy plumage. This colony of about twenty-five pairs nested in the Cliffs on the Northwest side of the island.

"There was a colony of Brewster's Booby (*Sula brewsteri*) nesting on the Southern end of the island in the cliffs, caves and in the openings among the rocks. The nests were composed of a few sticks in most instances whitened with guano and on this, one egg was laid. I didn't find a single nest that contained two eggs. As I saw full grown young on the wing, they probably begin to nest in January.

"In a niche among the rocks, I found two nests of Craveri's Murrelet (*Brachyranphus craveri*) each containing one egg well incubated."

From Iddefonso Island, Mr. Brown sailed to Loreto. He then went to Comondu where he collected a fine series of Brown's Song Sparrow and twelve sets of eggs. He was also fortunate enough to get several sets of Belding Yellow-throat (*Geothlypis beldingi*).

JOHN E. THAYER,  
Lancaster, Mass.

From the Isle of Pines.

The Florida Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula aglacus*) is one of our most common birds. It measures about 11.25 inches in length, and wing 5.5 inches. It is much tamer here than our Grackles of the North, and is very

curious, wishing to investigate everything that one does in the neighborhood. The male is a very proud bird and struts almost exactly like a fantail pigeon; head bent back and tail brought forward until they almost meet over the back, all the while uttering a peculiar metallic squeak.

This bird like the Ani (*Crotophaga ani*), locally known as Black Parrot, likes to be around horses and cattle, and it is no uncommon sight to see them perched on them picking off ticks which at certain seasons almost cover the animals in pasture. These birds don't seem quite as gregarious as the Bronzed Grackles, and the usual flock rarely exceeds six to eight. They nest during May and June.

The Ani (*Crotophaga ani*), is quite abundant on the Isle of Pines. This bird, although a member of the Cuckoo family, is generally known as Black Parrot, or Jew Bird, because of the shape of its bill. It is entirely black with bluish reflections, and measures fifteen inches in length and wing 6.25 inches. This bird is gregarious and is found in flocks varying in size from 6 to 20. They feed on chameleons, crickets and other insects. They may be seen often just in front of the flames of a forest fire picking up the chameleons that are fleeing before it, or after it has passed over and is still smoking, picking up the dead ones. In order to see these birds, all that is necessary is to build a big fire, make lots of smoke and presently there will be a score of Black Parrots around in company with several Cuban Sparrow-Hawks and a pair or two of Kingbirds.

My list continual to date is as follows:

Quail Dove .....	1
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.....	1
Ward's Heron .....	1
Louisiana Heron .....	Several
Blue-headed Quail Dove.....	1
Solitary Sandpiper .....	1
Pied-billed Grebe .....	2
Yellow-throated Vireo .....	1
Black-billed Cuckoo .....	1
Cuban Cliff Swallow.....	Several
Oven Bird, Common (Omitted from previous lists.)	

This makes a total of sixty-six species identified by myself, on the Isle of Pines. The nesting season is in its

height, but I have been too busy to do any collecting.

I wish to make several corrections in the list of birds which I have seen on the Isle of Pines.

1st. The Black Parrot is the Ani, *Crotophaga ani*.

2d. Cuban Bob-white, *Colinus cubanensis*, instead of *Colinus virginianus*.

3d. Carion Crow, *Catharista uruba*? probably an immature Turkey Buzzard.

4th. Cuban Red-bellied Woodpecker, *Centurus superciliaris*, instead of *Centurus carolinus*.

5th. Cuban Meadowlark, *Sturnella hippocrepis*, instead of *Sturnella magna*.

6th. Cuban Crane, *Gruonesiates*, instead of *Grus Mexicana*.

7th. Chimney Swift, *Chaetura pelagica*(?) probably some other swift, as there are no records of this bird for Cuba.

I also wish to add to my list of birds seen here, Cuban Oriole, *Ictarus hypomelas*.

A. C. READ.

## THE PROTHONOTARY WARBLER.

(*Protonotaria citrea*.)

The Prothonotary or Golden Swamp Warbler, is one of the best known members of the warbler family. Few of that family exceed it in brilliancy of plumage, and none in gentleness of way.

It is a bird that early attracted the attention of students in ornithology. It has been studied and written about for many generations, and by some of the greatest of all bird students. This species has a peculiar fascination for the writer because in my earlier bird studies it came under my observation oftener, was observed more closely and furnished more interesting incidents than nearly any other bird in the entire list of North American birds. The larger part of my earlier accumulations in the line of Oology are the result of exchanges based upon Prothonotary warbler eggs taken myself. This little bird is a denizen of the soft, moist, quiet sylvan swamps of most of the interior rivers of the Mississippi Valley; seldom venturing far beyond their shady depths. Yet



Prothonotary Warbler's Nest in Overflowed River Bottoms, the day before it was Flooded. Photo by W. E. Loucks.

frequently flitting through a narrow sun-lit space with quivering wings and outspread tail, a perfect picture of orange, gold and olive green. It is, or was one of the commonest summer residents of the swamps bordering the Illinois River up to the year 1900, and one of the best articles referring to this bird that has ever come under our notice is "The Life History and Distribution of the Prothonotary Warbler in Illinois," written and published by W. E. Loucks, formerly of Peoria, Illinois.

The Prothonotary is found regularly in the swamps bordering the Mississippi river as far up as Davenport and the Ohio as far north as Cincinnati, the Wabash river, the Kaskaskia river, as far north as Vandalia, the Missouri river for about half the distance across the State of Missouri, and the Illinois River as far north as Ottawa. In some of these places it is very abundant, and in all of them practically a regular breeder.

The Prothonotary here comes early, arriving about the first of May. The male is a tireless singer, soon selects his summer home, and immediately asserts squatter sovereignty in that vicinity, making war upon all other birds with which he is able to cope, that invade his domain. The female is garbed in more subdued hues, but is recognizable at a glance as its name would imply, as a Golden Swamp Warbler.

The nesting site selected by these little birds is a hole in a tree, stump or log apparently without much care as to whether the cavity is artificial or natural, nor as to the size of the same, except they avoid large cavities. They seem to prefer those which are in logs, trees or stumps standing in the water; and also to prefer to place their nest in a cavity in a damp water-soaked or partially rotten timber. The elevation from the ground or water varies from a few inches to twenty-five feet, both extremes being exceedingly rare; the vast majority of nests being up from four to twelve feet only.

The nest material is fine straws, weeds and grasses, occasionally a few feathers or hair, skeletonized leaves, frequently some smaller dead water-soaked leaves; and almost in-

variably moss which the bird gathers from the trees in the vicinity of its home; a short greenish, bark growing moss. These are formed into a cup shaped nest that is fitted into the cavity and in this the bird lays from three to ten eggs; the latter number being found, so far as the writer knows, but once. The former number occasionally. However, five and six are the almost invariable clutch; seven being quite rare and any number above that, exceedingly so.

The female does practically all the work of nest building, in which she is accompanied back and forth as she goes and comes for material, by the male, who is apparently possessed of a desire to do nothing but sing at such times with all his energy. Both birds incubate the eggs; the writer having repeatedly taken the male in his hand from the nest. Incubation lasts two weeks.

The birds raise a second brood in the season here if undisturbed and leave for the South about as soon as their second brood is able to shift for themselves.

The Prothonotary is frequently imposed on by the Cow Bird, as many as four Cow bird's eggs having been found by the writer in one nest which contained but two of the Prothonotary, all partially incubated. The eggs are the most beautiful laid by any of our Warblers, and no series of them can give an adequate representation of all the varieties of size, shape and coloration. They group themselves naturally into two groups, the lighter colored eggs and the darker colored eggs. They are larger for the size of the bird, quite rounded, and have a thick, heavy shell for a Warbler. The ground color of some being glossy white, and in others, a rusty or pinkish white, more or less covered with all manner of chestnut, lilac, lavender, light brown, buff, rusty red, dark brown and almost black spottings, marks and blotches, arranged in some as a ring around the larger end; in some, evenly scattered over the egg in very small dots; in others, covering nearly the whole side of an egg with one huge blotch; and occasionally an albino egg is found, the writer having recorded in the O. & W., Volume 14, page 37, the taking of a

complete set of Albino Prothonotary Warbler eggs. And we also have in our collection, a runt of this species measuring .48 x .40 inches, which is in a set with four other normal eggs.

The birds seldom wonder far away from the nest, and many of their eggs are destroyed by snakes.

The time of nesting of the Prothonotary is largely determined by the stage of the water. Prior to 1900 the Illinois River was in annual flood from about March until June, and many times have we found the nest of this little bird submerged and drowned out by a sudden and unexpected raise in the river. Since January, 1900, when the water of the Chicago Sanitary District was turned into the Illinois River, the homes of the Prothonotary hereabouts have been destroyed, and but few birds are now nesting here, owing to the fact that the permanent raise in the river occasioned by the Sanitary District water has flooded substantially all the cavities used by them prior to that time, and has killed and destroyed most of the timber in the river bottoms.

The plate herewith presented of a Prothonotary Warbler's nest is from a photo made by W. E. Loucks, and shows the general character of the outside of a nest of this species, which is just on the point of being submerged by a raise in the river. Here is a huge cottonwood stump, two feet in diameter which has stood in the bottom until water soaked and rotted, and in which the Prothonotary has built its nest, at a time when the cavity shown in the photo was five or six feet from the ground. A few days after this picture was taken, this nest was again visited and the fatal work of destruction observed in the six cold, wet and deserted eggs lying at the bottom of the cavity.

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#### Woodpeckers of Ohio.

Our most abundant species here, as in many other parts of the East, is the Red-head. He comes in the Spring about April 25th, and leaves about October 1st. Occasionally he is a winter resident. On March 12, 1908, I was tramping over a large tract of woods through a snow storm, when I heard a familiar c-r-r-r-ruck, and soon locat-

ed the *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. There were perhaps a dozen individuals scattered over the tract. At first all were busily foraging, unheeding the snow rapidly falling in large, wet flakes. Later on they became quiet, and soon not one could be seen on the wing, but careful inspection found them here and there clinging to the sheltered side of the trees. I learned afterwards from the owner, that they had spent the winter there, and upon consulting my authorities, learned, that, although not a common occurrence, it was not altogether unusual. Beech trees were quite numerous in the woods, and the crop of beechnuts had been good, which seems to go to verify the conclusion that the Red-head's winter residence depends upon the supply of "mast."

He still seems to prefer to place his nest in a decayed beech trunk or similar situation, although I have seen many nests in telephone poles, often at cross roads, where dozens of vehicles passed by every day.

The Downy is very common, and the Flicker may be said to be abundant. I don't know that I have observed anything about either of these not already known to most bird students. The Hairy is not rare, but few trips will find more than one or two individuals, and often none at all. From my own observations, I am inclined to believe that in this locality he is becoming scarcer, although I have never compared notes with anyone on the subject.

The Red-bellied woodpecker is found occasionally, more often in winter. I do not know of its breeding.

Have one record of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. April 7, 1908, several of them were flying about town, and saw some in the woods next day. Prof. Kreglow of the Ohio Northern University, located here, says he has seen them here several springs.

HOWARD W. McMILLEN,  
Ada, Ohio.

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#### "Bird Island."

For more than thirty years I have heard of "Bird Island" and I have heard of the birds nesting there, and the hundreds and thousands of eggs that were gathered from that island

to be eaten by people. I had heard of boat loads and wagon loads of eggs gathered at a time. Recently, on the 14th and 15th of last month, (June, 1909) it was my privilege to visit for the first time that island. Four others were with me.

If I were to live a thousand years, I would never forget my visit. The island is much smaller than I expected to find it, being only about 350 by 150 yards at the longest and widest points. As we approached the island in our little gasoline boat we were met some hundred yards away by thousands and thousands of birds seriously protesting against our landing. It would, of course, be pure guess work to attempt to estimate the number of young birds we saw. I counted and thoroughly identified the following varieties nesting on the island: Brown Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Louisiana Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Reddish Egret, Caspian, Royal, Gull-billed and Sooty Terns, Black Skinner, Laughing Gull, Doves and Great-tailed Grackle. I may possibly have omitted a few, as I am naming them from memory. The Laughing Gulls outnumber all the others. Many thousands of these had already hatched and there were many thousands of nests with two and three eggs, never over three, all of them advanced in incubation. The Terns seemed to be nesting a second time, as there were many young on the island. Many of the Pelicans were just hatching, and many were about grown or nearly so. I could secure but very few fresh eggs, or even fresh enough to be blown. I am sure that I could have easily gathered a wagon load of Laughing Gull eggs. I am sure, furthermore, that it requires now from one thousand to five thousand pounds of fish a day to feed the birds that are already hatched and on the island. How deeply I regretted not having a kodak. It was the finest opportunity for taking bird pictures I have ever seen.

I secured eggs of all the varieties mentioned above except one, and on this trip but not on this island, I secured some beautiful sets of Caribbean Clapper Rail and Texas Seaside Sparrow and a number of Wilson's Plover. I found the old nests of Western Willett and other varieties. I was

not out on a collecting expedition, but a resting expedition; did not expect to get any eggs on the trip. The Terns and Laughing Gulls have their nests, though in separate colonies, within six or eight inches of one another. I found it impossible to walk on the island without stepping in nests. Only a few Sooty Terns were there. The Sooty Terns are remarkably gentle. I picked one of them up from the nest, had the bird mounted and saved the set of only one egg.

Eggs in nests as follows: Pelicans, 3, occasionally 4; Great Blue Herons, Black Crowned and Louisianas, 3 each; Egrets 3; Laughing Gull, nearly always 3, never over; Caspian Terns, 2 always; Royal only 1, except in two cases, then 2; Sooty Tern, never but 1.

There are many more things which I could say about this trip, but the article is probably already too long.

J. M. CARROLL,

San Marcos, Texas.

Ed.—The "Bird Island," above referred to, lies off the Texas Gulf coast somewhere—but where?

#### What Number of Eggs Constitute a Set of *Melospiza Georgiana*?

In the December number of THE OOLOGIST, Mr. Semmes in his excellent paper on the Swamp Sparrow, comments upon the number of eggs constituting a set of this little bird. He gives five as the usual number of eggs in a set in Virginia, which is at variance with the observations of many ornithologists and oölogists.

In this connection it is interesting to learn that the Swamp Sparrow lays larger sized sets in Virginia than it does here in Southeastern Pennsylvania, though the Old Dominion State is not far South of us. This is contrary to the generally accepted theory that Northern birds lay larger sets than their Southern cogeners.

In an oölogical experience of more than eleven years of consecutive field observations, I have found and examined a great many nests of the Swamp Sparrow in the vicinity of Philadelphia, where it is an exceedingly common summer resident in restricted localities. A consultation of my field notes reveals that I have col-





Virginia Rail's Nest in Marshall Co., Ill. Photo by W. E. Loucks.

lected forty-nine sets of three eggs, seventy-eight sets of four, and only seventeen sets of five. But unfortunately for comparison, my records of nests with young and of sets not taken are not available, as they are scattered promiscuously through the pages of my notes, and to search them out would require more time than I have to spare. Suffice to say, they bear out the above ratio, except that very few nests contained under four young, and from this fact I infer that at least one-half of the sets of three eggs I have collected have been incomplete clutches, inasmuch as they were mostly fresh.

A study of the foregoing shows that one clutch in every eight consisted of five eggs, a low proportion which is borne out also in the number of young and eggs not taken in nests that have come under my observation.

Here in Southeastern Pennsylvania (if not elsewhere) four eggs is the average of a set, five of common enough occurrence, as not to be regarded as rare, and three occurring still more frequently.

I have never found over five eggs in a nest except once, when a nest containing six eggs was examined. These were laid by two females, four by one and two by another, as a blind person could have ascertained by touch—they differed that much in shape and size.

Let us hear from others concerning the number of eggs constituting a set of the Swamp Sparrow, whether it is usually four or five eggs.

R. F. MILLER

July 1, 1909.

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### The King Rail.

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July 4th, Ye Editor took a ramble through one of the swamps near Lacon, Illinois, and in the course of the day, found the nest of this species situated in a tuft of grass growing in the midst of an extremely soft marsh, the surface of which was level, and except for the tufts of grass sticking up here and there, almost without vegetation. In one of these tufts of grass, Mrs. Rail had built a nest composed wholly of dry grass stems, in which she had deposited eight eggs. Wading through mud that was more than

knee deep, she permitted us to get within a couple of feet of the nest before flushing, and then flew not over five or six feet, and lit and set up the most doleful protest imaginable, cackling and squealing and squacking at a tremendous rate, spreading herself out on the mud and thrashing around as though she had suffered an injury of some kind. We stood perfectly still and much to our surprise she returned and walked up towards the nest, all the time keeping up the noisy protestation, and tilting herself until her tail was nearly verticle, and her breast against the mud, and her wings outstretched, she advanced until she was within arm's length of Ye Editor. She would then back off; and she repeated this very unusual demonstration several different times.

Finally tiring of the uncomfortable situation in the mud, we started to plough on. We passed the nest, which alarmed her further, and she then took to the bushes some twenty yards away.

The eggs were eight in number, and evidently much incubated. We left the nest and eggs undisturbed.

It was our purpose to write an article relative to this species for this issue, but upon an examination of the books in our library, we were surprised at the paucity of information relative to the habits of the King Rail. The bird is a fairly common breeder in this locality, and yet, should a person desire to advise himself carefully and fully regarding the habits of this bird, we would not know where to direct him. Nearly all the books will tell of its range, and some few give very slight reference to its habits; many will tell of its nest being located in a swamp, and yet, after a long research, the searcher will be astonished to see how little he has learned regarding the real, everyday life of this common bird.

Such truly is the misfortune of American Ornithology relative to many species—our most common, everyday birds are overlooked in the strenuous hunt for rarities.

We present herewith a photo of a nest of this species taken in this county by W. E. Loucks, formerly of Peoria, Illinois. The nest photographed, was within one hundred feet of an occupied dwelling house in the

midst of a small reedy swamp on the edge of the Illinois River bottom.

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### Cow Birds.

I wonder if all parts of the country are as badly infested with Cow birds as Central Wisconsin? They are certainly a pest here, and I think a bounty on them would not be a bad idea.

From observations I have made this season, although somewhat limited, I feel safe in saying that fully one-fourth, if not more of the eggs of our smaller song birds, are destroyed by this bird. Have seen several nests where the bird would be sitting on nothing but eggs of the Cow-bird.

C. W. PELTON.

Marshfield, Wis.

During a recent collecting trip in Canada we found at least fifty per cent. of the smaller birds nests which we examined, contained Cow-birds' eggs, ranging in number from one to four, and sometimes, found these nests containing nothing but Cow-birds' eggs.—Ed.

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### The American Bittern.

Dr. W. A. Hart of Lapeer, Michigan, desires information as to whether the American Bittern lays a second set of eggs in case its nesting it disturbed or its first set taken. Concerning this, we have no personal knowledge. Can any of our readers enlighten the Doctor on this subject?

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### Lucky.

A. M. Ingersoll of San Diego, California, reports taking a set of the exceedingly rare California Black Rail. This is indeed a rare find and Mr. Ingersoll is to be congratulated on his good luck.

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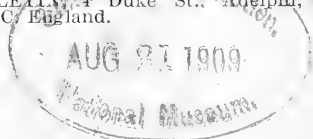
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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 8.

ALBION, N. Y. AUGUST 15, 1909.

WHOLE No. 265



Virginia Rail's nest in Marshall County, Ill.—Photo by W. E. Loucks.

This picture should have appeared on page 107 of this volume of the Oologist in lieu of the plate there shown, which is of a Pied-billed Grebe's nest.

## A CORRECTION.

## The Pied Billed Grebe.

In our July issue on page 107 appears a cut of the nest, four eggs and two young of the Pied-billed Grebe (*podilymbus podicipes*), the legend attached to which recites that it is a "Virginia Rail's nest in Marshall Co., Ill. Photo by W. E. Loucks."

The error is so apparent that it is ludicrous. It is not blamable upon the printer. It is solely the mistake of ourself and occurs because of the mixing of the labels on the packages in which we keep our plates tied

This Pied-billed Grebe's nest was situated in the Senachwine Swamp, Putnam County, Illinois, about a dozen miles from the present home of THE OOLOGIST and is a very rare and unusual picture; in fact we know of no other published picture of the young of this species, and Mr. Loucks is to be congratulated upon his successful portrayal of the home of this curious bird.

The Pied-billed Grebe is found over most of the Southern three-fourths of Northern America and the Northern three-fourths of South America, ranging from Northern Saskatchewan, Canada, South across the United States, Mexico, Central America, Cuba and South America into Brazil, Buenos Ayres and Chili, and it breeds throughout nearly its entire range.

The nest, a splendid portrayal of which appeared on page 107 of the July OOLOGIST, is made of mud and decayed and decaying vegetation, almost invariably placed in water from a few inches to a couple of feet deep, usually in the midst of growing vegetation, such as flags, bull rushes, reeds and the like, to which it is fastened, apparently to keep it from floating away.

When the birds leave the nest they

usually, unless frightened away, cover the eggs over with this vegetable matter and so cunningly conceal them that the ordinary observer would pass the nest by as a mere bunch floating in the swamp. More than once when going through the home of this species, even with experienced hunters and trappers, have we pointed out the black conical shaped mass sticking up through the water and asked our companion what it was. Usually they did not know, and were much astonished upon our seizing the cover of vegetation and laying it back, exposing the nest full of eggs, to view.

The young are able to swim, and dive too, almost immediately upon leaving the shell; in fact, I think they can do both of these before they are thoroughly dried. They ride upon the back of the old bird at times, and when she becomes alarmed, they will seize the feathers on her back in their bill and when she dives, will hold on and come up with her in the distance. The old birds are usually shy, keeping well concealed in the vegetation, and seldom leaves the water. When they do, they appear ludicrously awkward in their endeavor to scramble over the land, and cannot live long away from the water. Once in a while however, they are found a considerable distance from the water. I have never been able to tell whether they fly out there and becoming exhausted, fall, or for what reasons they go there, I never knew.

During the month of May of this year several of these birds became entangled in the fishermen's nets near Lacon and were presented to me alive. I turned them into an enclosure where I have a considerable number of wild fowl and plenty of water, and endeavored to keep them, but invariably they died within from a few days, to a few weeks, I presume for want of their

proper food, which is fish.

The number of eggs laid by this species varies from five to eleven, so far as our personal observation goes. They are oblong in shape, nearly equally and somewhat sharply pointed at each end and with a heavy calcareous shell of a bluish tinge, usually discolored to such an extent by the nest that they are in and the bony deposit adhering to them as to hide the natural color of the shell from view.

On the seventh of June of this year I found a nest of this species in a small pond-like lake nine miles South-east of Prince Albert, Canada, containing two fresh eggs, and on which the bird lay dead.

---

#### More About the Pennsylvania Goshawks.

Since writing about the nesting of the Goshawk in Warren County, Pennsylvania, we have had more adventures with the same birds.

As I said in my account of their nesting, I had gone that way again several days after securing eggs and found that the old birds had decorated the nest with fresh sprigs of hemlock.

I kept away until April 20th when I paid a visit. Going up carefully to the tree I saw or heard nothing of the old birds, so pounded the tree but with no results. In looking for owls' nests earlier in the season I had found two other large nests near the Goshawk's so I concluded to take a look at these. At the most promising I found nothing, but at the other the old Goshawk left at once in response to a vigorous pounding on the tree. I had promised Mr. Thomas H. Jackson, of West Chester, the young, if the hawks should nest again, so I left the vicinity and did not go near until May 20th when Spencer and myself

made the trip. We found both old birds very much agitated, but on reaching the nest what was our surprise to find only broken egg shells. There must have been two or three eggs and the set must have been destroyed during a brief absence of the old hawk. Possibly by a crow.

Directly under this nest, a Solitary Viero was building in a low hemlock. The old hawks continued their fuss so we went over to the other large nest found while hunting owls. The hawks became even more noisy, so we determined to investigate. This nest was very large and was high up in a big oak. On the upper side of this oak and about thirty feet away stood a very tall slightly-leaning maple. Up this maple Spencer went until he got above the nest and could see in. To his surprise he saw two eggs. The camera was sent up and the nest and the eggs photoed. A measurement on the line showed that the camera was eighty-four feet and four inches from the ground when the photo was taken.

July 2d we concluded it was time to get the little fellows, so we visited the nest early in the morning. We got very close without seeing a sign of the hawks and had just begun to think that something had happened, when from somewhere the old female appeared on the scene. She came straight at our heads and actually came so close that I ducked and Spencer struck at her with his climbers. Then she fairly made the woods ring with her noisy cries, and the male at once appeared on the scene and added to the racket. We sat down for about ten minutes during which both old birds dove down at us repeatedly and sometimes alighted within thirty feet of us, all the time screaming loudly. Both were in fine feather. I had expected the female would be rather

ragged, but she looked to be in very good shape. In a little while, they quieted down and withdrew so Spencer started up the maple. As he ascended I watched the old ones, and when one started for him I called and he prepared for trouble. Several times the old female came within an ace of hitting him and a vigorous use of a stick was necessary to fight her off.

A photo of the two young in the nest was secured; then by means of a long pole they were poked out of the nest and as they came down they fell into my clutches. We photoed them on the ground; then took them home and shipped them to Mr. Jackson at West Chester, where they arrived safely, and at last accounts were doing nicely.

The birds certainly showed great perseverance in laying three sets in one season and refusing to leave the vicinity.

About the ground at the nest tree we found many remains of victims but could find no signs of grouse or rabbits. The birds seemed to be living almost entirely on the red or pine squirrel which is numerous. There were also a few skulls of chipmunks, but I could find no trace of game. On our way out we had hardly gotten out of sight of the nest until we came upon an old grouse and her brood of large young. So it does not appear that this pair of Goshawks at least, are the destroyers of game that they are said to be.

In the region inhabited by these hawks there are a good lot of grouse. In the slashings nearby are plenty of rabbits and a goodly number of hares (varying hares) yet I could not find a bone of any of these about the nest.

R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

## THE MALLARD.

This duck (*Anas boschas*) A. O. U. No. 132, is, in the mind of the writer, the noblest of all the duck tribe. It is found substantially all over the Northern half of the Northern Hemisphere, in some places far more plentiful than others, and in some places congregating in vast flocks and droves containing thousands. It is a bird that arrives from the South early and passes North with the first of the ducks.

Its breeding ground covers practically the Northern half of its entire range. Usually it nests in the vicinity of a grassy prairie slough or pond; occasionally along a river or on an island. The nest is typical of most of the duck tribe, built on the ground and containing from eight to fourteen eggs, made of grass and lined and surrounded with down pulled by the duck from her breast.

In the Northern part of its range, this duck is known as the Stock Duck, from the fact that it is supposed to be the original stock from which the domestic duck descended, and it is no uncommon thing now to see Mallards of various stages of blood mixture in confinement with tame ducks, all in a domesticated or semi-domesticated condition.

In many places it is known as the Green Head, taking the name from the brilliantly colored head of the drake.

As a rule the Mallard nests in single pairs scattered throughout its range, seldom if ever, so far as we have observed or know, congregating in colonies as do many other species of duck. The eggs are a dark greenish-drab and are not uncommon in collections.

With this issue, we present a plate made from a photo of a nest of this



Mallard Duck's nest. St. Peters Marsh, Henry Co., Ill.—Photo by W. E. Loucks.

species taken by William E. Loucks in St. Peters Marsh in Henry County, Illinois, and the picture shows a typical nest and nesting site.

One of the strange things about a Mallard is the care with which it hides its nest. During a recent trip into Canada during which we found dozens of ducks nests of many different species, but two Mallard's nests were found by the entire party and none by the writer; though the birds were common at all places visited.

#### TRAILING THE BARTRAM.

Several years ago I was walking through the pasture lands, when a Quail approached the roadside, and with upraised wings poised on a fence post and eyed me curiously. Her plaintive alarm note was a quivering whistle, quite in keeping with the way she gently folded a pair of long, pointed wings against her side. Several years after I encountered this species in that vicinity. They usually greeted me with their weird notes, as I ventured from the roadside to search for their nests. This usually occurred during the month of June, and I searched diligently, hours at a time, in an effort to locate the nests.

Spotted Sand pipers, Bobolinks, Meadow larks and Rails (all much less solicitous than the watchful Bartram) were harboring their treasures in the same vicinity; and I discovered many of them while seeking the nest of the wary Bartram, whose long drawnout whistle, though melodious, has an uncanny effect upon some naturalists. Unless I accidentally discovered one of these nests, it would be much more difficult, to systematically look for and find the initial set, than to locate subsequent clutches. The first nest of any species is usual-

ly the hardest to find. That is my experience, and I have followed in the wake of the Curlew, tracked the Woodcock through the brush, and watched many a duck, through my field glasses, as she voluntarily left her feeding grounds, to again resume the duties of incubation.

Prairie collecting in general is more favorable during rainy or very windy days. When the verdure is wet, many birds sit closer than at other times, except when approached opposite the windward side, during a stiff breeze. The ability to approach a nest while walking against the wind, without flushing the parent until you are very close upon her, is due to the atmospheric conditions and the disturbed state of the vegetation, which is more apt to deaden the sound of intruding footsteps.

I was going against the wind one warm day, when a Bobolink fluttered from the grass six feet ahead. Parting the stems and weeds, I decided to secure this nest for a group, and seated myself preparatory to removing nest intact, with sod and all. After fussing for perhaps fifteen minutes, I placed one hand behind about to arise, when my finger tips touched something soft, and a Bartramian Sand piper wobbled from a tussock, within an arm's length. Naturally she was a "crippled bird" and her actions indicated the utmost distress. Carefully peering twist blade and stalk, I distinguished four pear shaped eggs, adeptly concealed in a natural depression. The frantic actions of the parent had attracted the male from an adjoining pasture, where he had watched my actions for three days without manifesting the least uneasiness.

Last year I tramped back and forth methodically over every square foot of this pasture without disturbing the



Bartram, but I had not gone twenty yards the other side of the fence when I was delighted by a Bartram who remained upon her nest, until almost touched. This nest was in a field of timothy, and I could not see the nest without stooping to part the foliage.

Nineteen hundred and eight was a cool, rainy spring. The flooded creeks had driven the rails to the uplands, where they were laying. I found an unusually handsome nest containing only three eggs of *Rallus Elegans*, but each had a blotch on it the size of a cherry. On my way to gather this set, ten days later, I intuitively changed my course, and walked through a meadow where I had never seen nor heard an upland Plover. Two hundred yards from my usual course, I surprised a Quail from four badly soiled eggs. There was a faint peeping from one of the eggs, which was pipped. I examined the second which appeared to be unusually light in weight, and I could hear the contents shaking as I tilted the shell. The contents of this egg was removed in about half a minute, and I found the other two eggs in the same condition. I thought this a peculiar incident to discover a nest with one egg hatched and the other three eggs being unaddled, but absolutely infertile.

This last find gave me the most valuable key to the situation. I concluded that the Bartramian Sand piper when incubating, was a very close setter. The males, while not in evidence, were usually gleaning the surface of a nearby pasture within calling distance of the mate. Originally I had been misled because of the excitement displayed by both birds. These manoeuvres I found to be very deceptive, because only when the young have hatched do the parents sally forth to meet an intruder, hov-

ering overhead continually whistling or "thrilling."

This year I visited the vast stretch of pasture and meadow lands I previously tramped periodically for six years, and in a space of approximately two hundred acres I noted six pairs of Bartrams. This was in May, and they were unquestionably about to take up their summer homes in close proximity.

The following week found me in the same environment but I noted only one or two individual "Plovers." To all appearances there was "nothing doing." No thrilling, and but occasionally did I hear the plaintiff whistle. I had come upon three clutches, and one brood of young in previous seasons, and while each find was equivalent to many miles of tramping, the instances were vivid in my mind, so I felt confident of another "royal flush."

It was about 3:30 p. m., and I crossed and recrossed the pastures in so many places, that it seemed as if I had met myself several times. Plodding on automatically. I stopped two feet behind a Plover as she cackled through the grass alternately limping and flying. I found the eggs to be one-half incubated, which plainly indicated how near I must have come to this same bird the previous week, when I tried to canvass the entire field. Six days later I adopted the same tactics, automatically beating back and forth through the same fields. I startled a sitting Bartram within fifty feet of the nest, which I found the previous week, and the last clutch was at least twelve days old, which proved conclusively that I must have been within a yard of this bird when I found the other nest near the cow path.

In the adjoining field and adjacent

to a stony creek, were a number of posts. Often had I detected a Plover eyeing me from this elevated position, but he manifested no uneasiness and was not at all demonstrative. I decided to examine this field, which was sowed to timothy, but was very weedy, containing a number of Canadian thistles. I had not been in the field ten minutes, when a Quail sprang from the grass almost at my feet, and revealed the most cleverly hidden nest I had discovered, since chancing upon one found indirectly, through flushing the Bobolink. The last set was fresh, and the female must have been preparing her domicile at the time I spied her mate on the fence post. These eggs rested not only with the small ends together, but practically on their points, in a cavity five and one-half inches deep and only three inches in diameter. It would have been possible for a mowing machine to have passed completely over the nest and eggs without disturbing either.

The result of my discoveries this year while studying the nidification of this large Sand piper, only tends to bear out the statement which is so applicable to the searcher of ground birds' nests, viz. that a restricted area systematically searched, invariably yields more than a vast tract containing an unlimited assortment of growths, both wild and cultivated.

The three sets of Bartram found during by '09 trailing were within a radius of one-half mile. These birds frequently ranged on the opposite side of a creek. In previous years, when they bred in the same pastures, that contained the '09 nests, I have noticed the parents approaching me when I was fully a mile from their offspring.

GERARD ALAN ABBOTT,

Chicago, Ill.

#### From The Isle of Pines.

The Red-legged Thrush (*Mimocichla rubripes rubripes*) better known here in Cuba among the Americans as "Robin" is slightly larger than *Merula migratoria*. Both in actions, voice and in markings, it reminds one of our northern Robin. The general color above is bluegray; also the breast. The rest of the underparts are rufous. The throat is white margined with black and the iris and legs bright red. This is one of our most common birds, generally nesting in trees about twelve feet from the ground, but sometimes it nests in and about houses, sheds, etc. When we were building our house a pair of those birds built their nest in one of the front rooms. As the work progressed and we became too noisy there, they tore the nest to pieces and moved the same material and built another nest behind an unhung door in the kitchen, but as the door had to be hung, the nest was destroyed.

This is the first time I have known of a bird moving and taking the house along. The nest is very similar to that of a Robin, but lacks the mud lining (at least in this section) being composed of grass, strings, bits of paper, and rags, and in fact almost anything. It begins nesting in April and continues through May.

I also wish to add several birds to my list of birds seen here; making a total of 72 species identified to date.

American Egret; one.

Woodpecker (*Ciphiopicus percussus*); common.

Giant Flycatcher (*Tyrannus cubensis*); several.

Whip-poor-will?; two.

Palm Swift (*Tachorius phoeniscobia*); only seen just before or just after a rain and then only one to three at a time.

The birds I mistook for Chimney Swifts (*Chactora pelagica*) were probably *Chpseloides miger*, but of course can't tell as no specimens were taken.

A. C. READ.

#### The Osprey in Old Virginia.

As the Osprey, or Fish Hawk, as it is called by some people, breeds on the West coast as well as the East, I thought a word from this section might be of interest to some of THE OOLOGIST'S readers.

Every now and then I receive a letter asking for sets of this bird, generally stating "that as they are so easy to get on the East coast," I must have a large supply on hand. Quite the contrary.

The days of the Osprey colonies on the beaches have gone, with those of the Royal and Least Terns, Black Skimmers and Oyster-catchers. Now days one must be a good climber to reach them.

The nest shown in the photo I send you was in a dead pine on an island, between one hundred and twenty-five and fifty feet above ground. The thick of the tree bark has decayed and dropped off in places. All the way up, it is hang on for dear life, as trusting the climbers in this sort of a foot hold would be sheer suicide.

Years ago when first visiting this island, there must have been two hundred pairs of Great Blue Heron and Ospreys breeding in the dead tree tops. When last visiting there, there were no Herons' nests and the photo shows the last of the Mohicans. Thus for the pot hunters and millinery trade—Ospreys now seek the tallest tree they can find.

H. H. BAILEY,  
Newport News, Va.

#### The Bittern.

I noticed by the July issue of the "OOLOGIST" that Dr. W. A. Hart requests some information as to the American Bittern laying second sets if the nesting site is disturbed or if the first set of eggs is destroyed or taken.

I think it may safely be taken for granted that this bird lays second sets, provided, of course, the females has not been sitting on the eggs for

ten days or two weeks. Should incubation be well advanced, it is unlikely the bird will lay a second time. I will give you a few records of second layings of the American Bittern in this locality:

On May 29, 1908, 1-5, 2-5, Amer. Bittern were taken out of a large area of bullrush marsh, the eggs being fresh. On or about June 21st while looking for warblers in the same locality, a Bittern was flushed off her nest containing three fresh eggs. This was no doubt a second laying of one of the birds mentioned above.

On May 24, 1909, while wading through a small area of reeds and rushes—this swamp was about 75 yards long by 30 in width—a Bittern was flushed off her nest containing 4 olive green eggs, which were quite fresh. This bird always laid eggs entirely different from other Bitterns in so far as the shade of the specimens are concerned and consequently was much sought after. On June 12th while walking through a meadow where Meadowlarks and Bobolinks were nesting, I was somewhat surprised to flush this same bird from a nest containing 4 more fresh eggs. This bird had departed from the usual custom of her tribe and built a nest in a dry field where the grass was two feet high. The eggs were exactly the same as the previous sets taken. The site of this nest was about one mile from the other locality where the bird nested, but there is not the slightest doubt but that it was the same bird.

I have noticed time and again nests containing eggs of this species which had been destroyed by muskrats and there can be no doubt but that the bird lays again.

Yours truly,

W. J. BROWN.

P. S.—The tone and new life put into the "Oologist" is just what we wanted. W.J.B.

#### Notes From Southern Connecticut

"Alder Swamp" is a small triangular piece of wet ground on the lower part of our property. The growth is mostly Black alder (*Alnus serulata*), with a Swamp maple (*Acer rubrum*) and a White oak (*Quercus bicolor*) sprinkled here and there about the

edges. The center is entirely made up of tussucks so that one may walk about without difficulty.

At all seasons this swamp fairly teems with bird life. White-throated sparrows abound the edges all winter where numerous swamp weeds still hold their seeds. Tree sparrows are also often seen in small flocks gathering food, and occasionally hopping to the top of an alder to send forth their plaintive "Tulee". Field and Song sparrows are abundant the year round. The crows have become quite tame this year, often feeding in the dump pile at one end of the swamp while I am working near them. The Chickadees and Nuthatches find plenty of suet on the sides of my swamp blind. More than once I have come out of the blind suddenly; startling an industrious Winter wren so that for the next two days I have been the object of its continual scolding. Purple finches and Fox sparrows are common in the fall and early winter, feeding on weed seeds and refuse from the dump pile. The two birds most in evidence in the swamp are the American goldfinch and the Junco. I have often watched a single pair of Goldfinches call down a passing flock of thirty or more, and then such a noise as there is until all finally become interested in the abundance of seeds.

There is an old stump of a dead maple at one end of the swamp. A pair of Flickers drilled their hole in it in 1906. During the winters since, I have often watched Blue birds carrying pieces of nesting material to this cavity as though to build and raise a mid-winter brood. Why is it so many birds have these sudden inspirations to build in winter and then abandon the idea as suddenly as it came to them? this old stump has had different tenants every year since the Flickers used it in 1906. In the winter of that year the cavity housed a pair of White-footed mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*), in the spring of 1907 it was used by Blue birds and in the spring of 1908 by a pair of House wrens.

During migration a great many water and shore birds use this swamp as a resting place. Among those of interest, which I have noted are the following: Canada Goose (*Branta can-*

*andensis*), three startled from the water in March, 1906. Sora (*Porzana carolina*) a single bird seen in October, 1908. Wilson snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) several pass through every fall. I have never seen them in the spring. Least sandpiper (*Actodromas minutilla*) flocks of many birds noted in spring of 1907 and 1908. Spotted sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) many seen every spring and fall. One or two pairs remain to breed. Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) March 12, 1908 one pair noted.

In the spring I am out constantly, guarding the breeding birds of the swamp from "Bands" of small boys who are out first thing in the early months armed with sticks and all manner of death weapons. It goes hard with all living things which cross their path. However as a result of constant guarding, forty nests were constructed on this small piece of property and thirty-seven successful broods left the swamp in the spring of 1908.

P. G. HOWES,  
Stamford, Conn.

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#### Death's Harvest.

We are sorry to be called upon to chronicle the death of Charles K. Worthen, the well known naturalist of Warsaw, Illinois.

During his lifetime Mr. Worthen was probably the best known dealer in scientific bird skins in the United States. Shortly before his death, he wrote the Editor that he had a stock of some fifteen thousand. His dealings were largely confined to those who were scientists and more specially to those connected with public institutions.

Mr. Worthen left a record and reputation for integrity, painstaking accuracy and absolutely fair dealing that it would be hard to equal and which is as it should be, a priceless heritage to those he leaves behind.

Recently Dr. Vernon Gould of Rochester, Indiana, departed this life. Mr. Gould was a well-known ornithologist and had a rank and standing as a scientist that was enviable. In his de-

mise the study of birds losses a valuable investigator.

Rev. J. C. Elliott, an old and valued subscriber died at his home in Sandwich, Illinois, not long since, leaving a large circle of sorrowing friends. Mr. Elliott delighted in spending his spare time in the out door study of the birds, and the fund of general information he accumulated in this manner regarding their habits and character is seldom possessed by one in his line of work; and was frequently made use of by him in an illustrative way in his sermons. Something others might copy with profit.

#### Crows.

On June 20, 1909, two Crows were noticed flying across a field near West Chester, Pennsylvania; one of them had something in its claws. Presently it dropped it, when the other crow swooped down and caught the falling object before it had reached the ground. In a short time the second crow dropped it also, and it fell to the ground. Someone who went to see what the crows had been carrying, found a half-grown blackbird, still alive. It was taken home and put in a Robin's nest containing young birds. The old Robins made no protest, but offered it food, though the blackbird would not eat.

Next morning it was missing from the nest, having likely died from the effects of its fall, and been thrown out by the foster parents.

R. P. SHARPLES.

During our recent trip to the Central part of the Saskatchewan Province, Canada, we noted the abundance of Crows in this territory. Up to the time of making this trip, I had been much of a friend of the crow, believing it to have been maligned and not nearly so injurious as is generally supposed.

Our observations in Canada have entirely changed our views of the Crow. We found dozens of ducks' nests of nearly all species nesting there that had been destroyed by the crows. It was an everyday sight to see one or a half dozen of the black rescals walk-

ing along the edge of a slough, pond or lake, industriously peering into every bunch of grass and other likely places, in search of the ducks' nests. If the crows in that territory could be exterminated, we verily believe the annual output of wild ducks would be increased not less than ten per cent.—Ed.

#### MORE NEWSPAPER ORNITHOLOGY.

RICHMOND, Ind., May 8.—(Special).—Pennsylvania freight car No. 16656, though relieved of its burden and under company rules ready to be reloaded and sent on its endless journey, is being held on a sidetrack in Richmond awaiting the day that a dainty Mrs. Robin Redbreast shall have hatched out three skylblue eggs that lie at the bottom of a nest on a journal box of the car.

The nest was built and the eggs laid in New York City, the car having left "piers 4 and 5, Pennsylvania yards, April 28th," as the tag on the car's side indicates. The car came through to Richmond laden with goods for a wholesale grocery house, and on its arrival, May 1, William Nearnen, car inspector, discovered the nest with Mrs. Robin Redbreast on guard. The car was unloaded and with great care backed on to a siding.

The journey of more than 600 miles must have been made with the robin on her nest most of the time. Since arriving here, however, she has left her nest at intervals, and the railway boys say she seems to understand she is among friends.

When the eggs are hatched, if it is believed practical, the young birds and their home may be transferred to the eaves of a nearby building. But the chances are that car No. 16656 will be tied up for a month to come, waiting the day that the youngsters can fly.—Chicago Tribune.

When a great journal like the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Record-Herald dish up the above character of stuff, it is time to stop and wonder. Talk about nature faking! it beats any of the stories even now emanating from Eastern Africa.

Of course this robin will stick to

her nest on a shaking, jarring brake beam of a freight car for six hundred miles or fly along by the side of the car as it sailed over the track on the fast freight, and of course these eggs would be still in a condition to hatch if such a trip for them were possible.

The publication of this kind of stuff shows either that the publishers are ignorant—wholly so—or that they care little or nothing as to what they hand out to their readers; just so it fills space.

Since the foregoing was put in type we are more astonished than ever to see the long article based on the foregoing dispatch, and apparently endorsing the authenticity of the information regarding this Robin, in the August Shields' Magazine, accompanied by a photograph purporting to show the nest in situ.

That our old friend George O. Shields should be taken in by this sort of a fake is beyond understanding.

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#### More Abnormal Eggs.

Observing an account of abnormal eggs in recent issues of THE OOLOGIST, reminds me that I have found a few oddities in that line.

I once took a set of two eggs of the Red-tailed Hawk, one of which measured 2.35 x 1.85, the other 2.12 x 1.50.

Have an egg of the American Goldfinch about one half normal size.

A set of four of the Red-headed Woodpecker, two of which are perfect and normal specimens, though averaging a trifle small; the third being nearly flat on one side, and bulging out on the opposite side. The fourth egg is only about two-thirds normal size.

Have also taken Albino eggs of the Blue-bird and have a pure white unmarked egg of the Field Sparrow.

C. W. PELTON,  
Marshfield, Wis.

We have received from F. W. Walker an egg of the Mockingbird, taken near Augusta, Georgia, that is worthy of special mention.

It is nearly a sphere measuring .48 by .51 inches as compared with .72 x 1.02 for a normal average egg.

Contains almost exactly one-fifth

the cubic contents of the normal egg. Is beautifully marked and is one of a set that is said to have been alike. Sorry I could not have secured them all.

Mr. Walker says it was found in a nest like a Chickadee's in a hole in a tree near Davidson's Crossing, Georgia. It is hard to credit this; seems to me very improbable.

ERNEST H. SHORT.

During our recent trip to Canada, we observed among other things the following unusual or abnormal eggs.

Common Tern—one pale sky-blue egg, wholly unmarked, in a set with two dark colored, heavily marked eggs. One set of two nearly round, deep blue, almost unmarked eggs. One runt egg about the size of a White-bellied Nuthatch egg, in a set with two normal sized eggs. One set of four normal size and colored eggs.

Ring-billed Gull.—One set of five eggs. Several sets of four eggs. One deep blue, slightly marked egg of normal size in a set with two other normal eggs.—Ed.

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#### Rare and Early.

I have been able to get out on a number of trips this year, with some pleasing results. On May 12th I secured a set of four Bartramean Sandpiper, the first nest I have ever had the good fortune to locate. On Monday, May 31st, I took a set of four Wilson Thrush. This, so far as I am able to ascertain, is the only record for this State. Dawson's Birds of Ohio speaks of it as a possible breeder in the Northern part of the State, but with no authentic records. There is no possible doubt as to the record. I had both birds under observation for half an hour about the nest. I have observed the Wilson Thrush every year during the breeding season in this particular patch of timber, which is very heavy and damp. I once found an empty nest in a clump of ferns. This season's nest was placed in a coarse growth of weeds about a dead branch. I took the nest for evidence.

On April 26th secured a set of four Killdeer with incubation begun. I find that very few authorities speak of this bird as breeding in April. It does

so regularly here. I have one record of a nest with four eggs found March 31st, 1903. This is from Lorain County, on the 41st parallel.

Another rather early record this year was a Hairy Woodpecker's nest with young, on May 12th.

F. M. PHELPS,

Elyria, Ohio.

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### 200,000 BIRDS KILLED

#### Gulf Storm Overflows Famous Breeding Grounds Off Coast.

New Orleans, La., July 24.—About 200,000 birds on the breeding grounds maintained by the game commission on Battledor, Audubon, and Breton Islands of the southwestern coast of Louisiana, were killed in the storm. Many of the birds were of rare varieties. The islands were completely overflowed.—Press Dispatch.

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### NISHNA LAKE, MISSOURI.

On the 15th of May, my brother, a friend, and myself went to Nishna Lake, Missouri, on a recreation and outing trip; however, I went solely for the purpose of studying and collecting; they went to fish.

Here I found birds in abundance; Cardinals, Crows, Blue Jays, and Woodpeckers were nesting, while Bank Swallows, Kingfishers, Prothonotary Warblers, Green Herons, and Spotted Sandpipers had started to build their nests. The following were migrating: Black Terns, Franklin's Gulls, Great Blue Heron, American Bittern, and Myrtle Warblers. Besides these, there were many of the commoner birds such as Red-wings, Crackles, Orioles, Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied and Red-headed woodpeckers, Flickers, Red tail, Sparrow, and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Bobolinks, Whip-poor-wills, Night Hawks, Catbirds, Nuthatches, Chickadees, Thrashers, Thrushes, Sparrows of many varieties, Tur-

key Buzzards, Yellow and Prairie Warblers, Quail, Mourning Doves, Indigo Buntings, Yellow-breasted Chats, Pied-billed Grebe, and American Coots.

JEROME BURNETT.

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### RARE AUK IS NOT EXTINCT.

#### Naturalists Find Bird Alive and Prosperous on Triangle Island.

Victoria, B. C., June 22.—A notable ornithological discovery has been made on Triangle Island, where Warburton Pike and W. F. Burton, two well known sportsmen, were encamped, according to advices received by the Quadra. They have found some rare birds, including the little auk, supposed to have been extinct, and have an egg of that bird.

The above press dispatch is sent us by an old and valued friend and a long student in ornithology. It is entirely misleading as the Little Auk has never been supposed to be extinct, so far as we know. It is a bird common in its natural habitat.

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### Chestnut Collared Longspur.

This species (*Calcarius ornatus*) A. O. U. No. 538 I discovered nesting at Regina, Canada, June 4th, 1909, finding three nests containing three eggs, four eggs and five eggs, respectively. The latter of which, though the largest in number was the smallest in size of the eggs, and was the most beautifully marked. All of these eggs I found in the same way—by watching the bird.

The country in this vicinity is rolling, treeless, wild and prairie grass covered. It is a typical "short grass" country as the term is understood in Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado. The birds I found plentiful

here, seemingly nesting in colonies of from five to a dozen pair.

The first nest I found, I noticed the bird as she flew round—that she seemed nervous. I stopped and she would fly round me in a crescent shaped orbit, about 20 feet above the ground and nearing the ground at each end. I being the center. She would fly first to the left of me and then to the right until about even with me on each side. Then back around through the air three or four times, describing this semi-circle, finally rising; but all the time keeping about the same distance from me. Occasionally she would alight at one or the other end of the crescent and walk around through the grass, occasionally picking at small weeds or objects. She repeated this several times. Occasionally, however, she would soar over the place where I finally discovered the nest, with her wings and tail outstretched after the manner of the song flight of the male. I finally backed away and she lit near the center of this semi-circle not over ten feet from where I had been standing in the grass, and gradually slipping and sneaked through the grass and disappeared. I waited a few minutes, and going forward, flushed the bird. The nest was in an open situation midway from where I was standing and the center of the curve of her crescent shaped flight. It was on high, dry ground amid wild prairie grass, sunken into the soil where there were very small prairie shrubs on different sides of it. The nest was made of old dry grass, and of course I saved it.

At the second nest discovered, there were no small shrubs around it, but in lieu thereof there were several tall weeds ten or twelve inches high, and last season's grass stems. The last above described nest was found on a

rolling hill side just North of the Catholic Cemetery and almost within the corporate limits of Regina.

Still another set I found close beside this last set. All of them were found within what I supposed was the corporate limits of the city of Regina, a town of some seven or eight thousand.

The birds seemed plentiful in this vicinity, the black breasted males were continually in sight and singing or scolding or both. They seemed interested in the actions of the females as they flew round me, and sometimes accompanied them on such fights. The males were more fearless than the females. They have two song refrains, one somewhat similar to the song of the Meadow Lark, though of course much weaker; and the other similar to that of the Bobolink, but both much inferior to the real thing.

Both the male and the female have a churring or rattling, scolding series of notes. In all three of these nests the eggs were very much incubated.

I found the other unfinished nest of this species at this place.

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#### Strange.

On July 22, 1909, I was crossing a hay field and found a nearly grown bird, some specie of the Horned Lark, which could fly about twelve to fifteen feet at a time and examined it to see if the mower or rake had done any harm. This bird had received no injuries, but a little ways on I found another of a similar size and examined it for the same reasons. There were no legs or wings minus, but it contained a pus sac. The loose skin on its thighs on the under side had small holes and through them I pulled out seven maggots.

I felt something under the skin be-



neath the chin and I worked out four large ones of the same size. In the end of one wing apparently in the bone and where two large wing feathers were pulled out, there were three more maggots which I took out and then turned the bird loose.

It fluttered away minus fourteen parasites. Isn't this very uncommon?

PERCY L. JUDD,  
Rathdrum, Idaho.

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Rarities.

Our old friend "Campbell," of Pittston, Pennsylvania, reports the Least Sandpiper again breeding at that place. Also the discovery of nests of the Lincoln Sparrow, Field Sparrow and Worm-eating Warbler; certainly a nice bunch of rare ones.

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R. P. Smithwick.

In the June issue of this year we published a press dispatch giving an account of the death of R. P. Smithwick, May 24th, at the age of twenty-two years, by being smothered in a hole dug by him in a sand dune after Kingfishers' nests.

When we purchased THE OOLOGIST, the following notes came to us with other manuscript forwarded by Mr. Short, and they show the work of the Smithwick family in the Ornithology of the South many years ago, and are now published for the first time. Bertie County, N. C.

May 1, 1895.—Chipping Sparrow, 4-4. Nest of grasses and fine weed-stalks, lined with horse hair; placed in a shade-tree. Eggs fresh.

May 6, 1895.—Chipping Sparrow, 5-4. Nest of grasses and fine weed-stalks, lined with hair, placed in a cedar, standing in yard, 10 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 6, 1895.—Chipping Sparrow, 6-4

Nest of fine grasses and weed-stalks, lined with hair, placed in a cedar about 25 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 9, 1895.—Red-eyed Vireo, 2-3. Nest of the usual maturial, placed in a beech, about 20 feet from the ground. Small embryos.

May 13, 1895.—Red-eyed Vireo, 1-4. Nest of the usual material placed in a beech, about 5 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 13, 1895.—Red-eyed Vireo, 3-3. Nest of the usual material, placed in a beech 13 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 21, 1895.—Red-eyed Vireo, 4-3. Nest of the usual material, placed in an oak, about five feet from the ground. Incubation slight.

May 22, 1895.—Red-eyed Vireo, 5-3. Nest of the usual material, placed in an oak 9 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 25, 1895.—Purple Martin, 1-5. Nest placed in a box 20 feet from the ground, made of the usual material. Eggs fresh.

May 25, 1895.—Purple Martin, 2-5. Nest placed in a box 20 feet from the ground, made of the usual material. Eggs fresh.

May 25, 1895.—Purple Martin, 1-6. Nest placed in a box 20 feet from the ground, made of the usual material. Eggs fresh.

June 18, 1895.—Cardinal, 3-3. Nest of leaves and pieces of jessamine vines, lined with fine grasses, placed in an oak, about 13 feet from the ground. Incubation advanced.

June 24, 1895.—Indigo Bunting, 2-3. Nest placed in a bunch of reeds, about two feet from the ground, made of weed-stalks and reed-leaves, lined with fine grasses. Eggs fresh.

April 20, 1896.—Cardinal, 4-3. Nest placed in a dogwood bush, about 5

feet from the ground, made of jessamine vines, strips of bark and leaves, lined with fine grasses. Eggs fresh.

April 22, 1896.—Cardinal, 5-3. Nest of fine weed-stalks and reed-leaves, placed in a small maple, about 7 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

April 22, 1896.—Chipping Sparrow, 7-4. Fresh eggs taken from a nest of weed-stalks and grasses, lined with hair, placed in a small cedar about fifteen feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 1, 1896.—Purple Martin, 3-5. Nest of sticks, rootlets and grasses, placed in a box 18 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 1, 1896.—Purple Martin, 3-5. Nest of sticks, rootlets and grasses, placed in a box 18 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1896.—Purple Martin, 2-6. Nest placed in a box 14 feet from the ground, made of small sticks, grasses and fine roots. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1896.—Purple Martin, 4-5. Nest of small sticks and fine roots, placed in a box 16 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1896.—Purple Martin, 5-5. Nest of leaves, grasses and rootlets, placed in a box 20 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1896.—Purple Martin, 6-5. Nest of small sticks, fine roots and leaves, placed in a box 16 feet from the ground. Incubation begun.

May 16, 1896.—Purple Martin, 7-5. Nest of rootlets, placed in a box 16 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1896.—Cardinal, 6-3. Nest of jessamine vines and leaves, lined with fine grasses, placed in a small maple about 8 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

June 13, 1896.—Indigo Bunting, 1-4. Nest made entirely of reed-leaves and grasses, placed in a reed, about 3 feet

from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 4, 1897.—Purple Martin, 1-4. Nest of small sticks and grasses, placed in a box 16 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 5, 1897.—Red-eyed Vireo, 3-4. Nest of chips of rotten-wood, fine strips of bark, leaves, weed-stalks and spider-webs, placed in the fork of a beech limb, about 15 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 7, 1897.—Rough-winged Swallow, 1-7. Nest placed in a borough overhanging Albemarle Sound, made of "pine seed leaves" and small bits of fodder. Eggs fresh.

May 8, 1897.—Cardinal, 7-3. Nest of jessamine vines, strips of bark and leaves, lined with fine grasses; placed in a small bush, about 10 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 15, 1897.—Purple Martin, 915. Nest of grasses, fine roots and leaves, placed in a box 15 feet from the ground. Incubation begun.

May 15, 1897.—Purple Martin, 10-5. Nest of grasses and fine roots, placed in a box 15 feet from the ground. Medium embryos.

May 15, 1897.—Purple Martin, 11-5. Nest of grasses and small sticks, placed in a box 16 feet from the ground. Medium embryos.

May 18, 1907.—Purple Martin, 3-6. Nest of grasses, fine roots and leaves, placed in a box 14 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 22, 1897.—Field Sparrow, 1-3. Nest placed in a small gum bush about 24 inches from the ground, made of fine weed-stalks and grasses, lined with fine grass. Incubation begun.

May 22, 1897.—Summer Tanager, 2-3. Nest of weed-stalks, lined with long stalks of grass, placed in a gum, about 10 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 22, 1897.—Summer Tanager,

3-4. Nest placed in an oak about 8 feet from the ground, made of weed-stalks and wool, lined with grass. Eggs fresh.

May 31, 1897.—Summer Tanager, 3-3. Nest of weed-stalks, wool and jessamine vines, lined with long grass stems, placed in an oak, about 20 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

June 5, 1897.—Red-eyed Vireo, 6-3. Nest of chips of rotten wood and spider-webs, lined with strips of bark, placed in the fork of an oak limb, about 8 feet from the ground. Incubation slight.

June 10, 1897.—Summer Tanager, 4-3. Nest of weed-stalks, lined with long grass stems, placed in an oak, about 18 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

June 11, 1897.—Summer Tanager, 5-3. Nest of weed-stalks and bits of cotton string, lined with long pieces of grass, placed in an oak, about 10 feet from the ground. Incubation slight.

April 25, 1898.—Cardinal, 9-3. Nest of beech-leaves, strips of bark and jessamine vines, lined with fine grasses, placed in a bunch of briars about 7 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

April 26, 1898.—White-eyed Vireo, 2-4. Nest placed in the fork of a dog-wood limb, about two feet high, made of moss, reed-leaves fine strips of bark and spider webs. Eggs fresh.

April 30, 1898.—White-eyed Vireo, 3-4. Nest of moss reedleaves and strips of bark, lined with fine grasses, placed in the fork of a holly bush about two feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

April 30, 1898.—Field Sparrow, 2-3. Nest of fine grasses and fine weed-stalks, lined with finer grass, placed in a small cedar about 12 inches from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 3, 1898.—White-eyed Vireo, 4-4. Nest placed in a fork of gum limb, 20 inches from the ground, made of bits of rotten wood, moss and leaves, lined with fine grasses. Eggs fresh.

May 10, 1908.—Field Sparrow, 5-4. Nest of fine wood-stalks and fine

grasses, lined with finer grass, placed in a small pine bush, about 8 inches from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 14, 1898.—Field Sparrow, 6-4. Nest of fine grasses, weed-stalks and fine roots, lined with horse hair, placed in a small pine bush, near the ground. Incubation begun.

May 16, 1898.—White-eyed Vireo, 3-3. Nest of moss, fine bark and leaves, lined with fine grasses, placed in the fork of a gum limb, about 22 inches from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 21, 1898.—Red-eyed Vireo, 7-3. Nest placed in the fork of maple limb, about 6 feet from the ground, made of strips of bark bits of rotten-wood, pine straw and spider-webs. Eggs fresh.

May 28, 1898.—Red-eyed Vireo, 8-3. Nest of fine strips of bark, leaves, grasses and moss, lined with fine strips of bark, placed in the fork of an oak limb, about 8 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh.

May 31, 1898.—Red-eyed Vireo, 9-3. Nest of bits of bark, leaves and spider-webs, lined with fine grasses and strips of grapevine bark, placed in the fork of a gum limb, about 10 feet from the ground. Eggs fresh. Portlock, Norfolk Co., Virginia.

May 16, 1904.—Field Sparrow, 7-4. Nest placed 8 inches from the ground, in small gallberry bushes, in thicket, about 35 feet from a road, made of fine grasses and weed-stalks, lined with very fine grasses and horse-tail hair; sizes as follows: .58 x .49; .65 x .49; .58 x .47; .57 x .48. Incubation slight.

May 16, 1904.—Field Sparrow, 8-4. Nest placed 9 inches up in small gallberry bushes in thicket, made of grass and weed-stalks, lined with very fine grasses and horse-tail hair; eggs measure as follows: .61 x .51; .65 x .48; .63 x .51; .63 x .50. Eggs fresh.

May 16, 1904.—Field Sparrow, 1-5. Nest of grasses and fine weed-stalks, lined with very fine grasses and horse-tail hair, placed 2 inches off the ground in jessamine vines standing between small stream, bordered by marsh, and freshly ploughed field; nest only two feet from small foot-path; eggs measure as follows: .57 x .49; .58 x .48; .57 x .48; .57 x .46; .59 x .44. Incubation slight.

### BACK NUMBERS.

With this issue we complete all transactions with all the subscribers who have written to us since we assumed control of this magazine in March, relative to back numbers, and have mailed all back numbers requested to this date. Any subscribers having written or remitted for any back numbers and who do not receive the same by the first of September next, will confer a favor by advising us.

R. M. BARNES.

### Copy.

All copy for articles intended for publication in "THE OOLOGIST" must hereafter be plainly written on one side of the paper only. A failure to comply with these requirements will result in the matter going into the waste basket in place of into the publication.

We wish to thank our contributors for their generous response to our request for bird notes. We have a number of splendid articles on hand for future publication. Send us in some more.

R. M. BARNES.

### Special Notice.

Inadvertantly in a late issue, there appeared a number of advertisements signed by Ernest H. Short, as Manager. Mr. Short has no longer any connection with this magazine. All correspondence should be addressed to THE OOLOGIST, at Lacon, Illinois. The undersigned is the sole owner, proprietor, editor and manager of this publication.

R. M. BARNES.

### Fraud.

It will be a pleasure to us to expose any improper, unscientific or fraudulent practices, on the part of any one, relating to the sale or exchange of specimens; of failure of anyone to square accounts in such matters. These things should be conducted along honorable lines

R. M. BARNES.

Prices for Back Numbers of the YOUNG OOLOGIST AND THE OOLOGIST will, during 1908, remain as below:

After which the prices of many numbers will be advanced and possibly not obtainable at any price. Should you desire back numbers to complete your file, NOW is the time to purchase. You can never obtain them for less money and possibly not at any price, as our stock ranges from only 1 to 25 copies of an issue.

Prices for 1909 Are as Follows:

Nos. 1, 14, 18, 31, 34-35, 42, 53, 86, 89, 111, 130, 132, 137, 139, 140, 153, 158, are 50 cents each;

Nos. 9, 66-67, 76, 77, 78, 79, 88, 90, 100, 113, 138, 146, are 25 cents each.

Nos. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 54, 55, 56, 75, 87, 123, 127, 128, 129, 144, 149, are 15 cents each.

Nos. 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 38, 39, 40, 45, 50, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 70, 74, 80, 93, 114, 115, 126, 133, 135, are 10 cents each.

~~50~~ All other numbers 5c. per copy.

For \$12 will send prepaid a copy of every issue ever published, No. 1 to 145. This offer includes your subscription through 1908.

My prices for back numbers of the YOUNG OOLOGIST and OOLOGIST in volumes, are as follows:

Vol. I, 1884-5, Nos. 1 to 12.....	\$ .90
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VOL. XXVI. No. 9. ALBION, N. Y., SEPT. 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 266

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 9. ALBION, N. Y. SEPTEMBER 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 266

Published Monthly, by R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Illinois.



The well known Oologist.  
Thomas H. Jackson of West Chester, Penna.

## THOMAS H. JACKSON.

With this issue we present a likeness of the well known Oologist, Thomas H. Jackson of West Chester, Pennsylvania. This we do without his knowledge or consent, and with "malice aforethought."

Mr. Jackson is one of the best known oologists of the United States and is one of the oldest subscribers to this magazine, and is personally known to more collectors of North American birds eggs by correspondence than perhaps any other man in America.

Our first acquaintance with Mr. Jackson commenced in the late '80's as the result of numerous exchanges of specimens then made with him. Since that time we have had more or less a continuous correspondence and interchange of specimens and notes, and is a pleasure to testify to the fact that we have always found Mr. Jackson deserving of that sturdy reputation for absolute integrity and fairness in these matters which is known throughout the land. Would that there were many, many more of his kind.

---

**SUBSCRIBERS.**

Our old friend P. G. Howes, Curator of the Maplewood Museum of Natural Science of Stamford, Connecticut, sends the "wherewith" to pay for two subscriptions and adds., " These subscriptions I am paying myself, but am sure that they will both renew next year."

If every subscriber to the OOLOGIST would take as much interest in extending the subscription list and do as well as Brother Howes, we would double the size of the magazine and commence the publication of colored plates.

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**PASSENGER PIGEONS.**

A flock of fifty-five of the "real thing" passed over my head at Chili

Center, Monroe County New York at 9.30 this morning (August 6, 1909) flying due east at terrific speed, and not over one hundred feet above ground.

I've been "hearing" about them for four years back, but have only one eyesight record of a pair and young in ten years, until this find.

Ernest H. Short.

The above note is of special interest to me because on February 5th, 1909, some twelve miles north of Lacon, Illinois, as the editor drove along the road, he observed a flock of six or eight birds which at first he took for Passenger Pigeons, and in regard to which the following entry in our bird journal was made as of that day.

"Saw a flock of six or eight Turtle Doves up at the mouth of Clear Creek valley; a very unusual occurrence for this time of year. I first took them for Wild Pigeons, and am not yet thoroughly convinced that they were not. As they passed me going at a very high rate of speed towards the Southeast and entered the timber flying among the trees in a compact flock and turning and twisting as I never have seen doves in all my life. They appeared large for Turtle Doves."

Let us hope that the Passenger Pigeon is not entirely a thing of the past.  
—Ed.

---

**LOOK OUT.**

We would advise all our readers against having any dealings with W. H. Boose of Waupun, Wisconsin.

---

**RUBY THROATED HUMINGBIRDS.**

(Trochilus colubris)

Even the greatest and most careful observers sometimes arrive at wrong conclusions. It is in the February 1907, **OUTING** that John Burroughs, one of America's most faithful naturalists,

takes to task some Briertown, N. J., sketch artist who has penned certain objectionable nature literature for Harper's Magazine. It is in regard to the hummingbird that the great writer became strenuous in showing the falsity of some supposed observations. While, in truth, he does point out what seem to be glaring inaccuracies, that are actually borne out by observation.

The first idea he attacks is that the breeding date of the hummingbird is chronologically wrong since the time is set when the mountain and meadow lilies are in bloom. Quoting the exact language he says: "Now the hummers nest in May and early June while the mountain lily rarely blooms before July. In New Jersey it may bloom in late June but the nesting of the hummer will be correspondingly early or near the middle of May." While perhaps Mr. Burrough's observations and reading may have brought him to these conclusions, they do not in reality accord with facts as evidenced by other observers. Mr. R. C. Harlow in the October, 1906, OÖLOGIST, has the following to say: "The recent article relative to the nesting of the Hummingbird calls to my mind a nest which I examined in 1904. On August 20, it contained two hatching eggs. Built 10 feet up on a horizontal hemlock limb and very deep. Place, Washington County, Md." This instance shows that in Maryland the hummer breeds later than June. If this were the only case in which the ruby-throat breeds later than May or early June Mr. Burroughs might hold that this was an exception to the rule or that the observer was mistaken. However, in Kansas at about the same latitude as Maryland and two weeks further south than Northern New Jersey, the writer has made rather complete notes in regard to the Hummingbird. About ten years ago, personally, he found and

collected two sets of eggs together with the nests. This was before he began to preserve notes. The first was about May 20th and the second in June.

The dates in the following tend to show that Mr. Murrough's chronology is not beyond question. Observe the dates. The exact language has been retained, even where there are poorly constructed sentences or mistakes in the use of the English language. In the writers' note book, June 24th, 1906, he finds the following reference to the Hummingbird: "This afternoon Ralph Gilman and I went out north. I started and met Ralph. After talking a bit he decided to go with me. We went straight over the hills. \* \* \* Above the "Cave," we heard a Hummingbird making quite a fuss and we both began to watch it. We were sure that there must be a nest. Sure enough! The bird flew to a small hickory limb just above our heads, and we both saw at the same time, the small lichen-covered knot on the upper side of the branch. The limb was hardly larger than my thumb, if as large. The nest was on a small leaning hickory, sticking out over the bank. Climbing up the bank, we could not see to the bottom of the nest; though it was considerably lower than our heads; so I climbed up into a small tree and looked down. There were two small bean-like eggs. We did not try to get them."

"July 9, 1906. Saturday morning (July 7) I went to the woods with Elmer Monahan. He had found a couple of hummingbirds' nests and wanted me to take a picture of one of them. We drove down over the "Big Hill." \* \* \* \* We next turned in west and came up on old wood road to the side of a deep embankment, to the region of the first hummer's nest. \* \* \* \* He had told me it was in an iron-

wood tree, so I began to look among the number of trees of this kind that stood all around. By and by, I saw the object of my search on a small, slender limb, smaller than my little finger. The nest was lichen-coated and the gray of the lichens blended well with the limb and sky. I climbed up. There was nothing in it. \* \* \* He handed me his hatchet and I cut off the limb. I could tell that it had been used because of the excrement left in the bottom by the young. \* \* \* Taking the nest back to the buggy, we then followed down the steep-banked ravine to the nest of his other hummingbird. It was also in an iron-wood tree, or rather, bush. The tree was about as large as my wrist and the long slender branch, on which the nest was situated, was about twenty feet above the bed of the ravine and about twelve feet from the nearest bank. The old bird was not at home when we went there, so I planted my camera with the long focus, so as to take in the whole limb. The clear sky was the back ground. While waiting, Elmer climbed up a small oak tree that over-looked the nest and saw the two eggs. We could occasionally hear the hum of the bird as she flew about to see if the land was clear. Finally she began to fly about the nest and settled down on it without a second's halt. Her motions were so rapid that it was hard to follow her with the eyes. After trying two plates, we decided to go up the branch of Coal Creek to the nest Ralph and I had found two weeks before.

"After following the stream a ways, we heard a hummingbird, and began, at once to scan the available limbs for the nest. After a search of five or ten minutes, Elmer found it out on the limb of a small tree, and about fifteen feet from the ground. Elmer climbed to it, and found it empty.

"Next we went on up the stream and when within about fifty yards of the place where Ralph and I had found our nest, I heard what I thought to be the buzz of a hummingbird. Looking up into the elm tree, whose branches over-hung the creek bed in which I was walking, I descried the nest. It was so low that I could pull down the branch and see the two small white eggs. Elmer wanted the eggs for the Museum (Baker University) and I wanted the nest; so I had him shoot the female after we had taken the eggs and nest. I expect to take a picture of the nest, eggs and bird, which Elmer is going to mount on one of the limbs by the nest.

"After getting the specimens packed away we went to my first hummingbird's nest, the one Ralph and I had found. The eggs had been hatched and there were two little bits of birds, smaller than the tips of my finger. The down was beginning to show on their backs and one could see two rows of yellowish golden spots running down their backs almost like the stripes of young quails or chickens.

"In all, we saw five hummingbirds' nests. Three of them were in use. we secured on the trip, two hummingbirds' nests, two eggs and one bird, besides a tanager's nest and two Bells' Greenlets. Had we desired to do so, we could have collected the other set of hummingbird's eggs. We went, rather to get a picture of the nest, with an old bird on the nest. However, the plates were not good."

From these notes it would seem that, if Mr. Burroughs correctly dated the flowers, in Kansas and Maryland, the hummingbird builds late enough for the structural process to take place when the mountain and meadow lilies bloom.

Now as to another instance in which Mr. Burroughs's observations have not

been carried as far as his conclusions. Admitting that he may be correct in finding a nest made of wood pulp without foundation in nature, it is evident that he goes too far in his conclusion in the following paragraph: "And this nest when completed holds water like a cup. A passing shower fills it and drowns the eggs and the mother is obliged to build a new nest! Think of a bird's nest that would fill with water and stay full whenever it rained! How long would a race of birds, that build such watertight nests, survive? A bird's nest will not hold water as well as a boy's straw hat—not even the mud-lined nest of the robin." Now while Mr. Burroughs does not assert in positive terms that the hummingbird's nest will not hold water, it seems that he intended to convey that impression. Mr. Burroughs is hardly the man to retreat behind the mere technicality of words. At first reading, a question at once rose as to whether the conclusion had been reached by actual test. Having in a box, ready to send to a friend, a nest of the ruby-throat taken July 7, 1907, the writer proceeded at once to try the experiment. Filling the nest full of water it was entirely emptied in less than a minute. But this nest was one that was loose on the limb and it was thought that this condition might render it more seive-like. But having in his possession a very fine nest which was taken June 20, 1907, and containing two eggs, it was with hesitancy that he tried the experiment on this. Wetting would not improve it, to say the least. Anyway on the afternoon of Aug. 14, 1907, at three o'clock, he filled the nest with pure water. The water stood all that afternoon, all the next night and until after eleven o'clock the next day. Between that time and one o'clock the water soaked through the nest and ran down the

limb which was still wet when discovered. The nest held water for at least twenty hours.\*

However, this article is not intended to merely criticise; but it also aims to show as much of the hummingbird life as is warranted by the writer's observations; so for the sake of added information, the data in connection with this water-tight nest is given. "Collected June 20, 1907, three miles northwest of Baldwin, Kansas. Nest in a burr oak growing on bank of a stream. So low that one could pull down the limb while in the bed of the stream. Nest composed of lichens fastened together with spider webs and lined with silky down from some kind of seed, like dandelion or milkweed, (maybe from sycamore balls). Depth, outside, 1 3-4 inches; inside, 3-4 inches. Diameter; outside, 1 3-4 by 1 1-2 inches; inside, 1 by 3-4 inch. Two eggs in the nest. Incubation well advanced. Nest was found June 10th and contained one egg. The female kept flying around as the limb with the nest was being cut off."

His diary further shows several other references.

"June 20, 1907. Also found another hummingbird building. She would bring a little piece of lichen and put it on the edge of the nest and then, while holding it in her bill, would give it a shake to tangle it in the spider webbs. Then she would settle down into the nest and turn around, shaping it with her breast." (This is the leaky one, first filled with water.)

"June 30, 1907. Visited hummingbird's nest found on 20th. Nest apparently done. Did not look in. Also found another nest of the ruby-throat about ten feet from the ground on a small limb three feet from the trunk of the small burr oak. It contained young birds half grown."

The following notes taken Aug.

24, 1902, give a further picture of the feeding habits of this pretty little creature: "At last I come to a beautiful place where the jewel weed or wild touch-me-not fill the space not occupied by the new growth of sprouts. Both varieties are here, the yellow and the orange; and I simply stand and look. The bees and butterflies keep up their constant fluttering. Suddenly there comes the sound as of a four-horse power bumble-bee. There is a stir among the touch-me-nots. It is a ruby-throated hummingbird. See it poised, probing into the secrets of the blossoms. It starts, rises above the verdure and hangs with tail outspread, the pulsating wings looking like the spokes of a fast-revolving wheel. The foliage below stirs by the breeze of it's wings. It's head turns and it's eyes look straight into mine. But it sees nothing there that is unfriendly; so, it commences again, but a few feet away to pass from flower to flower. Over to the north another buzzing and there hangs a male bird, the beautiful green body glistening in the sunlight and the ruby-throat shining against it like a gorgeous jewel. It darts away and lights on a dead branch of a sycamore tree in the bed of the stream. A pair of them fly past with a buzz and they light on a tall horse weed over on the east side. A big black butterfly, with long streamers behind, floats high across the scene and disappears among the trees to the east. Another female hummer comes up close to me and poises herself in the air as if to see whether I would make a good perch. Deciding in the negative, away she darts and lights on the limb of a hop-hornbeam that overleans the stream. Hummingbirds seem to be everywhere. A sparrow flits from one bush to another and looks comparatively like a crow. \* \* \* I would be satisfied if I

could just stay here always and listen to the mingling sounds and watch the matchless spread of blossoms, birds and bees. But I move on trying to follow the hummingbirds as they speed out into the timber and dart back for new nectar. So I start, breaking the brush-end from a little sapling that had been cut down, and with the large end I strike the trees along my path. But if there are any nests, the owners are evidently out on a foraging trip."

It has been asserted that the hummingbirds are especially fond of red flowers. They are seen most frequently, in this region, around honey suckle, trumpet vine, gladiolus, and wild touch-me-nots, though they visit many small inconspicuous wild flowers. The probabilities are that the hummingbird has the color sense well developed and at once distinguishes the bright colors.

The Ruby-throat, of the fifteen recognized species in North America, is the only one whose geographical distribution is general over the eastern United States. It has been noted nesting as late as June 24th, in Michigan. This would lead one to think that it raises two broods each year even that far north. If this be true, in New Jersey early July would be just about the right time for the second generation. Red birds have reared as many as three sets and some other birds, when the first clutch is destroyed, at once build again; and, sometimes during a single summer, lay as many as four settings.

Now just a word in regard to all observations. One may draw positive conclusions from actual observations; but to say that a thing is impossible or preposterous presupposes a knowledge universal. Birds of the same species differ in nesting habits. Turtle doves nest both on the ground and



in trees. Robins have been known to build on the ground and under sheds. There is individuality in birds, as in men. They adapt themselves to conditions. One hummingbird composed a nest entirely of cotton, being provided with this comodity by a human friend. English sparrows, when the population crowds them from dwellings, build a straw ball, with a hole in the side, in the tops of trees. In California a quail is recorded as having built a nest in a tree. There are geniuses among birds as among men; and the freaks of nature mean that either conditions, force birds to act in new strange ways or that by voluntary choice they progress and improve their surroundings.

\*The Ruby-throat, as far as the observer's experience goes, builds its nest under a protecting leaf, which acts as a roof in time of rain. He has observed fourteen nests, in each one of which, the protecting leaf seems to have been the determining factor in the choice of nesting sites. Quite a number of these have been observed since writing the above article in 1907.

ARTHER BRIDWELL,  
Baldwin, Kansas.

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#### From Crawfordville, Indiana.

Dec. 27, 1908—Saw Tufted Titmouse, Kingfisher, Slate-colored Junco.

Dec. 29, 1908—Cardinal, pair.

Jan. 4, 1909—Downey Woodpecker.

Jan. 18, 1909—Cardinal, feeding on dried grapes in vines, six inches of snow.

January 19, 1909—First Robin of season.

April 5, 1909—Screech Owl, nest in hole in Beech tree fifteen feet from ground, in College grounds. Five eggs. This I watched until the young had left the nest. The last time I saw them, all five were sitting side by

side on an iron railing around a cellar stairway one evening.

April 18, 1909—Red-bellied Woodpecker.

May 20, 1909—Hairy Woodpecker, nest in willow stub eight feet from ground; three eggs. Green Heron, two nests; one in elm twenty-five feet from ground; platform of sticks, two eggs; fresh. The other nest was in a thorny locust fifteen feet from ground, large nest of sticks, six eggs, nearly ready to hatch.

American Redstart, nest in elm sapling, six feet from ground; one egg.

Aug. 17, 1909—Was on the creek, saw a man hauling gravel. He said "See that big buzzard on that dead sycamore; it has been around here all week." I looked and it proved to be a Bald Eagle. I never saw it after, although went over the same ground for several days afterward.

August 27, 1909—While out fishing saw a Great Blue Heron. First I have seen here since 1905, when I saw a pair.

On Monday, August 30th, my Brother-in-law found a bird of this species with one wing shot and mangled. It was in a hay field. As I could not mount it, we turned it loose in the woods along the creek.

W. C. Parks,  
Crawfordville, Ind.

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#### HAWKS.

Altho, among naturalists, it is generally supposed that, looking from a scie tific stand-point, the larger hawks do comparatively little harm to the poultry-raiser, and which from my own experience, I think, is the proper way to look at it, since these birds destroy so many destructive rodents, that if left to multiply, would be much more harmful than the hawks. Yet from my own knowledge, I knew that the Broad-

wing, as well as the Red-tail and Swainson hawks, do, occasionally prey upon poultry.

On July 17, 1909, while out in search of a cuckoo's nest, I was suddenly surprised to see a hawk, which I supposed to be a Broad-wing, fly up from a patch of weeds just ahead of me. Thinking that this hawk might make a good specimen and hoping to ascertain the exact kind of raptore it was, I secured my rifle and, for about an hour, sat huddled up in the dense foliage of a nearby cedar-tree. Then looking up I spied the bird carefully surveying the ground about his prey. After about twenty minutes of circling about, he sailed slowly down on to his prey, a large, fat hen, which he had killed just prior to my coming. Waiting the chosen moment, I pulled the trigger, and upon picking him up, I found that I had secured a large male in fine plumage of the species, *Buteo playpterus*.

Again on Oct. 12, 08, while on one of my journeys thru the woods, just as I was entering an adjoining meadow, I saw a good-sized hawk fly up from the ground a short distance away. Going over to the place, I found that a pullet had strayed too far from the barn-yard and thereby had experienced the fate of many a rabbit. Not knowing what kind of hawk it was, I decided to set a steel trap beside the part of the body that had been eaten and covering well with leaves, I retired to the timber to await the hawk's return. In about twenty minutes the bird returned and perched on the dead limb of a nearby tree. Then after a few minutes had past, he sailed down, and on alighting placed both feet on the jaws of the trap. Hurrying to the scene, I found that I had caught an immature Swainson, probably a female.

On another occasion while looking

thru a plum-thicket in search of a Bell Vireo's nest, I noticed a large Red-tail swoop down onto a full grown hen, but being a short distance away, I succeeding in frightening him away before he had killed her.

JEROME BURNETT,  
Nebraska City, Nebr.

Nobody has ever disputed but that most of the larger hawks occasionally take a chicken, and it is generally known that the Broad Winged Hawk is an injurious species, but the Red-tail and its immediate relatives including the Swainson's, are far more beneficial than injurious, and every person who destroys any hawk of this kind is committing an irreparable injury to the extent of taking the life of one highly valuable bird.—Ed.

#### FROM THE ISLE OF PINES.

**Cuban Oriole** (*Icterus hypomelas*.)

Length 8-in., wing, 3.4 in., male. General color black; shoulders, under wing coverts, lower back, upper tail coverts and tibiae, bright yellow; under tail coverts, black and yellow; bill, legs and feet bluish, shading to black. Female and immature, very similar to other female orioles.

This common bird is tamer and more confiding than our Northern orioles. It is usually found in little parties of six to eight and may be seen in the woods along the arroyas and rivers and in fact any place but in the pine woods. This Oriole is fond of being in porch vines and does great service by destroying green worms which generally about in such places, and when thus occupied it seems to have but little fear of man and allows one to stay close by and watch it. They also sometimes come under the porch roof to shelter from the storm.

**Zenaida Dove** (*Zenaida zenaida*) is our commonest pigeon. It is found al-

most everywhere, both in the pine woods and in the orange groves. Among the natives it is known as "El bobo" (meaning fool) because when one of them is shot, the others fly about and alight near by and several can be shot before the flock takes alarm. They are becoming a little more educated now that Americans are settling here and sometimes they are quite an important factor as food. Their flesh is sweet and tender. This is one large tract here known as "El Bobo" because of the large number of these doves found here. They are protected from February to August and as they raise several broods in a season, they stand a pretty good chance to hold their own. The orange growers are glad to have them around as they do a great deal of good in the groves by eating injurious weed seeds as well as insects.

**The Simpkin** (*Aramus gigantus*) one of our locally common birds is to be found here along most of the arroyas and rivers. In the early morning and late afternoon this peculiar wader may be seen standing at the water's edge fishing. Upon approach it will try to get out of sight by running into the jungle, but if the intruder comes too close, it will rise in heavy flight uttering loud discordant croaks. Even late into the night the Simpkin may be heard and from my observations, there seems to be much individuality in their voices. The flesh, although a little strong, is not unpalatable and locally it is known as "Crane," among the Americans, and "Gnaa," among the natives.

**Ruddy Quail Dove** (*Geotrygon montana*.) This is quite an interesting bird. My first impressions were that it was rare, but as I got around more into the jungles I found that it was fairly common. It loves the dark tangles and feeds almost entirely on the

ground. When flushed it reminds you of a Ruffed Grouse, except that the whirl of wings is absent, its flight being noiseless. It flies but a short distance, generally placing a tree between you and it, and lights either on the ground or a blown down tree trunk. Its flesh is tender and quite gamey. The natives call it "Perdy."

A. C. READ,  
McKinley, Isle of Pines,  
Cuba.

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### THE CROW AS A RAPTORE.

The reading of Mr. R. P. Sharpless' notes in the last OOLOGIST about a Crow carrying off a young Black Bird, reminds me of a similar incident that occurred last spring. Two young friends of mine were driving along a road that skirts the Brandywine meadows. They noticed a Crow flying very low and trying to rise with something in its claws. A large rabbit was following and springing from the ground trying to reach the Crow.

Their near approach frightened the Crow and it dropped the young rabbit, which escaped in the grass, apparently uninjured.

Two years ago I noticed rather an unusual departure of the Purple Grackle from its usual habits. A large male that was feeding in the meadow beside the stream, attempted to seize a good sized Green frog. After a strenuous tussle the frog escaped to the water and was safe.

THOMAS H. JACKSON,  
West Chester, Pa.

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### BIRD NOTES.

..As the season now is substantially over, we trust that our subscribers will divide the pleasure of their summer experience with our readers by furnishing us many interesting notes for the coming fall and winter. We



Wood Thrush Nest.

The above is a half tone of a very remarkable Wood Thrush nest photoed at West Chester, Pennsylvania, by Thomas H. Jackson, in the Spring of 1909. The nest was decorated, as is seen, by strippings of rags and paper, making it not only a very conspicuous object, but a very beautiful specimen.

have no doubt but that many, many very interesting things have been learned, and valuable observations taken this season, and it would be a pleasure to publish them if forwarded to us.

#### NOTES FROM WEST CHESTER, PA.

Notwithstanding the continued abundance of the English Sparrow here, it is interesting to note that our native birds are holding their own, and in a few cases are on the increase.

We have eight or ten fine colonies of Martins that are welcomed each spring, their landlords generally having their quarters cleaned out of Sparrow nests, and giving them an equal change with the sparrows. Often they settle down to housekeeping side by side in apparent harmony, though at first they have some hard fought battles in which the Martins generally come off victorious.

Quite a number of Carolina Wrens remain with us during the winter and occasionally a pair of Tufted Tits. The Wrens are particularly welcome as they sing almost constantly during the late winter and early spring.

Cardinals are more numerous in the surrounding country than they were twenty years ago.

Red-eyed, Warbling and Yellow-throated Vireos and Baltimore Orioles are regular breeders in the Public Park of our town.

This season a pair of Blue Jays also nested in the Park and raised a brood of young.

The Wood Thrush has become a regular summer resident in town within the last few years, and probably a dozen pairs of them nest each year scattered through different sections, frequently nesting in the most public places. One nest I knew of over-hung one of the most traveled streets and another was so close to the house that

you could reach it from the porch roof. The Wood Thrush seems to leave all its wildness in the country and becomes our tamest bird—too tame in fact to avoid its only enemy here—the house cat.

The Robin is our most abundant bird, hundreds of pairs of them nesting in almost any conceivable place about town, and with the early dawn they raise such a racket that they drown the songs of all the other birds until they become almost a nuisance.

In the Raptores, our town is well represented by numerous pairs of Screech Owls scattered through every section, where old trees afford a convenient home, and I have a very strong suspicion that a large part of their food comes from the hordes of sparrows that infest the ivy covered walls and the favorite rendezvous of these little pests.

A pair of these owls annually bring out a brood of young in the Park, nesting in hollow limbs or in the boxes put up for gray squirrels.

THOMAS H. JACKSON,  
West Chester, Pa.

#### THE REDSTART.

I must say I think THE OOLOGIST has improved. I looked in an American Redstart's nest this Spring and saw five nice fresh eggs; the first set I ever saw and have been wandering the field for twenty years.

A. E. KIBBE,  
Mayville, N. Y.

We get many communications beginning as the above does. The Redstart is one of the commonest, if not the commonest of all the breeding warblers in the vicinity of Lacon. In the season, it is no uncommon thing for a person to see from ten to two dozen nests in the course of one day in the woods.—Ed.

### The Cuban Meadowlark.

I enclose a photo of a nest of a Cuban Meadow Lark. This photo was taken by me in the "Mayari" Pine woods on May 23, 1909. These pine woods are some eighteen hundred feet above sea level. They grow (the pines) on an extensive mining property (Iron ore) belonging to the Spanish American Iron Company of New York. The earth is naturally very red and nearly all the birds that live largely on the ground, are stained red or rusty, making them appear much darker than they are in other localities.

CHARLES T. RAMSDEN,  
Guantanamo, Cuba.

The photo sent is not clear enough from which to make a good half tone, which we would very gladly do for the benefit of our readers. In general appearance it is a typical nest of the Meadow Lark, but unusual of course as to location, as is shown by the above note.

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### Occurrence of Lincoln's Sparrow.

The morning of May 14th was rainy, but birds were singing everywhere, so I took a short tramp and luckily took my gun along.

At a place along the river where thorn trees, alders and small brush was plentiful, I noticed among others, a bird that I at first took to be a song sparrow. It flew from some brush to a little tree and a second glance showed it to be rather small for a Song Sparrow. Looking closely I noticed markings on the breast but failed to see the usual dark blotch of the Song Sparrow's breast. The bird was shy and kept close to the trunk. I could not get an unobstructed view, but soon became convinced that it was not a Song Sparrow.

A shot secured the specimen, which proved to be a male Lincoln's Sparrow, the first I have any record of here.

R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

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### Notes on the Least Tern.

I paid a visit July 24th to the colony of Least Terns nesting on the beach between Newport and Huntington beaches, Orange County, Cal. The place is an ideal one for these birds; there being a long strip of

sandy beach broken up by sand dunes, with the Pacific on one side and a salt marsh on the other.

The colony has increased materially since last May, there now being about six hundred pairs of birds inhabiting the above mentioned district. About one hundred and fifty nests were examined, most of them containing young of all sizes, or else piped eggs. The nest is simply a depression in the sand, usually at the foot of a sand dune, lined with bits of broken shell, and nearly always near a bit of drift-wood or a stone. High tides had washed out many nests and many of the eggs were observed along the high-water mark. The young crawl about on the beach as soon as they are dry, and how the parent birds find and identify them I do not know. I saw one bird hovering four young of different sizes and a young bird trying to crawl under a Tern sitting on eggs, so I suppose that the old birds feed any fledgling indiscriminately.

D. I. SHEPARDSON,  
Los Angeles, Calif.

This note is interesting to us from the fact that we have a very interesting series of eggs of Least Tern, taken in this colony, which came to us with the collection of W. Lee hambers of Santa Monica, California; and also for the reason that when in all-fornia in May, 1907, we made two visits to this colony of birds, one in the middle of May and one the last day of May, only to find each time that the birds had not commenced nesting, though they were there in large numbers.—Ed.

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### Bully for the Starling!

In the OOLOGIST for August, 1907, I spoke quite strongly in favor of the English starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and I wish to add a few notes taken since that date.

As I previously stated, the Starlings are most certainly diminishing the sparrow population in this locality. The chart shown herewith is an accurate record of the number of song bird nests and the number of sparrow nests which have been built on the grounds surrounding my home since the arrival of the Starling, and it may be plainly seen that the song birds are greatly on the increase.

Year	No. of song bird nests	No. Spar- row nests
1905	20	31
1906	50	26
1907	73	28
1908	120	18
1909 to date	121	6

pairs nesting. Did not dig out any, but they appeared to have large young.

R. B. SIMPSON,  
Warren, Pa.

#### A FINE LOT.

"It may be interesting to your readers to know that I have succeeded in personally collecting a set each of Clarke's Nutcracker, N 3; American Crossbill (Northwest form) N-4; Ruby-crowned Kinglet n-9; and examined nest of four young of Western Evening Grosbeak, during the collecting season.

I shall write in regard to some of these for THE OOLOGIST, if time permits."

J. W. PRESTON,  
Spokane, Wash.

The foregoing is certainly a wonderful record for one season, and we trust our friend Preston will write us full accounts of each of the above rare nests. Certainly our readers as well as ourself will appreciate it.—Ed.

#### ABNORMAL SETS.

The discussion of abnormal sets and eggs in the last two numbers of THE OOLOGIST reminds me of my own experience along that line in the season just past.

I took a set of three Pied-billed Grebe eggs measuring respectively, 1.16 x .87; 1.07 x .84, 1.02 x .76. The average of normal eggs is 1.70 x 1.18.

An egg of the Tri-colored Red-wing .42 x .30, and one of the Cliff Swallow, .40 x .25 were also noted.

Observed the following unusually large sets:

Mourning Dove, 1-4; Burrowing Owl, 1-10; Gairdner's Woodpecker, 1-7; Cliff Swallow, 1-7.

D. I. SHEPARDSON,  
Los Angeles, Cal.

#### NOTICE.

Some time since we arranged a small exchange of eggs with Alfred C. Snyder of Stony Plains, Calif. His eggs came all right and were entirely satisfactory. I sent mine any they are now returned by the Postal authorities with a notice of no such person there. Can any of our readers tell us where Mr. Snyder is. We are holding the returned box of eggs for him.

R. M. BARNES.

Many people seem to believe that the Starlings will also drive out the useful birds in time. I hardly think so, for the reason that they do not show signs of aggressiveness unless the trouble is started by the other bird. This was true in the case of the sparrows and I believe that the two would have lived together peacefully had not the smaller birds been so irritable. One man told me that he thought the increase of destructive larvae on our shade trees was due to the decrease of the sparrows. After carefully looking into this question, it was found that the larvae which this person meant, were of an extremely hairy species which I hardly think the sparrows would eat anyway.

In conclusion it seems that there are no stains as yet on the Starlings' character that is, of course in this locality. I wish that some of the readers of the OOLOGIST would enlighten us on this subject, as they may be detrimental to bird life in other localities.

P. G. HOWES,  
Stamford, Conn.

#### FROM ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA.

July 4th, 5th and 6th I spent with my parents at Erie, Pennsylvania, and although I only spent a little time afield, I saw several things of interest in the bird line.

On the "Peninsula" along the outside beach I found a flock of thirty Bonapart Gulls and two large dark Ducks. Also a lot of spotted Sandpipers and a few flocks of Kildeer. I saw also a pair of Piping Plover, which may have been breeding in the vicinity as this bird formerly bred there.

Just west of the city I found several Chats in a brushy ravine. This was of interest to me, as the Chat is unknown at Warren, sixty miles south of Erie, but in a higher and mountainous region. The Chat must reach the lake shore in Ohio and then work east along the lake.

Also visited a colony of Bank Swallows and found fully two hundred

### For Sale at Reduced Prices:

Moose, Elk, Caribou and Deer horns and scalps; also extra scalps and sets of choice Antlers. Skins for rug making, polished Buffalo horns, Elk tusks. All guaranteed goods; duty free; returnable if not satisfactory to purchaser.

References: Leading American Sporting Journals.

Also a few fine mounted Moose, Elk and Deer heads. I can supply any wish in my line.

Edwin Dixon, Dealer in Game heads,  
Main Street,  
Unionville, Ontario.

### A FEW STANDING REMARKS.

The business office of this Magazine is at Lacon, Illinois, where all communications should be addressed.

Articles and photos on bird life are desired by us and will be properly accredited.

All copy must be plainly written on one side only, and must reach us before the 10th of each month.

THE OOLOGIST will not advertise for sale, either the skins, nests or eggs of North American Birds.

We will do all we can to further scientific collecting and the exchange among collectors of skins, nests and eggs.

### Fraud.

It will be a pleasure to us to expose any improper, unscientific or fraudulent practices, on the part of any one, relating to the sale or exchange of specimens; or failure of anyone to square accounts in such matters. These things should be conducted along honorable lines

R. M. BARNES.

Prices for Back Numbers of the YOUNG OOLOGIST AND THE OOLOGIST will, during 1908, remain as below:

After which the prices of many numbers will be advanced and possibly not obtainable at any price. Should you desire back numbers to complete your file, NOW is the time to purchase. You can never obtain them for less money and possibly not at any price, as our stock ranges from only 1 to 25 copies of an issue.

### Prices for 1909 Are as Follows:

Nos. 1, 14, 18, 31, 34-35, 42, 53, 86, 89, 111, 130, 132, 137, 139, 140, 153, 158, are 50 cents each;

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VOL. XXVI. No. 10. ALBION, N. Y., OCT. 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 267

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The Ornithologist and Oologist Semi-Annual, Published in 1889-90-91 by Wm. H. Foote of Pittsfield, Mass., and by C. C. Maxfield of Danbury, Conn., in 1891. All numbers published except Nos. Vol. 1, No. 2, and Vol. 2, No. 2.

The Wilson Quarterly, No. 2, Vol. 4, July, 1892.

The Wilson Journal, Vol 1, Jany., 1893 and Vol. 2, June, 1893.

Notes on Rhode Island Ornithology, Published by Reginald Heber Howe, Jr., 1890.

The Oologist, of Utica, N. Y., Vols. 1-5 inclusive, for 1875 to 1881.

Journal of the Maine Ornithological Club. A complete file.

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Birds of California, In relation to the fruit industry—Beal, Part II.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

VOL. XXVI. No. 10. ALBION, N. Y. OCTOBER 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 267

Published Monthly, by R. M. BARNES, Lacon, Illinois.

## The Solitary Sandpiper.

(*Nelodromas solitarius*.)

This bird, A. O. U. No. 256, is noted among ornithologists for the long period of time during which it succeeded in keeping its secrets of identification hidden from the prying eyes of natural history students.

It was not until the Spring of 1903 in Northern Alberta, Canada, that Evan Thompson discovered this species breeding by finding it nesting in an old abandoned Robin's nest—certainly a very peculiar place for Sandpipers to be laying eggs—that its nesting place and habits became known. Since that time numerous sets of eggs accompanied by the nests have found their way from this self same territory into private collections throughout the United States and Europe. A complete description of the first nests of this species and the contents thereof, together with a plate showing two nests and two sets of eggs and the skin of one parent appeared in THE OÖLOGIST for October, 1904. Substantially all the known nests and eggs of this species have come from Northwest Canada.

In years by, the writer well recollects that for several seasons a pair of these birds nested near the mouth of a small, very crooked, deep, sluggish creek emptying into the Illinois river some three miles below Lacon, in the midst of exceedingly heavy timber: the creek near its mouth being surrounded for some distance with very thick brush and growth of small trees.

Knowing at that time that the eggs of this species were unknown and desirous of being the discoverer thereof if possible, hours upon hours in different seasons were spent in this miasmatic swamp by the writer in a fruitless endeavor to track the birds to their nest. Almost every inch of ground was gone over and over, but all to no result. Upon reading the description of the nesting of this species in October, 1904, my mind harkened back to the days in the '90's that I spent near the mouth of Woodyard Creek trying to fathom the mystery of this mysterious bird. And least important at the time I was there, yet most important at the time I was reading the first published description of the finding of this species' nest, I well remember several abandoned nests, probably Wood Thrush's nests, possibly some of them Robin's nests, sticking in the trees and in the small brush-like growth ranging from six feet to twenty feet above the ground, which I saw at the times I was there. I paid absolutely no attention to them whatever, all the while carefully searching the ground beneath these old nests for the home of the Solitary Sandpiper. Had I been in possession of the information contained in the October number, 1904 of THE OÖLOGIST at these times, I have no doubt in my own mind now but that the nesting of the Solitary Sandpiper would have been reported from Marshall County, Illinois, instead of from Northwest Canada.

This pair of birds nested in this vi-



Solitary Sandpiper's Nest



cinity consecutively for several years, and always frequented this particular grove and seemed to feed along the bank of the river at the mouth of the creek, which at that time was free of timber; but they were often and often seen back up the creek in the larger growth and occasionally amongst the thick, heavy small growth surrounding the mouth of the creek. I believe it would be perfectly safe to put the Solitary Sandpiper down as a Marshall County breeder.—Ex.

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#### MAX KUSCHEL.

The well-known Oologist, Max Kuschel of Guhran, Germany, is now numbered among the dead. He was for long years a subscriber to THE OOLOGIST and a man known throughout Europe for his interest in and knowledge of Oology. He left a collection comprising about six thousand specimens of birds' eggs, one half of which have already been sold to the Dresden Museum. In his death, the Oologists of Germany lost a foremost and valued member.

---

#### Ruby Throated Humming Bird.

Two Broods from One Nest.

At Cannon, Connecticut on June 5, 1908, I found in the garden on the lower drooping branch of an apple tree about five feet from the ground, a nest of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird containing two eggs which were hatched on June 8th. I watched them at intervals daily until June 30th when the youngsters were about ready to sever their connection with the nest.

I was then called away for a week, and upon my return on July 6th, I visited the nest, intending to collect it, and was surprised to see the female flying away from it. Upon investigation I found it contained one egg. The following day, the second egg; and when I left on the 13th, the female was observed sitting on the nest.

I cite this merely as evidence of the fact that they do nest later than the time quoted by Mr. Burrows; also (at least in this instance) rearing two broods, when undisturbed; though perhaps this is unusual.

Willard L. Metcalf.

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#### Wilson's Thrush in Ohio.

A. C. Read reports a record of the nesting of Wilson's Thrush May 30, 1907 at Roseford, a suburb of Toledo. The nest was composed of leaves, bark and stems, lined with grass; placed in a clump of ferns and contained one egg. The female was shot for identification.

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#### The Blackburnian Warbler.

(*Deudroica blackburniae*)

During the latter part of the warbler migration in Spring, this beautiful warbler occurs here, (Western Pa.) as a rather common migrant.

Close observation for the past fifteen years shows that its arrival depends entirely on the weather. If we have an early Spring the Blackburnian is here early with the first of the warblers, but if the season is backward, they are late in arriving.

By looking up my dates of arrival, I find that my earliest is May 2d, (1891) and latest, May 16th, (1907).

Often during the height of the warbler migrations in May, we have severe storms with sometimes snow. At such times warblers are often plentiful about shade and apple trees in town

where the foliage is farther advanced and the buildings offer some protection from the storm. The Blackburnian is one of the warblers frequently seen at such times, and as they keep low down, they often attract the attention and arouse the curiosity of persons who at other times would never notice them.

After the migrations are over with, a few pairs are found in the mountains as summer residents. They are not common, but the song of the male can be heard almost any time in the right sort of woods.

They seem to prefer heavy woodland in this region where there is a large amount of hemlock. The birds in summer keep high up in the trees and it is a hard matter to see one when the song comes floating down. Owing to the fact that I have had poor success finding nests, I think this warbler must usually nest high up like the Black throated Green Warbler, which is a rather common summer resident in the same forests.

So far, only two nests have come under my observation. The first was found in early July, 1901. It was thirty feet up and five feet from the trunk on a horizontal limb. It held four large young.

The second I found June 23d, 1907, in a heavily wooded hollow in the mountains in a large tract of mostly virgin forest. This nest was twenty feet up and five feet from the trunk on the horizontal limb of a small hemlock. When I saw this nest the owner was not about. Climbing up I found four eggs. It had much the appearance of a magnolia's, but still didn't look right, so I returned several days later and found a female Blackburnian at home.

Both nests were built of five hemlock twigs and were flatter than the magnolia's. The set of four was heav-

ily blotched and spotted usually well marked as compared with several sets I have seen in collections.

In the fall I have seen it here as late as October 8th.

R. B. Simpson.

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#### Bird Notes.

While our subscribers and contributors have been very kind in the past in the furnishing of bird notes, we feel it our duty to call from them for a further and future supply. Send us in readable short notes based upon your observation. We are very sure they will be appreciated by our readers.

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#### Nesting of the Blackburnian Warbler.

The Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania still preserve a fauna decidedly Canadian. Here are found the Olive-sided Flycatcher, White-throated Sparrow, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Winter Wren, Hermit and Olive-backed Thrushes. But the great wealth of bird-life is brought out most strongly in the number of breeding warblers. Of these the most interesting are the Magnolia, the Chestnut-sided, the Pine, the Black, the Green, the Blue, the Canadian, the Nashville, and the Blackburnian.

The last named species is not rare. In all spots where a growth of virgin hemlock is to be found this bird occurs. But finding the bird and finding the nest are two widely separated stages in the tyro's studies of the Blackburnian Warbler.

Seven o'clock on the morning of June 17th, 1909, found me at the edge of what is locally known as the "Primal Forest" in Pike County. In front of me the sun was well up over the barren hills which had been left by the lumberman. These were covered

with a dense second-growth, with large trees scattered here and there over the landscape. Behind me the Wallenpaupack swirled, and rushed and roared over the rocks and between banks densely fringed with rhododendron, and disappeared into the "Primeval Forest," which towered on my right.

At this point the timber was mainly hemlock, with a few birches and maples. But it was not in the solid bank of green that I expected to find any nests, but in the solitary hemlocks which were scattered along the edge of the forest, as they had been bold enough to venture forth from their comrades, but which, in truth, were only the few survivors of the fateful axe.

Here at the edge of the wood was a brood of Winter Wrens, the second one seen that day. But soon I saw a Scarlet Tanager fly to a nest about forty feet up in a hemlock. It was a pretty tough climb, but up I went. The nest was a handsome affair for a Tanager to build, and contained four large young. This disgusted me a little, and I sat dangling my feet into space, watching the animated life below and beside me.

It was an excellent post from which to observe the birds, and the birds themselves were worth watching. Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Black, Blue and Green Warblers, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Canadian, Black and White, and Blackburnian Warblers. The top of a dead tree served an Olive-sided Flycatcher as his lookout.

The actions of a pair of Blackburnians led me to believe that they had a nest nearby, and after a fifteen minute watch, I thought I had the nest limited to a certain tree.

I descended and after more waiting, was sure I had at last located the nest in a thick clump of foliage about

thirty feet up in a tremendous hemlock. This clump was formed of the first branches, and there were only a few stubs between them and the ground. I hesitated, but finally started up. The bark was extremely slippery and my arms did not go halfway around the great trunk.

How I reached the first stub about twenty feet up I don't know, but I did it, and was soon just below the nest, which I could now dimly see through the thick foliage of the hemlock. I grabbed a limb and raised my head above the nest to see—four naked, little Blackburnians! Of course it did not affect the scientific value of a find that the eggs had hatched, but I did not think of that just then.

The nest was composed of hemlock twigs, with a few rootlets and grasses. It was lined with fine grasses and rootlets and a few hairs.

The foliage was so dense here that both the parents lay with outspread wings and tail on the deep green needles within three feet of me much after the manner of the Ovenbird. You could not beat the male for beauty!

David E. Harrower.

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#### From The Isle of Pines.

The Water Turkey or Snake-bird as it is commonly known to general observers and the *Anhinga anhinga* of the scientists is to be found sparingly along the rivers of the Isle of Pines, Cuba. It is a very seclusive and wary bird. One morning I had the good fortune to watch a female Anhinga fishing. The first knowledge of her presence that I had, was when looking down stream, I saw what I took to be a strick rise out of water and sink again. This was repeated several times, each time nearer, until she was almost directly underneath me.

The water in the Nuevas River being very clear, and the banks rather steep I had a good opportunity for close observation as she pursued a fish under water. She used her wings as well as her feet and when she captured her prey she rose to the surface of the water, thrust her head and neck out of water, jerked and twisted her neck and juggled the fish until it was head foremost in her bill and then swallowed it. This was repeated several times at a distance from her of not more than thirty feet, and once within about fifteen, and with a field glass it looked as though I could almost touch her.

Finally an incautious move on my part disclosed me to her and she sank from sight without making a ripple in the water. If one goes quietly through the jungle along the river, he will likely see one of these Anhignas perched on a low branch overhanging the water, either sunning itself or waiting for a fish to come within range. Upon disturbing it, from my observations, if it does not see you it will slip noiselessly into the water and escape by diving, but if it does see you it takes wing and quickly disappears around a bend in the river, as its flight is swift. From its long neck, bill and tail and long narrow wings, its flight, every time I see it, reminds me of an arrow.

I think that the males are either more common or less wary than the females as I have seen many more of the former than of the latter.

A. C. Read.

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From Idaho.

A noticeable feature of the Coeur d' Alene's Ornithology is the absence of all water birds from the lead producing districts. Water from the mountain streams is carried in some

instances for miles to be used in the separation of rock dust from the lead ore as it runs over the tables from the crusher. There is a certain per cent. of lead retained by the water as it leaves the flumes which invariably empty into some of the rivers, and the water is then known as "lead water." This water is poisonous to man, bird and beast and also to all animal insect life inhabiting water. The result is a milky, poisonous stream utterly devoid of life and therefore not inducive to wading birds. Vegetation even is affected by this lead water and cases are known of cows becoming sick from eating grass in the lead "bottoms."

Notwithstanding this lack of inducements to the water bird, there is one which fears neither poison or famine—the Spotted Sandpiper. Be the water ever so muddy with poisonous ingredients, he appears at home wading along the edge in a vain search for the absent bug. Little pools along the sides furnish enough food for his need, however, and the fact that these pools contain water filtered through several yards of gravel and therefore almost pure, probably accounts for his summer residence here.

Older inhabitants tell me that years ago before the streams were polluted with lead water, these Sandpipers, together with several species of Ducks, were abundant, but today one can travel miles without so much as seeing a water bird of any description. The Water Onsel is fairly common during nesting period (May 1 to June 1) along the tiny headwater streams, but seldom wander down into the valley. On the St. Regis River on the Montana side of the divide this little songster is abundant, building along its entire course. The Spotted Sandpiper is also plentiful. But over in that section, although only twelve miles from this

town, the waters are pure and free from the taint of man's greed.

Our land-birds nesting here, are very numerous, thus in a way, compensating us for the absence of water-birds. The Juncos, aside from the Robin, is the most abundant; the Montana being slightly in the lead. The Western Tree and Chipping sparrow and Varied Thrush crowd one another for third place in the list. In the stillness of a summer evening, there is nothing sweeter than the indescribably melodious whistle of the Varied Thrush. The mountain sides covered with second growth pines and tamaroes are the favorite places. The Western Evening Grosbeak, Rocky Mountain and Stellar(?) Jays are fairly common; the Western Yellow and Lutescent Warblers very much so.

Taking this section all-in-all, there is very few parts of the United States more adapted to a greater variety, owing to the great difference in altitudes. To the Oologist and observer, however, the down timber and tangled underbrush of the mountainsides, make them earn their knowledge in an impressive manner.

L. B. Howsley.

### Summer Birds of Toledo, O.

By A. C. Read.

The readers of THE OOLOGIST doubtless by this time have become familiar with the above name owing to the many interesting and valuable notes Mr. Read has contributed from the Isle of Pines, where he is at present located. Prior to going there, Mr. Read's home was at Toledo, Ohio, where he was Secretary of the Toledo Bird Club; and as such, made a preliminary list of the summer birds of Toledo, Ohio, during July, 1907, which was forwarded to THE OOLOGIST prior to our purchase of the same. It

came to us with other manuscript at the time, and is herewith presented that a record may be made of this list for future information, as it is the work of a careful observer and is valuable; and as years go by, will become more so.

1. (6) Pied-billed Grebe, 1, July 29.
2. (70) Cormon Tern, Common, July 29 and 31.
3. (77) Black Tern, July 29.
4. (190) American Bittern, July 29.
5. (191) Least Bittern, July 3 and 29.
6. (201) Green Heron, 6, July 3.
7. (219) Florida Gallinule (Also nest and seven eggs).
8. (221) American Coot, 1, July 29.
9. (228) American Woodcock, July 31.
10. (263) Spotted Sandpiper, common, July 12, 29 and 31.
11. (273) Killdeer, 5, July 3.
12. (289) Quail, July 31.
13. (316) Mourning Dove, July 3 and 12.
14. (332) Sharp-shinned Hawk.
15. (333) Cooper's Hawk, July 31.
16. (352) Bald Eagle.
17. (360) Sparrow Hawk, July 3.
18. (387) Yellow-billed Cuckoo, July 12 and 29.
19. (388) Black-billed Cuckoo, July 12 and 29.
20. (390) Kingfisher, July 3, 12 and 31.
21. (406) Red-headed Woodpecker, July 29.
22. (412) Flicker, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
23. (420) Nighthawk.
24. (423) Chimney Swift, July 31.
25. (428) Ruby-throated Hummer, common.
26. (444) Kingbird, common.
27. (452) Crested Flycatcher.
28. (456) Phoebe, common.
29. (461) Wood Pewee, July 12, 29 and 31.
30. (467) Least Flycatcher, July 3.
31. (477) Blue Jay, common.
32. (488) American Crow, July 31.
33. (494) Bobolink, July 3, 12 and 29.

34. (495) Cowbird, July 12 and 29.
35. (498) Red-winged Blackbird, July 29.
36. (501) Meadowlark, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
37. (506) Orchard Oriole.
38. (507) Baltimore Oriole, July 3 and 29.
39. (511b) Bronzed Grackle, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
40. (529) American Goldfinch, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
41. (540) Vesper Sparrow, July 12 and 31.
42. (560) Chipping Sparrow, July 3, 12 and 31.
43. (563) Field Sparrow, July 29 and 31.
44. (581) Song Sparrow, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
45. (584) Swamp Sparrow, July 29.
46. (587) Chewink, July 31.
47. (593) Cardinal, July 12 and 31.
48. (595) Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
49. (598) Indigo Bunting, July 12, 29 and 31.
50. (604) Dickcissel, 1, July 12.
51. (608) Scarlet Tanager, July 29.
52. (611) Purple Martin, July 31.
53. (613) Barn Swallow, July 3, 12 and 31.
54. (614) Tree Swallow, July 29.
55. (616) Bank Swallow, July 29.
56. (619) Cedar Waxwing, July 12.
57. (624) Red-eyed Vireo, common.
58. (627) Warbling Vireo.
59. (652) Yellow Warbler, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
60. (681) Northern Yellow-throat, July 29.
61. (687) American Redstart.
62. (704) Catbird, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
63. (705) Brown Thrasher, July 3, 12 and 29.
64. (721) House Wren, July 12 and 31.
65. (725) Long-billed Marsh Wren, July 29.
66. (751) Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

67. (755) Wood Thrush.
68. (756) Wilson's Thrush.
69. (761) Robin, July 3, 12, 29 and 31.
70. (766) Bluebird, July 12.

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#### The Rock Wren.

On May 31, 1909 while out collecting in Kansas, I discovered a set of ten Rock Wren, A.O.U. 715; this being very unusual, as the full clutch is generally six or seven. The eggs were very uniform in size, shape and markings, being undoubtedly all laid by the same bird. They were finely marked, over the entire egg, the spots being more numerous at the large end.

The nest was situated in a bank in a hole about eight feet up nest of grass, roots and grass; lined with horse and cow hair. Only one of the parent birds was seen. She left the nest at my approach. She didn't seem to be very much annoyed, but hopped around watching the proceedings as if it were an every day occurrence. Five of the eggs were in different stages of incubation; the rest were fresh.

June 13, 1909 I took a set of eight. These are larger than the normal Rock Wren egg, and nearly round. Also took a set of six that are all pure white except one, which if examined closely, shows a very few faint specks on the large end.

The Rock Wren rears two broods a season in this locality; for the first clutch they complete the nest before commencing to lay, but commence laying in the second nest before it is fully lined, adding to it, while finishing the set.

Guy Love.

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#### Notes on Snowy Plover.

April 25, 1909, I visited the nesting place of the Snowy Plover and Least Tern, near San Diego, Cal., a narrow

sand spit about one mile long consisting of sand dunes and gravel mounds with the Ocean and False Bay marsh on either side.

Collected only one set, 1-3, fresh. Nest on little mound of sand, depression one inch; diameter three inches, lined with bits of shell and dried seaweed. A little too early.

May 2, 1909, collected a small series of Snowy Plover eggs as follows: 2-3; nest a small depression in sand lined with bits of shell; fresh eggs.

3-3, nest on gravel pile, lined with shell and dried fish bones; fresh eggs.

4-3, nest on mound of sand, lined with bits of shell; eggs fresh.

5-3; nest in sand about fifty feet above high water mark; lined with shell and bones.

6-3; nest amongst gravel and driftwood; lined with bits of shell and fish bones.

7-3; nest depression in sand; lined with bits of shell and seaweed.

When nearing a nest, the parent birds fly around your head uttering sharp cries of alarm, but when the nest is discovered, the birds use different tactics, generally approaching to within twenty-five or thirty feet of the nest, carrying a small piece of shell or seaweed in their beak; but at your least movement, running away; perhaps trying to lead you a merry chase across the sand in a vain effort to catch them. And on turning back, the chances are you won't again find the nest, as the eggs closely resemble the stones and seaweed in which the nest is made. It is very interesting to watch a flock of these birds feeding on sand crabs on the beaches. As each wave recedes, they follow closely in its wake picking up crabs; and as another wave breaks and sweeps up, they run back, their little feet fairly humming; yet always keeping together in a perfect squad, perhaps thirty birds

not taking up a larger area than five feet square.

In flying they form a mass dipping and turning, each bird keeping in perfect rhythm with its neighbor, as well drilled as the best regiment.

Charles S. Moore.

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## PENNSYLVANIA.

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### Nesting Dates for 1909.

334 AMERICAN GOSHAWK—April 2d, three eggs; nest sixty feet up in white pine. April 20th, female began sitting on second set, which was afterwards destroyed by a crow or squirrel. May 2d, female began sitting on third set in a nest seventy feet up in an oak. Young (two) taken July 2d and sent to T. H. Jackson at West Chester. At present, they are in the New York Zoo. All three nests were large, old nests fixed over.

333 COOPER'S HAWK—May 16th, five eggs.

332 SHARP SHINNED HAWK—May 30th, five eggs.

339. RED SHOULDERED HAWK—Found first nests containing three and four eggs each, on April 13th and found a female sitting on two fresh eggs as late as May 15th. Saw young out of the nest by June 15th.

373 SCREECH OWL—April 2d, five eggs.

368 BARRED OWL—April 13th.

375 GREAT HORNED OWL—May 2d, large young; nearly ready to leave nest.

388 BLACK BILLED CUCKOO—June 13th, four eggs.

405a NORTHERN PILEATED WOODPECKER—May 16th; four eggs. Forty-three feet up in large oak stub.

409 YELLOW BELLIED WOODPECKER—May 1st, Female sitting but owing to size and condition of stub, it was impossible to see contents of nest.

459 OLIVE SIDED FLYCATCHER—June 15th; three eggs. Forty feet up in a hemlock and five feet from the trunk on a horizontal limb.

461 WOOD PEWEE—June 21st; three eggs.

471 BLUE JAY—June 1st, five eggs.

507 BALTIMORE ORIOLE—In two nests, close by; the birds began sitting May 25th and May 28th.

598 INDIGO FINCH—June 13th seemed to be the date on which most finches had fresh sets. In a little walk that day I saw seven nests; five of three eggs and two of four eggs.

581 SONG SPARROW—Saw fresh eggs in sets of four and five from April 15th to June 15th.

619 CEDAR BIRD—June 27th seemed to be the height of the nesting season. Saw sets of four and five each.

623c SOLITARY VIREO—June 1st; four eggs.

636 BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER—June 8th; four eggs.

652 YELLOW WARBLER—New nests finished by May 25th.

657 MAGNOLIA WARBLER—Saw six nests from May 25th to June 11th each containing four eggs.

659 CHESTNUT SIDED WARBLER—Saw sets of four on June 8th, 15th and 22d.

679 MOURNING WARBLER—June 8th; five eggs.

681 YELLOW THROAT—June 25th; four eggs.

684 HOODED WARBLER—June 6th; five eggs.

Out of a number of nests that I have found of this warbler this is the first to contain five; four is the full set here.

686 CANADIAN WARBLER—June 11th, five eggs. June 25th saw several broods just out of the nest.

722 WINTER WREN—June 15th; found nest of large young.

758a OLIVE BACKED THRUSH—June 15th; four eggs.

R. B. Simpson.

### The Condor.

The September-October 1909 number of The Condor comes to hand and "is gooder than ever" containing among other things the following articles:

"Some Owls along the Gila River in Arizona" by M. French Gillman; "The Nesting of the Heerman Gull," by Pingrey I. Osborn; "Fall Notes from Eastern Kansas," by Alex. Wetmore; "Cliff Climbing for Prairie Falcons," by George Richards; "Nesting Notes on the Lucy Warbler," by M. French Gillman; "Notes on some Birds of Kern County," by Harry H. Sheldon; two pages of notes from Field and Study; the Editor's page; three book reviews; and a list of the members of the Cooper Ornithological Club, showing a membership of two hundred forty.

The Condor is the acknowledged authority on the birds West of the Rocky Mountains, and is a high class publication.

However the most interesting feature of this number of The Condor is the announcement by the business manager that the Condor has adopted the method so long in vogue with THE OOLOGIST of offering "free to each and any member of the Club, one notice of about thirty-five words in each issue of The Condor," referring to exchange notices such as appear in this magazine. That this will give an added impetus to the exchange of specimens, among collectors of natural history specimens particularly bird skins, nests and eggs, we have no doubt.

The pendulum has commenced to swing the other way. The really careful and accurate modern collector of birds' eggs is no longer looked down upon. Indeed we have always maintained that he had as legitimate a place among scientific investigators of



the world as any other class of natural history students, and without doubt has done more towards shaping the ultimate course of ornithological investigation among the men who have made a name in that science than any other single element we know of. Nearly all of them started out in early life as collectors of birds eggs, and in that pursuit learned the necessity of careful painstaking accurate observation and record keeping, which has followed them throughout life, and has stored the pages of American Ornithological literature with the vast quantity of valuable information now accessible therein.

### THE ILLINOIS WAY!

#### HUNTERS MAY MAKE \$2.50 DAY.

#### State Game Warden Wants Wild Fowl Captured Alive to Restock Farm.

L. C. Heim, of Marine, Madison county game warden, has given notice that he will hire for the state any hunters who will capture alive and uninjured wild ducks to be put on the state game farm at Auburn. Mr. Heim states that he was authorized by the state game commissioner, J. A. Wheeler, to make the offer of good wages to hunters who would enter the state's employ. The game commissioner said that the entire stock of wild ducks at the game farm had been drowned. The ducks, Mr. Wheeler said, had been deprived of water for swimming so long that they had degenerated, and when freshets came recently and swelled the creeks and ponds the ducks, having lost their ability to swim, were drowned. They could not produce the natural oil that waterproofs a duck's feathers. It has been found necessary to replenish the stock for breeding purposes. Mr. Heim

said that any hunter could earn \$2.50 a day. The ducks must be trapped or snared without wounding them.

The foregoing is clipped from an Illinois paper and shows the manner in which the Illinois tax payer is flim-flammed out of his money. Of course during a season of drouth the tax payer should believe that the duck would in a few weeks lose its ability to swim. Also that its system would cease to produce the natural oil for water-proofing its feathers. If we are not in error, all natural history research shows that birds of all families, including the duck tribe, lose these natural instincts and attainments when deprived of their ordinary surroundings for a few weeks. However if the Illinois tax payer is willing to swallow the foregoing, we presume that we can stand it; but we take this kind of "dope" as a citizen of Illinois and as one whose money with other inhabitants of the state is being squandered in the above manner as the small boy took the straddle bug—nct as a matter of choice, but as a matter of have to. And the ducks were drowned?

Though Docther Peary claim the credit for that record polar trip, the fellow who deserves it and the man who took the skip is Mистер Doolee.

Zeppelin begins at the lowest line in the alphabet, but the man himself is very near the top letter class in his trade.

That word "dactylographs" should be submitted to the simplified spelling board before it is tried on typewriter girls.

In suitably honoring the memory of Victor Hugo present day Parisians draw honor upon themselves.

Much easier to swallow Dr. Cook's story than that yarn about 336 pounds of Judge Taft getting really lost in the woods.

If the Prince of Wales wants to kill his game on Roosevelt's African trail he must give the baby lions time to grow up.

#### The Jealousy of Savants.

The validity of Dr. Cook's inspiration right at the pole that his story might be declared a fake has been challenged. It is said that that was the last thing he would be thinking about then. "I felt sure it would be said that I bribed my two brave Eskimos and forged my diary containing observations," he wrote to the Herald. The explorer could well imagine that his incomplete records and diary might be found with his bones long years after with no one to verify the facts. As an educated man he well knew that some of the most marvelous narratives left by explorers were scouted for years and even for centuries.

Marco Polo's statements of his journeys overland to the far east waited over 600 years for complete verification. Even today he is caricatured as a Munchausen before the populace of his native city in Italy. James Bruce, explorer of Abyssinia and searcher for the sources of the Nile, was called a liar for more than a hundred years because there were errors in his calculations, due to lack of scientific methods. The accounts brought back by Abbe Huc from Tibet, "the roof of the world," in the middle of the last century were only verified by white men a few years ago, when a British army penetrated the land of mystery. Ever the sober and especially the scientific world has been slow to accept the tales of lone travelers until backed

by indisputable proofs. Columbus' own age neglected him and considered his exploits a fake, although the roundness of the earth was not then an unknown theory. Fremont, "the Pathfinder," was court martialed, and when Stanley reported the finding of Livingstone he was bluntly told to produce Livingstone in proof.

Among the items sidetracked by the dual discovery of the pole are the tariff, benzoate of soda, conservation of forests and that trifling incident between Fowler and Uncle Joe.

Peaceful relations between certain neighboring towns and cities in the land are likely to be strained as soon as the next census is taken.

Dr. Cook's narrative lacks one indispensable bit of internal evidence. It says not a word about Jack Frost.

Although straight from the arctic, Dr. Cook's advent produced a hot wave.

It looks like a dispute which must be referred to the north pole.

Sticklers are disputing as to the proper place to put the accent in automobile. A prefix rarely printed, but most always understood, which begins with a big, big D, is the syllable usually made emphatic.

The lid on the rooster's crow devised for Washington doubtless has strong backing from certain individuals who want to do all the crowing around that dunghill themselves.

When the Rev. Edward Everett Hale advised us to "look up" he wasn't thinking of aeroplane wings overhead, but of the kind so hard to sprout.

**For Sale at Reduced Prices:**

Moose, Elk, Caribou and Deer horns and scalps; also extra scalps and sets of choice Antlers. Skins for rug making, polished Buffalo horns, Elk tusks. All guaranteed goods; duty free; returnable if not satisfactory to purchaser.

References: Leading American Sporting Journals.

Also a few fine mounted Moose, Elk and Deer heads. I can supply any wish in my line.

Edwin Dixon, Dealer in Game heads,  
Main Street,  
Unionville, Ontario.

**A FEW STANDING REMARKS.**

The business office of this Magazine is at Lacon, Illinois, where all communications should be addressed.

Articles and photos on bird life are desired by us and will be properly accredited.

All copy must be plainly written on one side only, and must reach us before the 10th of each month.

THE OOLOGIST will not advertise for sale, either the skins, nests or eggs of North American Birds.

We will do all we can to further scientific collecting and the exchange among collectors of skins, nests and eggs.

**Fraud.**

It will be a pleasure to us to expose any improper, unscientific or fraudulent practices, on the part of any one, relating to the sale or exchange of specimens; or failure of anyone to square accounts in such matters. These things should be conducted along honorable lines

R. M. BARNES,

Prices for Back Numbers of the YOUNG OOLOGIST AND THE OOLOGIST will, during 1908, remain as below:

After which the prices of many numbers will be advanced and possibly not obtainable at any price. Should you desire back numbers to complete your file, NOW is the time to purchase. You can never obtain them for less money and possibly not at any price, as our stock ranges from only 1 to 25 copies of an issue.

**Prices for 1909 Are as Follows:**

Nos. 1, 14, 18, 31, 34-35, 42, 53, 86, 89, 111, 130, 132, 137, 139, 140, 153, 158, are 50 cents each:

Nos. 9, 66-67, 76, 77, 78, 79, 88, 90, 100, 113, 138, 146, are 25 cents each.

Nos. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 54, 55, 56, 75, 87, 123, 127, 128, 129, 144, 149, are 15 cents each.

Nos. 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 38, 39, 40, 45, 50, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 70, 74, 80, 93, 114, 115, 126, 133, 135, are 10 cents each.

All other numbers 5c. per copy.

For \$12 will send prepaid a copy of every issue ever published, No. 1 to 145. This offer includes your subscription through 1908.

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BIRDS--NESTS--EGGS  
TAXIDERMY

VOL. XXVI. No. 11. ALBION, N. Y., NOV. 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 268

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VOL. XXVI. No. 11. ALBION, N. Y. NOVEMBER 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 268

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*Published Monthly, by R. M. Barnes, Lacon, Illinois.*

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At the time we took over THE OÖLOGIST there were 734 paid subscribers on the subscription list, 135 of whom had paid in advance for a year or more subscription. Since that time 173 old subscribers have paid their subscription. The balance are in arrears. The subscription list has doubled. Of course the above figures do not include the new subscriptions.

The plain statement of fact is laid before our readers that they may understand the condition of the thing as it now is. A magazine cannot exist without sufficient support to pay for printing, type setting, paper, postage, plates, and the like.

Now, Mr. Subscriber, this strictly means you; and it is up to you to arrange at once a payment of the amount due from you to "THE OÖLOGIST." The end of the year is a good time to square up with the whole world, and we especially request that you give this notice attention, and remit the amount due for your back subscription and also send in your renewal for 1910. In order to make sure of this you should attend to it while it is still on your mind, as the result of reading this notice.

R. M. BARNES, Publisher.



12. View in Great Blue Heronry, 7 miles south of Lacon, Ill.

—Photo by W. E. Loucks

### They Are Gone.

Years ago, seven miles south of Lacon, Illinois, the Great Blue Heron bred in large numbers. The "Herony" as it was locally known, was situated at the head of a bayou or slough, a wide, shallow pond-like lake surrounded with flags, wild rice and bull rushes, called "Rice Pond" into the head of which emptied a small creek that wound through the West edge of the Herony. The whole territory was a perfect marsh and lay about a mile east of the Illinois river, and a half mile West of the East line of the high water overflow of the river bottoms proper.

Here was situated a small grove containing fifteen or twenty very large cotton wood and sycamore trees. The size of these trees was immense. These birds nested along with the White Egret and the Florida Cormorant in considerable numbers at this place, building their nests of dry, dead and very light sticks; though some of the sticks were of considerable size. The nests were placed at the extremities of the branches of the tallest trees both at the ends of the verticle limbs and of the horizontal limbs. This Herony had been in existence ever since the first settlement of the country. The White Egret was the first to go, thirty years ago seeing the last of the nesting birds of this species at that point.

The Florida Cormorant followed next in order. In 1890 was the last time these birds nested among their old neighbors, the Blue Heron.

The main line of the great Santa Fe Railway was built from Kansas City to Chicago in 1887 and passed almost through the Northerly edge of this Herony within less than a quarter of a mile of it. It was soon after this that the Cormorants left. The Great Blue Heron however, stayed by its old

home as long as the old home stayed by it, and their nests dotted these great tree tops in this vicinity until this year, (1909.)

In 1901 the Sanitary District of Chicago turned down the Illinois river, the sewage of Chicago, diluted with vast quantities of Lake Michigan water. This has raised the level of the river and permanently overflowed all the surrounding bottom lands, with the result that nearly all the large timber in the valley along the river is dead. These giant cotton woods and sycamores that had withstood the storms of years, succumbed to this new flood of water and gradually died out, their roots rotted off, and the winds did the rest. Upon their return home this Spring, the Great Blue Heron found no home to return home this Spring, the Great Blue Heron found no home to return to and has gone elsewhere.

My first visit to this Herony was in April, 1888, at which time there were forty-two nests of the Great Blue Heron here, eleven of which were in one giant cotton wood tree.

May 2, 1900, I again returned to this Herony and found forty-seven Heron's nests in the trees; one tree containing thirteen nests.

May 6, 1904, found me again in the Herony, which had by this time increased until it contained sixty-seven nests. At this latter time, the birds seemed wild, and there was evidence of the Herony having been raided by shoters, as dead birds were lying all round.

At each of these visits, I took several sets of eggs, and a beautiful sight it was too, to sit in the very topmost branches of a huge cottonwood tree and look down into from ten to a dozen nests scattered in every direction below me, on the outermost branches of the tree. The nests contained from



11. View in Great Blue Heronry, 7 miles south of Lacon, Ill., 19 nests in one tree.

—Photo by W. E. Loucks.

three to six eggs, several sets of six being found, and at the time of all these visits, the eggs were almost fresh; many of them perfectly so.

The same nest is used by this bird from year to year, and is gradually added to after the manner of the Fish Hawk. To get at these nests required some ingenuity aside from the nervy climbing which was necessary to reach the top of the tree running up fifty feet without a limb, and being four feet and over through at the base. In order to reach the eggs, I invented a scoop by attaching an oval wire to the end of a long bamboo fish pole, sewing my handkerchief into the wire, making a deep spoon, and with this I could reach out and scoop up the eggs, one at a time, and bring them in from the ends of the limbs on which the nests were situated in such positions as to be wholly out of reach, because of the danger of breaking limbs.

Within this Heronry at different times, Turkey Buzzards, Redtailed Hawks, Barred Owls and Hooded Mergansers have been found nesting. Yet one of the strange things was that though there were many elm trees scattered throughout the Heronry of equal size with the cotton wood and sycamore trees, yet not a single Blue Heron's nest was found in any of these elm trees; though the elm, owing to the toughness of the wood, and its bendability was by far the safer tree in which not only to place the nest, but also for the searcher for eggs to climb.

We present herewith two photos taken in this Heronry by W. E. Loucks, one of which gives a good idea of the character of the territory in which these birds nested; the other showing one of the individual trees containing the large number of 19 nests.

Where the Herons have gone since their home has been destroyed is a

mystery. They are seen continually passing up and down the river as of yore. Few people are aware of the fact that a Blue Heron may travel, and frequently does travel fifty miles a day each way to and from its feeding ground, so they may have located a considerable distance from their old habitat. Ed.

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P. M. Silloway, so well and favorably known to our readers, has recently shaken the dust of the home of the Long-billed Curlew—Mondana—from his feet, and returned to "The best of All"—Illinois. We hope with our readers that he did not leave that splendidly descriptive pen of his out West.

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Prof. L. Jones, the well-known bird authority of Oberlin College recently suffered the misfortune of losing a member of his family; a son. A fine splendid, robust lad, making the death the more unexpected. Our sympathy goes out to the sorrowing father and family.

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#### IN POLITICS.

Our old friend, Dr. Frank H. Lattin, so well known to the readers of this publication, has recently broken into politics, and was recently elected Coroner at Gaines, New York, having been nominated on both the Democrat and Republican tickets; his only opponent being a candidate on the Prohibition ticket.

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We are in the market for one pair each of the following live birds. Can you get any of them for us?

R. M. Barnes.

- 169 Lesser Snow Goose.
- 169 Blue Goose.
- 170 Ross Snow Goose.
- 171a American White-fronted Goose.
- 172a White-cheeked Goose.
- 172c Cackling Goose.
- 173 Brant Goose.
- 175 White-bellied Brant.
- 176 Emperor Goose.

### Old Nesting Site of A Colony of Robins.

(*Marula migratoria*.)

It seems an odd thing to speak of a colony of robins, but when several pairs are found nesting in the same location it could scarcely be called anything else.

However it was towards the last of May, 1907, while walking in a field near a bridge of the N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R., near Stamford, Conn., that I noticed, between the sections of the siding on the bridge, several dark objects which I thought at the time to be nothing but piles of cinders or dirt, but on crossing the bridge several days later, found them to be nests of the American Robin, eleven in number, all apparently just ready for the reception of the eggs, but no eggs were laid in 1907, all the birds deserting shortly after my visit. I never expected to see such an occurrence again but was very pleasantly surprised on May 2, 1908, while walking through the same field to see two new nests in the same location as those I had found the previous season. On making a thorough search of the bridge I found four more nests. These other four were built on an iron girder directly under the tracks and the tops of the nests only measured 22 inches from the base of the rails! They were not the usual type of Robin nest, being rather flat with hardly any mud used in their construction. The furthest distance apart of any two nests was 28 inches, and the nearest two were 16 inches apart.

At this date none contained eggs. On returning May 8, 1908, one contained four eggs, one three, two two, and three were still empty.

There were five workmen hammering on the bridge while I took the photo, one of which told me that the female bird, (which he swore was the

male) had been sitting right under the hammering for the most part of that morning. After taking a picture of the nest, I took the workmen's and one of them whom his comrades called "Dirty-face," had an exceedingly hard time trying to get it through his head why he could not see his picture immediately after I took it.

The average number of trains which cross this bridge per 24 hours is 400 not counting any freight at all and how these robins stand this noise and vibration not more than 20 inches above their heads day and night is more than I can understand.

Most of the eggs hatched, and successful broods left all but two of the nests.

Paul G. Howes.

Ye Editor enjoyed an over Sunday visit from J. F. Ferry of the Field Museum of Natural History recently. He was our campmate on a trip into the Canadian bird paradise last Spring and a better one could not be found.

### THE DEAD.

We are sorry to be called upon to remove from our subscription list the name of C. T. Brennon, of Mount Carroll, Illinois, a student of birds well known in the State of Illinois. Though of a quiet, retiring nature, seldom publishing anything, he had a large knowledge of the avian tribe.

### SAMPLE COPIES.

With this issue we are mailing a large number of sample copies, and especially request our subscribers that if they receive more than one copy of THE OOLOGIST to give or send the duplicate to some person interested in birds, nests or eggs. By so doing, they will confer a favor on the present management, and also add to the subscription list, and thereby help build up the magazine.



## A FEW DESERT SPECIES.

In April, 1905, I made a hurried trip through the Colorado desert and added a few rare sets to my collection.

April 19, collected set 1-5 Leconte's Thrasher, nest in ocatia three feet up; composed of dried catclaw and mesquite twigs lined with sage fibres. Bird very shy, as it scuttled off through brush and cactus as I draw near nesting site and at a distance of one hundred feet stopped and peeped at me from behind a sage bush uttering a plaintive "whuee, whuee."

April 20, took set of 1-6 Rock Wren; nest in ledge of rock outcropping on hill side, composed of sticks lined with fur and feathers. At entrance to hole in which nest was situated the bird piled a layer of pebbles. Also found a Rock Wren's nest about a hundred yards east of above, containing four young about one day old, and one infertile egg. Entrance to nest was also nicely paved with pebbles.

April 24, collected set of 1-5 Verdin; nest located in mesquite tree eight feet up, a small ball of mesquite thorns and twigs lined with feathers and fibres. Four inches in diameter.

April 25, took set of 2-6 of the Verdin. Nest in cholla four feet up composed of thorns and catclaws lined with fur and feathers. Also found Verdin's nest with young but did not ascertain how many as I was afraid parent bird might desert them.

Same day took set 2-3 Leontes Thrasher, nest in cholla cactus two feet up composed of dried twigs, lined with bard fibres. Heard bird calling several hundred feet away but could not get a glimpse of her. On a still morning it is possible to hear these birds singing at least a mile distant.

April 26, found Leontes Thrasher's nest in sage bush three feet up, containing three young about one week old.

Bird was much more anxious about her young than the two birds above of their eggs as she approached very near me, although always keeping a cactus plant or sage between us, and at intervals uttering a pitiable "whuee-ee-ee."

April 26, found seven nests of the Cactus Wren within a radius of one hundred fifty feet, only one containing eggs—1-5. Nests all in cactus, three or four feet up, composed of dried buffalo grass lined with feathers. Nest containing eggs had a little thicker padding of feathers and was a little longer than the others, all globular in shape with a hole near top. Have noticed in several instances, that there are from four to five extra nests very near at hand to one containing eggs; probably birds are very particular as to nest or nesting site, or maybe using them for roosting places or even deceptions.

April 28, found nest containing four young of the Scott oriole hanging from blossom of the yucca palm about six feet up. At first I was not sure of identity of bird so hid myself nearby and took close observations. Very rare in this locality.

Chas. S. Moore.

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 COMPLAINTS.
 

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We have received a number of complaints regarding failure on the part of some to balance exchange accounts. One or two charge fraud; the others seem mere misunderstandings of a more or less serious nature. All are being carefully investigated and our determination in respect to them will be made known in due time. If fraud is established, the culprit will be fully exposed. Better settle all matters of exchange account promptly.

Another good rule—Never offer anything for exchange unless you have it on hand at the time. This will avoid a lot of trouble.

## DUSKY WARBLER HAUNTS.

On a trip to Catalina Island from the 7th to 11th of April of the present year, I was rather fortunate in finding nests of the Dusky Warbler (A. O. U. 646b.) One was about two and one-half, the other about four feet from the ground and both in small bushes. These nests were similar in construction—of leaves and grasses, lined with very fine grass, rootlets and hair. One nest contained a single fresh egg, the other three well marked slightly incubated ones.

On the 10th, two more nests containing eggs were found. One was a typical specimen in a small sapling eighteen feet from the ground constructed like the other two. It contained four beautifully marked eggs which were slightly incubated.

The other was a peculiar nest. It was composed of twigs, bark, grass and rootlets, and also had a snake-skin incorporated in its make up. This nest was very large and bulky by comparison with the others. It contained four eggs which were as peculiar as the nesting materials. One was unmarked and the others were sparingly so.

A little later in the day a bird of this species was found on her nest. When on closer approach she flew away and the nest was examined, it was found to be empty. She was probably shaping the nest for it seemed complete.

A strange fact is that these five nests were found in one small canyon and though many Duskyies were seen elsewhere, there were no signs of nesting. This may have been due to the presence of water in this particular canyon while it was lacking elsewhere.

While on this trip I had the pleasure of inspecting several Bald Eagle's nests.

## A STRANGE FIND.

While walking along the outskirts of a large swamp North of VanCortland Park, New York, I noticed something of a bluish hue, hanging from a branch of a dead tree in the middle of the swamp. Levelling my field glasses upon the object, I discovered it to be a rather large bird. I determined to investigate matters. Making my way with some difficulty to the spot, I found the object of my search fifteen feet above my head. I attempted to shin up the tree and it was only after three or four attempts that the bird was reached and thrown down.

It proved to be a Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*). Several of which had been noted in the same vicinity the previous Spring. Its neck had been caught in the fork of a branch and was nearly cut in two by its attempts to free itself. After obtaining specimen feathers, it was left in the murky waters of the swamp.

K. H. Rockey.

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 FRAZAR'S OYSTER CATCHER'S EGGS.
 

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I have always been told that Frazar's Oyster-catcher (*Haematopus frazari*) laid but one egg. I never really believed it, although the only sets I have of this species in my collection contain one egg each. These were collected by A. W. Anthony in June, 1897, on Natividad Island, Lower California.

It always seemed very queer to me that the other Oyster-catchers (*Haematopus ostralis* or *Haematopus palliatus*) should lay from three to four eggs and that Frazar's should only lay one.

I was delighted to find among the many sets of eggs my collector, Wilmot W. Brown, Jr., has just sent me from the Cape Region of Lower Cali-

ifornia, two sets of Frazar's Oyster-catcher. One contained three eggs and the other two. As he collected the parent birds, there is no doubt about the identity.

The first set was taken March 26th, 1909, near LaPaz, Lower California.

The eggs were heavily incubated. The nest was a depression in the gravel on a jagged and surf washed ledge. It was out of reach of the surf, but the spray no doubt dampened it in rough weather."

The second set was "a depression in the sand. The eggs were laid on the bare ground, there being no lining to the nest whatever. It was eighty feet from the surf." This nest was taken near LaPaz, March 24, 1909, and contained two eggs nearly incubated.

John E. Thayer.

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#### CURIOSITIES OF BIRD-NESTING.

An authority says: "It is not at all an uncommon thing to find the first and sometimes second egg of a young bird abnormally small, but I came across a case some few years ago which was quite unique. In April, 1901, I was hunting for a few clutches of the carrion crow in some small woods, which were their favorite nesting places in that district. I walked right through the first wood without success, but on leaving it I saw, perched on a tree some distance away, two crows. Guessing that I had disturbed them and that they were watching me, I walked on for some distance, still keeping my eye on them. Sure enough, as soon as they were satisfied that I was leaving, one of them made off straight for a large oak tree at the extreme end of the wood I had just left. On returning I discovered the nest and the reason I had missed it. It was built out on the extreme end of the lowest limb of the tree, within

ten feet of the ground, and hidden by the undergrowth below—a most unusual position. I climbed to the nest and was much astonished at the contents. In it were four miniature crow's eggs, very little larger than black-bird's eggs, and in shape almost round. On blowing them I found the shells were abnormally thick and tough for the size of the egg and they contained no yolk. Knowing that crows invariably remain in the same locality year after year, the following season I went to look for my friends again and to my great delight found the nest in a similar position in another oak tree within 30 yards of the first nest. It contained five eggs, four exact counterparts of the first clutch and one of normal size, the only one to contain any yolk. The following season I found them for the third time again quite close to the previous nests; this time there were four eggs, only one small one and three full size."—Clipping.

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#### FROM THE ISLE OF PINES.

The Isle of Pines Tanager (*Spinidalis pretrei*) Description: ✓

L. 6 in., w. 2.9, Tar., S, b. 5.5. Male, head black, a white stripe over eye, also a white maxillary stripe below which is a black line; throat, breast, collar and upper tail coverts orange; back olive-green with a tinge of orange; bend of wing chestnut; wings and tail black; the former with considerable white on outer edges of greater wing coverts and the secondaries; primaries with more or less white on inner webs; outer pair of tail feathers with large white patches on inner webs; upper mandible blackish; lower mandible, legs and feet bluish.

Female slightly smaller; top of head gray mixed with olive-green; grayish stripe over eye and also an indistinct

macillary stripe; upper parts olive-green, darker on wings and tail; throat dirty white; breast and sides tinged with dirty yellow, whitening on the belly and under tail coverts.

The Isle of Pines Tanager although far from being rare is not often seen because of its staying mostly in the woods and jungles. The male, according to my observations, is less numerous than the female; two or three males in a flock of twelve to fifteen. The males are quite wary, but the females are a great deal more confiding. They are often found in a native tree which has a round black seed about the size of a B. B. shot and a soft yellow, sweet tasting fleshy end where it is attached, upon which they feed largely. These birds are unusually quiet and if it were not for the bright coloring of the males they would be very easily overlooked.

The Yello-faced Grassquit, (*Tiaris olivacea*) l. 3.7 in; w. 2 in. Male, upper parts olive-green, darker on crown. Throat, lore and stripe over eye, yellow ordered by black; a black patch on lower throat; under parts sooty. Female, duller and the black is lacking.

The Yellow-faced Grassquit is our most abundant member of the Finch family and may be found almost everywhere, but is most common in open country. In the orange groves and pine apple fields it may be seen in flocks from six to twenty in number, feeding on the seeds of the different grasses, and especially of a species of joint grass which is extremely hard to eradicate. It is sometimes known as "Tobacco bird" because it is fond of tobacco seed; but the harm done is greatly overbalanced by the good it accomplishes in eating the seeds of obnoxious weeds. I have also seen it eat grasshoppers and rickets which happened in its way while feeding.

I wish to add the following to my list of Isle of Pines birds:

"Chillina" Warbler, *Terestris fermandinae*

Ricord's Hummer, *Riccordia ricordii*  
Yellow-faced Grassquit, *Tiaris olivacea*

Cuban Pigmy Owl, *Glaucidium siji*

Isle of Pines Tanager, *Spindalis pretrei*

Blackbird, *Holoquiscalus gundlachi*

Lizard Cuckoo, *Saurothera merlini*

Cuban Tody, *Todus multicolor*

W. I. Tree Duck, *Dendrocygna arborea*

Blackbird, *Ptiloxia atroviolacea*

Isle of Pines Trogon, *Priotchis timnurus vercus*

Greater Yellow legs, *Totanus melanoleucus*

These make my list to date containing 85 species.

A. C. REED.

#### THE CAROLINA RAIL.

(Porzana carolina.)

After looking over all my passed records and notes on the subject, I consider the Carolina rail an uncommon but regular summer resident in this locality, Stamford, Conn. It is on account of its seclusive habits and quiet nature that it has been overlooked by most people and considered so much rarer than it really is.

Five and one half miles from my home, situated between two wooded rises near the little town of Talmadge Hill, Conn., lies a certain small grass covered, Alder dotted swamp in which one or two pairs of these little rails regularly construct their nests and rear their young, so far, I am happy to say, unmolested.

As a rule the nest building starts during the first week in May and lasts until the end of June. In some cases however the nest must be started considerably earlier as I have one record of a set which reads, May 12, 1897. Eleven eggs, incubation far advanced. May 30 is my latest date for fresh eggs. The completement seems to be

invariably eleven. All the clutches which I have found have been of this number and four other records of nests which are in my possession each contained eleven eggs.

The nests are composed of dead tussock grass, leaves and rushes. They are very broad and so slightly hollowed that one or more of the eggs will occasionally roll out. The site usually chosen is in a thick clump of grass and ferns directly upon the ground but it is by no means uncommon to find it in a tussock five or six inches above it. In the latter case it is woven quite tightly into the standing grass, while in the former it is more or less of a loose pile of leaves and rushes.

As the summer draws to a close the birds do not confine themselves to the hidden retreats of the breeding season but take to the coastal marshes with their newly reared families. At this time they become quite curious and often confide themselves too much in our so called "Sportsmen" who bang at anything which resembles a bird. This species of rail stays with us until the second or third week in October when suddenly in a night they will all disappear, and we know that they have silently flown to the sunny south, only to return when the warm sun again turns green our swamps.

P. G. Howes.

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#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

##### Birds of New Jersey, their Nests and Eggs.

We are in receipt of the Annual Report of the New Jersey State Museum of 1908, relating to the birds of New Jersey, by Whitmer Stone, containing among other things, articles on the Destruction and Protection of Birds; on the Distribution and Migration of Birds; an Analytical key to the Birds of New Jersey; followed by a sup-

posedly complete list of the birds known to occur within the state, giving a technical description of each species and notes on its occurrence in various parts of the state, followed by eighty four first class plates illustrating various species of bird life to be found in the state. The whole being a highly credible production; especially so in view of the fact that such outputs by a public authority are usually more or less the opposite.

This work is a valuable addition to any bird student's library.

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#### NOTES FROM FLORIDA.

on

#### CATHARISTA URUBU.

The writer was located the past season where he had ample material and opportunities to make a fairly complete study of the habits, etc., of this "fragrant songster." The first set of eggs was found February 10th, which was three weeks sooner than any previous date recorded during the past four years. I attribute this to the fact that this part of Florida had practically had no rain during the past three years, and the Lakes were very low and many of the larger and all of the smaller wood ponds had dried up. This had a very peculiar effect on bird life in general, and many species nested under conditions that were far from normal. I noticed that some species nested several weeks earlier, but found the majority were several weeks later, why this should be so I am unable to determine, but it is a fact. During late January and early February when I was looking for Ward's Heron and the Great Blues, I came across a small "cypress" of about 15 acres in area in a large piney woods, this "cypress" or "slough" as it is sometimes called, was about half mile from a large lake. This swamp was bone dry, first time ever known. Some giant

cypress trees were growing here, and to investigate a small colony of Wardi, I had to go 125 feet up in one of them. The space between these trees was thickly strewn with dead logs, the majority of which were hollow, these were lying in all kinds of positions and made travel through them very difficult, and somewhat dangerous for the reason of several large Mocasins that were sunning themselves on the under side of large logs. In this swamp there were hundreds of Black Vultures. I investigated several logs from which the old vultures had run, but saw no signs of any eggs this early. But I marked this swamp down as my "Happy Hunting Grounds" because it was the most ideal place for the Black Vulture that I had ever run across. February 10th, I found my first set and eggs could be found in this swamp right along up to July 1st, when the long deferred "rainy season" set in in earnest and in two days this swamp was six feet in water. Hundreds of young vultures met their death in this flooded Roost and I have no doubt that many sets of eggs were deserted from the same cause. Many pairs from actual observation reared two broods and were incubating the third set. Of course I cannot say positively it was the third set by the same pair of birds but it was the third set for that particular nest, and previous observations have shown me that Mrs. Catharista is very fond of her old nesting site, and will return to it repeatedly no matter how much bothered. Twenty-one nests were watched to see how long incubation lasted, etc. In eleven cases the second egg was laid the second day after the first, four cases three days elapsed, the other six, the last egg was laid the day following the first. Incubation was started in most cases as soon as the last egg had been laid. I noticed a few however waited from one to two days, never longer. The period of incubation was twenty-eight to twenty-nine days, one case noted went thirty days, this last however was one that was on edge of my farm in a clump of palmettoes, and the birds were disturbed several times a day by myself and others

passing near them. I enclose a photograph of the young in this nest taken when a few days old. One bird was slightly larger than the other and the chief occupation of this larger youngster was in trying to swallow his smaller brother, the pleasing operation lasting as long as ten minutes at a time. Life was made miserable for these birds by the hundreds of green flies, drawn to the nest by the remnants of offal around. I had aimed to take a series of photographs of these youngsters up to the time they could fly, but the nest was situated in a clump of palmettoes ten feet high and a person had to actually get down inside the small clearing where the young were and this clearing was not six feet in diameter. The reason I took but the one picture was evident. Nature has endowed me with a pretty good nose and a strong stomach and they went on a strike every time I got too near the young beauties. However, I noted their daily growth and they either flew away or wandered off at the age of six weeks. After they were two weeks old the amount of material these growing youngsters could assimilate was prodigious.

In the cities of the South this Vulture does real work and is the chief worker of the sanitary department. (In some of the smaller places they are actually the only ones.) They are fully protected in this country and in the cities and towns deserve it, but out in the rural districts I have come to the conclusion that they are harmful owing to their great numbers. One day while sitting in an Osprey nest resting, 105 feet up in a little cypress in another swamp, I counted 950 of these birds sitting around in trees and countless numbers were soaring about where ever the eye wandered. I believe that 5000 of these scavengers use this swamp as a Roost. Where so many of these birds gather together, the food supply is naturally a serious question for them, and dead food becoming scarce they are forced to become birds of prey in every sense of the word. Hundreds of young pigs, lambs, etc., are annually devoured by them and every stock breeder's hand is against them all the time. I have had them to come into my yard and catch young chickens. I will relate

the instance that opened my eyes to their preying habits. I was returning through a part of this swamp after a visit to a small colony of Egrets that I have seen protecting when I came to a colony of Y. C. Nighthérons, ninety six nests by actual count. Twenty-four of these nests had just hatched out as I could see by the egg shells under the nests, and the nests were empty. The old ones were sitting around in the low bushes looking very desolate and the Vultures were sitting up in the tall cypresses all about. While pondering over the empty nests, my attention was attracted by four vultures trying to drive an Anhinga from her nest high up in a cypress twenty yards away, but her long neck and needle like beak were too quick to be eluded by the vultures who after a short fight betook themselves off for easier prey. I immediately concluded the vultures wanted her young, because I had found that all the Anhingas in this swamp had just hatched their eggs. Two days later I returned and found the other seventy-two nests of the Nighthérons empty, these all had eggs in two days before, most of which were hatching. This in an instance of a whole colony of Nighthérons being wiped out. I watched this colony for two months and never found them breeding again. Possibly the vultures got into this nasty habit of eating young birds by having so much of this class of food put before them by the murderous plumers, who by their ruthless destruction of the plume herons, left millions of starving young to the tender mercy of vultures, etc. I had already noted a decrease in the number of Nighthéron in my territory and now attribute this to the preying vultures. The great number of vultures here do not seem to be suffering from want of food, because a few pairs I skinned this season had fat on them like a well fed chicken. I gave some of this fat to my negro laborers who have a superstition that "buzzard grease" rubbed on the hands, makes them slick and unable to be beaten in a "skin game."

In the two hundred sets or thereabout that I examined this year, I found only one really abnormal set, this was one with a runt egg. This set measured as follows, 1.75 x 1.30;

and 2.95 x 1.95. The average of about fifty sets was 3.00 x 1.95. This species of vulture usually use a hollow log as nesting site, failing this the next favorable site is a thick clump of palmetoes so thick that a wandering hog cannot penetrate. Seventy-five per cent will use these two kinds of sites, the balance, any old place that offers a safe retreat from hogs and is somewhat private. I know of six pairs using a sort of cave under an uprooted tree, all seeming to live in perfect harmony. I have never found a Turkey Vulture nesting with this species, altho I have heard that they sometimes do so. February 10th is the earliest date I have ever seen eggs and August 5th is the latest date.

O. E. Baynard.

#### THE OLIVE-SIDED FLY-CATCHER IN PENNSYLVANIA.

Thousands of acres of land in Warren, Forest, Elk and McKean Counties is wild mountain land and practically uninhabited.

A number of tracts of virgin forest of giant hemlock, pine, beech, etc., still stand. The rest is more or less lumbered over. Some of this deforested region is springing up into a second-growth of mostly hardwood timber. Large areas have been fire-swept until nothing much but huckleberry brush, sweet fern and rattlesnakes can exist. Again vast areas are an almost impenetrable jungle of berry-brush, second growth of all kinds, laurel, etc. As this region lies high (2000 feet and better) and is well watered, it offers a fine home for many of the more northern breeders among the warblers, thrushes, etc.

Among the very rarest of these more northern birds is the Olive-sided Flycatcher. For its summer home it chooses a place that has not been too closely cut off but where huge stubs are standing about with more or less living timber and with numerous smaller hemlocks.

The birds, especially the males,

spend most of their time on the top-most limbs of the big stubs. Here they sit uttering at intervals, their loud harsh whistle of two, sometimes three notes. This whistle can be heard a long ways on a quiet day. It is very unlike the note of any other of our birds.

I have never met with the Olive-sided in the farming districts along the river, but always back in the mountains.

Because of its rarity, data is lacking as to the dates of its arrival and departure.

I first met with the olive-sided when a kid, I used to camp and fish for trout in June in the mountains about fifteen miles from here. For three seasons we heard the birds in the slashing along the edge of the heavy timber near camp and recent experience leads me to think it was the same pair each year. I did not again meet with it for a number of seasons, but during 1900 I was quite fortunate.

In June, while trouting in the vicinity of our old camp, I located a pair and wrote to Mr. W. E. C. Todd of the Carnegie Museum Pittsburgh. He had been trying to get a pair from this state for several years, so he came up and was fortunate enough to secure both. In July I put in a week trouting with an old hunter. We covered a lot of country and I located two pairs of Olive-sides. The old fellow took an old shot gun into camp as dogs were almost daily running deer and he intended to put an end to it. With this gun and a little heavy shot I got an Olive-sided, but badly torn, so did not try another.

That fall in September, while collecting water birds on the "Peninsula" near Erie, Pennsylvania, I took a fine female Olive-sided the only record from that region.

On the 3rd of June, 1901, I secured a fine male from a tall pine stub. In 1904, I again located a pair, this time nearby, and by keeping close tab on them I found the nest and secured birds, nest and all for my collection.

In May, 1906, while hunting Ravens in Clearfield County, I saw a pair. Since then I have found two pairs of these birds, and have made many trips to their haunts to watch and listen.

These two pairs are about a mile apart. I found one pair in the spring of 1907. They nested and returned again in 1908 and again this summer, making three seasons they have spent in this one spot that I know of. The other pair I found last season and they were again on hand this summer making their second year here at least.

By watching the old birds I find it easy to locate the nest. When building the female is quite noisy and very restless. Her call is unlike the male's being a series of five to eight loud and rapidly uttered chip-like notes, much like the cross-bill's, only louder. While the female is building the male is most of the time perched close by on a big stub from which he makes frequent excursions after insects and at intervals gives his peculiar call.

Altogether I have found and examined five nests. All were in second-growth hemlocks. All were on horizontal limbs from three to twelve feet from the trunk and with one exception were well hidden from view from the ground. The lowest nest was twenty and the highest fifty feet from the ground. They required from five to seven days to build. The material used was small dead hemlock twigs on many of which small pieces of lichen was sticking. They were lined with a very few pieces of dried grass. The nests were all rather shallow affairs; several I could almost see through.

In all cases the eggs were three in number and looked not unlike the wood pewee's on a large scale. The ground color is much the same, but the eggs are much more heavily spotted and wreathed. When climbing to the nest I have found both old birds very courageous and have had them repeatedly dart within a few feet of my head.

One nest that I found was robbed by a red squirrel or Blue Jay before the set was complete, but in about ten days more the female began a second nest in the same tree on a limb fifteen feet lower down. In building this second nest she used fully half the material of the first nest. While sit-



ting around watching the old birds, I have found them very unsuspecting. Don't seem to pay any attention to a person on the ground.

At times I have seen both birds perched on a limb very close together and twittering to one another. Evidently making love or talking over domestic affairs. Next season, if my two pairs return, I intend to try and get a few photos if possible.

R. B. Simpson.

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### WOODPECKERS.

The Forestry service of the United States has recently issued a circular relating to the damage to telegraph and telephone poles occasioned by the Woodpeckers. It advises that the birds be not injured or killed, and reports creosote-treated poles are not attacked by the birds.

The woodpecker family is one of the most beneficial of all bird families. Without them there would be no need for a Forestry service for there would be no forests. These birds do more to preserve the forests of the country than all the forest experts on the government pay roll; many times over. Protect these birds by all means, and tell the Railway and telegraph people to use a little common sense and erect galvanized iron poles set in concrete in the country, and to put their wires underground where they belong, in towns and cities.

Our woodpeckers are far and away more valuable than the average corporation director imagines. Protect the birds.

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### BIRDS OF ILLINOIS AND WISCONSIN.

#### Birds of Illinois and Wisconsin.

We are in receipt of this publication issued by the Field Museum of Natural History written by Charles B. Corey, the Curator of the Department of Birds of this Museum.

It is a large portly volume of over 750 pages and is divided into three general sub-divisions:

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This work will take rank at once as the leading work on the birds of these two states, and will remain in that position for many long years, is our judgment.

The preparation of this book shows not only the well-known knowledge of Professor Carey, of birds, but likewise his exceedingly painstaking and careful collation of the information obtainable only as the result of long careful correspondence and acquaintance with bird students in the two states covered. It is a production which will be welcomed by the ornithologists of the West as well as by the ordinary reader; for while it is of high scientific value, it is by no means the dry prolix assemblage of latin names so distasteful to all except the professional ornithologists.

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Duck shooting along the Illinois river has been better this Fall than for several years. We have been expecting our den to be illuminated almost any day by the smiling "phiz" of our friend B. F. Gault, the well-known ornithologist. He has a habit of knowing where and when to look for ducks, and in times past has tried the shooting here.

---

A male European widgeon was killed by one of the prominent Chicago judges on the Swan Lake Club grounds last Spring, nine miles north of the present home of THE OOLOGIST.

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North American Fauna, No. 23.

Michigan Ornithological Club Bulletin, All published after No. 1 of Vol. 6.

The Wilson Billitin, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 64.

The Curlew, Published by O. P. Hauger of Orleans, Ind., Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

The Ornithologist and Oologist Semi-Annual, Published in 1889-90-91 by Wm. H. Foote of Pittsfield, Mass., and by C. C. Maxfield of Danbury, Conn., in 1891. All numbers published except Nos. Vol. 1, No. 2, and Vol. 2, No. 2.

The Wilson Quarterly, No. 2, Vol. 4, July, 1892.

The Wilson Journal, Vol 1, Jany., 1893 and Vol. 2, June, 1893.

Notes on Rhode Island Ornithology, Published by Reginald Heber Howe, Jr., 1890.

The Oologist, of Utica, N. Y., Vols. 1-5 inclusive, for 1875 to 1881, any numbers.

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VOL. XXVI. No. 12. ALBION, N. Y., DEC. 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 269

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## EGGS

EGGS IN FINE SETS—I can supply following species: 121, 207, 293a, 291, 295, 301, 302, 313, 318, 319, 321, 327, 328, 353, 354, 351a, 359, 360c, 370a, 376, 417, 419, 421, 420b, 459, 475, 487, 490.1, 490.2, 513a, 518, 533, 534, 536, 554, 567b, 581j, 586, 593b, 607, 641, 637, 654a, 683a, 697, 702, 708, 706, 730, 735b, 736a, 738, 749, 754, 763. Exchange lists invited. THOMAS H. JACKSON, West Chester, Pa., 304 N. Franklin St.

FOR rare Oological specimens from Asia, Africa, Australia, and South America, see "The Bulletin." World wide circulation. Advertisement rates 50 cts. per inch. Wants and Exchange column, 1 cent a word. Sample copy 3 cent stamp only. THE BULLETIN, 4 Duke St., Adelphi, London, England

FOR EXCHANGE.—In A. I. sets, with data. 190, 194, 263, 333, 337, 337b, 339, 359, (359.1) 362, 364, 375, 390, 423, 633.1, 759b and others. Also butterflies and moths, in dust and insect proof mounts. Very fine minerals in fine cabinet specimens and some Indian relics. Want all of the above, in fine specimens and especially want 328, 348, 349, 332, 301, 309, 281, 224, 208, 27. Send lists. L. C. SNYDER, Lacona, New York.

WANTED.—A set each of the Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned Hawk. Can offer in exchange fine western sets with nest. D. E. BROWN, 90 University St., Seattle, Wash.

FOR EXCHANGE.—636 n-5, 477 1-4 1-3, 681d n-4, 595 1-4, 755 2-3, 390 1-7, 65 1-3, 201 1-4, 388 2-4. EDWARD S. COOMBS, 243 Franklin St., Boston, Mass.

I HAVE a lot of fine sets of Sea Birds Eggs from Iceland and Lapland, to exchange for other kinds. Send your list to WALTER RAINE, Kew Beach, Toronto, Canada.

WANTED.—Sets of eggs not in my collection, including many ordinary varieties, and especially western and northerly species. Send list to B. W. ARNOLD, Albany, N. Y.

TO EXCHANGE.—A few first class sets and singles, with full data for same. Send list and receive mine. W. A. STRONG, 41 Grand Ave., San Jose, Calif.

WANTED.—The following eggs in sets: A. O. U. No. 5, 7, 9, 12, 27, 35, 42, 44, 47, 63, 117, 128, 196, 197, 203, 275, 349, 352 and others. PAUL TAYLOR, 315 N. 6th St., Camden, N. J.

WANTED.—Coming season, one set No. 36, 421, 48, 52, 62, 73, 86b, 86f, 89, 108, 105, (101), (110), 111, 112, (113), (114), 188, 206, 228, 334, 340, 344, 37d, 356. FRED TRUESDALE, Shandon, Calif.

Sets Sharp-shinned, Broad winged Hawks, Barred and Great Horned Owls, Great Blue Heron and others to dispose of. S. S. DICKEY, Waynesburg, Pa.

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WANTED.—Nests with and without sets of 463, 466, 550, 642, 645, 654, 667, 686, 719, 722, 726, 748, 758, 759b. JAS. P. BALL, M.D., Frankford, Pa.



## EGGS—Continued

RARE EGGS FOR EXCHANGE.—I have a few sets of Heerman's Gull, Blue-footed Booby, Red-footed Booby, Black Petrel, Least Petrel, Soccero Petrel, Cassin's Auklet, Ridgeway's Noddy, Black vented Shearwater, Blue-faced Booby. What have you? Only perfect sets wanted and must be strictly A. L. W. LEE CHAMBERS, Santa Monica, Cal.

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TO EXCHANGE—Sets of 658 and others for same. J. CLAIRE WOOD, 179 17th Street, Detroit, Mich.

NESTS with and without sets wanted, also reptile eggs, common variety particularly. J. P. BALL, M. D., Frankford, Phila.

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I offer 1-3, 2-4 Fish Crow, 1-5 201, 1-5 194; all for a set of Bartman's Sandpiper 4 or 5 eggs. W. B. CRISPIN, Salem, N. J.

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High grade cameras, lenses, field glasses, etc. for natural history work. I import them and can save you money. Correspondence invited. C. E. WEBSTER, No. Yakima, Wash.

I WANT INDIAN RELICS, especially arrow points. L. B. HAUSLEY, Mullen, Idaho.

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FOR SALE.—Basket work, of all shapes and patterns, mats, bows, pappoose baskets and other works of art of the "Northern California Indian." Price list free and your money back, if goods bought are not as represented. Address C. IRVIN CLAY, Box 353, Eureka, Cal.

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Please look this list over carefully and if you have any of them write me.

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The Ornithologist and Oologist Semi-Annual, Published in 1889-90-91 by Wm. H. Foote of Pittsfield, Mass., and by C. C. Maxfield of Danbury, Conn., in 1891. All numbers published except Nos. Vol. 1, No. 2, and Vol. 2, No. 2.

The Wilson Quarterly, No. 2, Vol. 4, July, 1892.

The Wilson Journal, Vol 1, Jany., 1893 and Vol. 2, June, 1893.

Notes on Rhode Island Ornithology, Published by Reginald Heber Howe, Jr., 1890.

The Oologist, of Utica, N. Y., Vols. 1-5 inclusive, for 1875 to 1881, any numbers.

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# THE OÖLOGIST.

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VOL. XXVI. No. 12. ALBION, N. Y. DECEMBER 15, 1909. WHOLE No. 269

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*Published Monthly, by R. M. Barnes, Lacon, Illinois.*

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## 1910

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It will wage a relentless war upon all persons engaged in field work or ornithology and will show up those who use its advertising columns for the purpose of arranging exchanges and then fail to settle the accounts of such exchanges.

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PLATE 21. King Rail on Nest at Philo, Ill.

—Photo by Isaac E. Hess, June 10, 1909.

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— The seeker after nesting data of this swamp-loving member of the "Rallus" family, would scarcely choose the eastern part of Illinois as a basis for field operations.

A trip through this (Champaign) county would discourage the most optimistic Oologist were he bent on accumulating information concerning Swamp birds or desirous of adding their sets to his collection.

We are unfortunately situated (from a bird student's point of view) in regard to swamps, being on a sort of divide, with our water courses running away in each direction, North, South, East and West. No swamp could exist under our present drainage system and we must be content with a few small ponds as the only representatives of the glorious swampy past when our parents could wade into the ooze places and come forth with aprons and baskets laden with Duck eggs. Ye Gods! When I hear mother tell of hatching a pair of Sandhill Crane eggs under a Turkey—such treasures picked up in the fields like so many potatoes and right where our fields of corn now wave in the winds, I feel that I appeared on this terrestrial ball about a third of a century late.

But the King Rail loves us yet and, although we have dugged our ditches with no thought or care as to his future existence, he apparently forgives our selfishness and contentedly accepts the huts we grudgingly leave him in lieu of the spacious mansions he might so easily find elsewhere. This reads along quite prettily of course, but how does it sound when I confess that two months ago I was not aware of the facts stated above—that the King Rail still nested with us.

It is really laughable and yet it is a matter of chagrin with me, when I

review my numerous trips to surrounding counties, including a long journey to the Illinois river bottoms in search of "Rallus elegans" in his home, to find five nests here in June, under my very nose and the one of my photo illustrations, in less than a mile of my store, where, during many seasons, I have dashed forth at the "call of the wild"—filling my stolen hours with Ornithological experiences.

Although always recorded in my note book—"King Rail—summer migrant—formerly a breeder," I have a suspicion that "Kingus Railus" has been a summer resident these many years, and I, only ignorant of his habits.

And is it any wonder? I found no photos of either bird or nest in my library. My Bird books contain so little information about this bird that one might easily consider him rare desiderata. Job's Water Birds illustrate neither King Rail nor nest. Neither is it found in the Nesting of Water-birds. Reed's splendid Egg book was perused in vain for photos of this common water bird. Through all the periodicals of years I hunted for the simplest data concerning his nesting and found the few notes far from satisfactory. Mr. Abbott of Chicago published in the Sept. 1908 Oologist the only valuable notes concerning this bird that I was able to unearth.

The old stereotyped assertion that the King Rail is "very shy" is incorrect, says Mr. Abbott. I am ready to agree with Mr. Abbott. My experience of June 10, 1909, when I was forced to lift the female from the first nest I had ever found, would seem to contradict the "shy" claim.

The only shy actions exhibited were on my part after the angry little female had drawn blood from my hand by a vicious stab from her sharp beak. I must needs get this vision of her

gentle nature from experience because nothing in print that I could find, gave her away.

I notice that in the current issue of the Oologist, ye Editor was also forced afield to learn of this bird. Well, at last King Rail or perhaps I should say "Mrs. King Rail"—is going to get exposed.

Another surprise was the location of this, my first nest of the King Rail. In a small 2 by 4 "pondette"—actually 15 feet by 40, by the side of the Wabash Railroad tracks, our interesting pair of Rails reared their 1909 structure. Building within 35 feet of the path of the night Buffalo Express with its blinding electric head-light and the almost hourly heavy freights with their diabolical deafening roars, quite convince me that his Satanic Majesty himself would fail in the attempt at frightening this pair of timid Rails. On May 17th, I noticed a Rail walk out from a tile drain which crosses the road-way. As this drain connected with a small pond a short distance away and as the date seemed a little late for an intending mover, followed the plan of the "Thinking Machine" of the Sunday Magazine fame. I put 2 and 2 together and it made 4.

June 1st I investigated and, although I saw no birds, a thorough examination of all the clumps of swamp-grass finally revealed what appeared to be a complete but unoccupied nest. It was well hidden in a thick bunch of tall grass growing on a hummock in three inches of water.

Nine days later, on June 10th, I was astonished to find the female covering 11 eggs. She must have done some tall laying to deposit 11 eggs in 9 days. Undoubtedly 2 eggs must have appeared in one day on more than one occasion. I found upon blowing the set, that all but two eggs were pretty well advanced in incubation,

proving to my satisfaction that the setting must have begun upon laying the first egg.

Probably this is necessary for protection in such situations, exposed as they are to Muskrats, Snakes and other enemies.

The utter fearlessness exhibited by the female turned my thoughts at once to photographs and immediately I hot-footed it to town for my trusty 5 by 7. Upon my re-appearance, the female slid off the nest and ran out of sight in the tall grasses. Recalling the fact that this bird was "very shy" my spirits fell and visions of pictures faded away.

However I could photo the nest and eggs and after obtaining a good focus, I attached a string, pulled the slide and backed off up the rail-road bed which was elevated above the pond probably 15 feet.

From where I was seated, the white eggs could be seen gleaming through the grass. After a half hour of patient waiting, the white gleam disappeared and I knew the Rail had returned to the nest. I pulled the string—heard the click of the shutter and felt repaid for my efforts.

Slipping cautiously down the string, I approached the camera. Mrs. Rail did not move this time and I was allowed to turn the plateholder and snap her again before she emerged with swelling feathers and scolding notes for all the world like an angry domestic Hen.

As I reloaded the camera she would approach behind me, sometimes within two feet and turning quickly I would find her in an attitude which seemed at the point of attack.

I found it necessary to retrace my steps 15 or 20 feet before she could be induced to return to her eggs. Repeating the performance time and again I succeeded in getting six views. The male joined in the scolding but would





PLATE 20. Nest and Eggs of King Rail near Philo, Ill.  
—Photo by Isaac E. Hess, June 10, 1969.

approach no nearer than 30 feet, where I could catch only occasional glimpses as he skulked through the grasses. He was undoubtedly "shy."

On June 13th, I wheeled to a larger pond four miles south of town and found King Rails where I had in seasons past, looked in vain. I located four more nests—one of which contained 9 eggs, one 10, and two nests had complements of 12 eggs. Of the ten birds represented by the 5 nests found, not a single one flushed or rose from the ground.

Indeed I never would have seen a Rail had I not carefully looked over each bunch of grass and parted each one for a close investigation.

Because of the difficulty in flushing the King Rail, explains why my many miles of weary tramping availed me nothing.

And all the time I had but to look to find the golden treasurers at my feet.

ISAAC E. HESS.

City of *Himantopus Mexicanus* in  
Los Angeles Co., California.

While collecting at Nigger Slough, June 12th of this year, with two friends, we observed several Black-necked Stilts flying about. One of my companions had been up to the other end of the slough a few days before and had found a great number of these waders there. So we started for the upper end with the intention of collecting a few sets of Stilt's eggs if possible. The birds were there in great numbers, and apparently breeding, but the results of a two hours' search were a few eggshells, two eggs found at different places on the bare mud, and a few young. We gave up in disgust, and started for home, but while crossing a shallow arm of the slough, dotted with clumps of marsh grass, I turned and saw four Stilt's

eggs on their flat, disc-shaped nest of sticks, placed on a clump of marsh-grass. They were far-advanced in incubation, so I guess we were too late for eggs of this species.

This was the only set of Black-necked Stilts that we found, but we got sets of the Tule Wren, Killdeer, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Yellow-throat, and found a nest and five eggs of the Californian Clapper Rail. This is unusual, as this species rarely breeds in fresh-water marshes.

D. I. SHEPARDSON.

#### Glossy Ibis in Wyoming.

While duck shooting in Odin Bay on Lake Pend Oreille, Wyoming, a few weeks since, my friend Dr. Patterson shot what was to me a very puzzling bird. When he brought it to me and asked me to classify it I unhesitatingly pronounced it a Long Billed Curlew (*Numenius longirostris*), but when I examined it closer I found that I was in error. We brought the bird in and I made a careful comparison of it and came to the conclusion that it was a White faced Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis guarauna*). The next day I returned to the bay and saw a flock of eight of which I killed two. They were mounted by a local taxidermist and are on exhibition here.

If I am correct in my diagnosis it is the first time those birds have ever been known to penetrate thus far north. Can you shed any light on the subject? Perhaps if you will give this space in the Oologist some of the family may be able to tell us something.

Yours very truly,  
CHAS. S. MOODY.

In California.

As this issue of THE OOLOGIST is mailed, Ye Editor hies himself to the sunny clime of Southern California to

participate in an annual family reunion which is a thing established for many years past. From December 23d to January 3d I can be found at the Virginia Hotel, Long Beach, California, at which place I would be pleased to meet all Californians interested in our publication personally, or hear from them at their leisure.

R. M. BARNES.

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#### Nesting of Florida Wren.

During the season of 1909 the writer made a special study of the habits of this sociable wren, *Thryothorus ludovicianus miamensis*.

Sixty nests in all were observed during the year and some very interesting facts were brought to light.

This wren is a resident with us here in Florida and is on hand every morning rolling out his rich full song before most mortals are ready to get up. There was a peach tree within three feet of my bedroom window and this was the favorite place for the morning concert of one very sociable little fellow. It hardly seems possible that so much sound can come from such a small bird and when they are breeding they seem to be singing continually all day, but the pair are very seldom together when singing, one will be off a few hundred feet and they will sing to each other, the male with the strongest song and the female will answer as soon as he is through and makes one think of an echo. About March 15 I noticed that this particular pair were looking for a nesting site, they were in the house the greater part of the time, peering in closets, and back of jars on the shelves, and all the time they would keep up the most cheerful twittering to themselves. They seem to be as much at ease when standing with their heads down as any other way and reminds one of the Chickadee in this re-

spect. I was very busy at this time and did not succeed in finding the nest of this pair until they had laid three eggs, so waited until they finished the set of five which I collected on the 27th of March. This nest was built under the kitchen on top of one of the piers and was a typical nest so will describe it. The outside was made of coarse grass and weed stems and some finer twigs, next came a layer of finer grass and some string, fine pieces of cloth and some cotton batting, this was followed by a lining of horsehair and dry snaix skin, in this respect, like the Crested Flycatcher. Ninety per cent. of the wrens nest examined by me this year had this dry snaix skin in the lining. The nest was built in the corner next the sill and the opening was at an angle of about 45 degrees. In fact, practically all nests of this species are built at this angle.

On the 30th after collecting this set I noticed that this pair were spending a great deal of their time in my house and upon investigation I found no suitable corner for them. I set up an empty peach can and in looking in there on the second day following found that they had completed their nest in this can. I watched this daily now and found that the first egg was laid on April 6 and laid about 10 a. m. and an egg was deposited daily from this on until the set of 5 were laid. The female began setting immediately after finishing the laying and set exactly fourteen days before hatching. During the time of incubation the male was very attentive, singing for hours within a few yards of the nest, he would sometime relieve his mate at the setting job, more especially after the 10th day. On one occasion I noticed him feed his mate while she was on the nest. The female became very tame and often al-

lowed me to put my finger on her while sitting on the nest, but the male never allowed such liberties.

When the young were eight days old and were becoming feathered out nicely, a rat found the happy home and destroyed them. This happened on May 3 and on May 5th I noticed the male was beginning to build again in another can that I had put up in the porch on top the plate. In this nest the male did nearly all the building and was five days doing the job. Singing all the time, he did not seem to worry about the loss of his family, the female was different, however, and sang very little. Ten days after this nest was finished I found the first egg laid and when three were laid, another rat or mouse destroyed them. This pair then immediately started a nest in a length of old stove pipe that I had nailed in a horizontal position in a tree in front of the house and about ten yards away. They completed this nest in two days and laid one egg, the next day I noticed that this nest had been torn out and the egg destroyed, probably the work of a pair of festive jays. After all these set backs this pair went further out in the woods and succeeded in raising a brood after all. I found their nest when they had four eggs in and that was the number she raised. The female did not come up to the house much after she moved to the woods, but the male was on his job every morning early at the peach tree and many times during the day would come in the house looking for spiders.

On my farm there were about six different pairs of these little songsters, but each pair seemed to keep to its own range and there was very little quarreling among them. One pair built in my packing house and built the nest in a day. By the watch this pair made 14 trips with building material in 10 minutes. They had a short

fly though, as the floor was strewn with wisps of hay. This nest was built in a box nailed to the wall and was used for keeping stencils in and was a large affair and this nest was the largest of all I noted during the year, but also it was the most loosely constructed and was made almost entirely of hay with the exception of the lining. Upon completing this nest the pair disappeared for over a week, when one day I noticed a new nest being made in the engine room in a box on the wall and have no doubt that this was the same pair. A rat destroyed this set after it had been set on for seven days. About two weeks later I happened to go to the nest in the packing house and found an egg that was identical with the set in the engine room, so, no doubt, it was the same pair. This set was also destroyed by rats, after five eggs had been laid.

In thirty-two sets that were allowed to hatch, the incubation lasted for fourteen days and the young, in every case, left the nest in fourteen days. The male always helped in the matter of feeding and after the young left the nest, the female generally let him do most of the work of feeding and instructing the young to fly.

A friend in town had a pair to build in a hanging basket of flowers just outside the front door, and they would help the old birds in the matter of feeding by getting the mud houses of the mud daubers, and break them open and lay them on the ground. The old wren would take out the young grubs and feed them to the young and would herself eat the spiders that were confined in these mud houses.

When the young were nearly full fledged, however, they would feed them some of the spiders.

The last nest I noticed was in my house and on August 10th, held a set of five that had been set on for a

week. I moved to Jacksonville the 11th, and cannot say how this pair made out with raising the brood.

This wren is a versatile nest builder and can be found in almost every location from cans to cavities in a bank along side a road. In holes in posts, old hats hanging up in an out house, in dwellings in corners on shelves, etc. etc. Almost every deserted old house in the country has its wren nest and were it not for the rats, there would be no telling how many wrens we would have, as it is, however, the increase is not noticeable.

To me the Florida Wren is the finest singer we have and while the much famed Mockingbird is a good one, he is only an amateur compared to some wrens I have known here. The wrens song has the fire and vigor to it that thrills one as the song of no other bird does. While partial to the vicinity of man, this wren also seeks the densest swamps and I have found them breeding in swamps five miles from any habitation. But his vigorous song is just the same there as when near man. This bird is an optimist and I have never seen the male fail to sing, no matter what his troubles are, and a man is fortunate, indeed when he can live here where he can have a pair as daily companions for the year round.

O. E. BAYNARD.

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The following clipping is now drifting through the rural press in Illinois:

"One of the finest private collections of birds' eggs belongs to A. E. Price at Grant Park. This collection consists of about 10,000 eggs which are arranged in a cabinet, each named and labeled. He has two eggs worth \$25. Eggs of all Illinois birds are included in this collection."

This shows the value by which the average person measures birds' eggs. It is safe to say that our friend Price does not measure the value of his collection in dollars at all. He is to high class a scientist for that. It debases and demoralizes oology to commercialize it.

The value of a specimen depends upon three things; first, the absolute accuracy of identification; second, the character, standing and rank of the name attached to the data accompanying the specimen; and third, the method of preparation.

The man who simply measures the value of specimens in dollars and cents is a poor oologist indeed. If they represent nothing better than that, he should at once donate them to some scientific institution and go out of the business. A collection of eggs should represent years of accumulated knowledge and personal reminiscences connected with the taking of the specimen; it should be measured by the amount of knowledge acquired, and by the pleasure of the reminiscences, not by dollars and cents. As a matter of fact, no bird's egg has any intrinsic value whatever.

#### From Tasmania.

"The Tasmanian Naturalist" published in the Island of Tasmania, in the South Seas, have on their records, a pair of "Welcome Swallows" that raised one perfect albino bird in each of three successive broods. Now if albinism is a disease, then this pair had a bad dose, eh?

#### Which Shrike Is It?

Although I never considered the Shrike a nice bird, yet I have always had quite an interest in it on account of its peculiar makeup and habits; and it is surely of value to the farmer's crops as it must destroy great

numbers of destructive beetles, grasshoppers, field mice and other pests.

I know of several pairs of these birds that nest about Auburn, N. Y., each year.

Early in May, 1908, I found a nest in a bunch of wild apple trees which was the nicest I have ever seen, being heavily lined with the cotton of dried cat-tails of a rich buff color. It contained three eggs. I visited the nest again in a week, and found the female sitting on six very pretty eggs. I quickly withdrew and watched for a half-hour through my glasses. The female returned to the nest immediately. In a short time the male came with food which his mate accepted with vibrating wings, and making a loud, rasping, squeaking sound. This occurred twice while I was watching. At no time during my visit was the male more than a hundred yards away from the nest.

Now the question in mind, is which Shrike is this. I had always supposed that this central New York State bird was the White-rumped, but during a short conversation with Mr. L. A. Fuertes last Spring, he told me that this is the Migrant Shrike, the White-rumped being the more Western species. Are not his statements authentic?

Would like to hear from some of the Oologist readers.

L. D. LEACH.

It is the Migrant Shrike.—Editor.  
A Letter.

The following letter was received from an old time subscriber to THE OOLOGIST, and is too good and too true to be hidden in a dust-covered file. Mr. Ingalls' name years ago was well-known in the bird world.

"R. M. Barnes:—

I was very much surprised to receive a copy of 'THE OOLOGIST'. It

had been a long time since I received a copy. I had supposed it had passed and gone. It is the same old familiar paper and still it is not the same. What has become of the old boys whose names used to appear from time to time. Search as I may, I can only find two or three left. I know they have not ceased to love and study the birds, but have passed on to the sterner realities of life. I trust they are better and nobler men on account of the time and enjoyment spent in the fields and woods among the birds.

"It takes me back to the happy hours I spent with my chum Dan, searching through the old Hyde Park District, south of Chicago; a veritable paradise for birds in days gone by. Where is Dan now? I cannot say, working away on books in some office I presume; also where are the birds that used to occupy the old haunts. Only those that knew the old district can realize the great change which the great city has made. I wish THE OOLOGIST great success, for it has a mission of its own, and I believe every boy or man who studies the birds is made better for it.

JOHN W. INGALLS"

#### Wyoming Juncos.

Dear Oologist:—

I send you herewith, two photos with notes, that may be of some interest to your readers. The set n-4, is that of the Montana Junco and the set n-5, the Oregon Junco—both photos taken in situ by Dr. Moody.

The most unusual thing connected with these photographs, is that of the Oregon Junco set, which contains, as may be plainly seen, 5 eggs. You will also notice that the surrounding shrubbery is that of a pine. The fact of an Orange Junco laying 5 eggs is something very uncommon; but to



PLATE 22. Oregon Junco's Nest and Eggs.  
—Photo by C. S. Moody, Mullan, Idaho.

find a nest placed in a shrub, several feet from the ground, is truly rare.

My friend Moody and I were nest hunting one sunny Spring afternoon and on our way homeward, for convenience sake, walked along the top of a large mining flume. Our days investigations were far from satisfactory to us and we were filing along Indian fashion, in no over-pleasant frame of mind. In close proximity to the flume, so close that one could touch it, grew a stunted pine about 6 feet high. The top had been broken off by some destructive pedestrian, which caused a "bunchy" growth to form where the top should be. It seemed to me an ideal place for a nest of some kind—in fact, I had a presentiment I would find something there—and I gave the clump a rap with my improved walking stick. It was as I had expected. Mrs. Oregon Junco flushed in a rather hasty manner and a short search revealed the nest, well made. Incubation had begun.

The next day Dr. Moody photographed the nest.

My only solution to the problem of this unusual nesting site, is, that on account of the numerous gophers and chipmunks which infested that vicinity, nesting on the ground was an uncertain undertaking. I have found many nests destroyed by these little pests and it is seldom one finds a ground bird nesting near their colonies.

The other set (Montana Junco), was found in the damp, swampy lowlands of a small river bottom, placed upon the ground amongst the sprouts and grass, at the base of an Alder. This, to my certain knowledge, was the 3d set of this Junco, as a friend of mine obtained the first; the second was discovered by me and, leaving it for a call the next day, I returned to the spot only to find evidence of a "meas-

ly" Gopher's visit. Result—no eggs. The third set of this bird was placed within 50 yards of the other two.

This species, the whole family included, are quarrelsome in the highest degree and it is no uncommon thing to see a "scrap" near the nesting site, occasioned by the accidental intrusion of a neighbor.

Both the Montana and Oregon nest very early here and also very late, as may be seen by the fact that my dates show a set taken on the 29th of March and one on the 3rd of August. The first set mentioned was placed on an open hillside on a bare spot about 8 feet square, the rest of the hill being covered with snow. The set found August 3rd was fresh. I also have a date of one set July 18th, but these were badly incubated—too much so to save.

While this record of the unusual length of the nesting period of these Juncos does not definitely determine it, still it sets one to thinking that there may be more than one brood a season. I think further investigations along this line will verify the suspicion.

In the Clearwater section of Idaho, I have seen a Spurred Towhee raise two broods in one season, building the new nest for the second brood within a yard of the first. The site was within 10 feet of a public road and practically in town. This bird was evidently of a sociable disposition, but she did not owe the successful rearing of her broods to the unusual quality of the boys in the neighborhood or the dislike for Towhee meat by the cats in the vicinity. She had placed the nest in a large pile of thorn brush, impenetrable by either man or beast. The nesting song of the male drew me to the spot and I easily flushed the mother bird. A long search—unnecessary to say a care-





PLATE 23. Montana Junco's Nest and Eggs—a near view.  
—Photo by C. S. Moady, Mullan, Idaho.

ful one for several reasons—revealed the nest, placed on the ground under the densest part. From a convenient peephole in the top of the pile, I carefully observed the proceedings of the happy family during the rest of the season.

I have no designs on the membership of our ex-President's Annanias Club nor to be at the head of the Nature Fakir Procession, so it is "better" I stop. As Mr. Roosevelt probably has not noticed the above Ornithological items in the form of a personal experience, I would immediately be consigned to the aforementioned Clubs were this to come to his notice.

It is "better to be right, than President." Perhaps (who knows?) that was the real reason of a third term refusal.

But this is carrying Ornithology into Politics, which I must not do for the sake of Ornithology.

L. B. HOWSLEY.

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#### Curians.

I was much interested in examining a Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella socialis*) female, evidently a mature bird, but as it was September 24th when brought to me, I could not determine whether it had bred this season or not. This was at Solon, Cortland County, New York, and a neighbor's cat caught the bird as it was trying to walk. On each claw, excepting the left hind one, which was in a normal state, there were large puffed up growths, rather soft to the touch, but so deforming the claws that the bird was unable apparently to perch, or only with difficulty, and as noted above was quite unable to hop about the ground as this species so likes to do.

The skin though quite mutilated in the conflict with the "Mouser," I now

have, and the largest abnormal growth measures about one-fourth inch in length by three-sixteenths in diameter, and like the other four, completely encircles the claw. But three of the nails at the end of the claws are visible.

What is this disease called, and how long we wonder, could the bird have cared for itself. I have frequently seen birds less a claw, and in one instance, a Red-tailed Hawk that had one foot destroyed by shot, remained an entire summer in the same locality, where it received the injury. I have frequently observed other wounded birds, but never before a specimen afflicted as was this one; not even in domestic fowls, where malformations, which this possibly may have been, are not uncommon. When I refer this specimen to the Linnaen Society at its next meeting, Dr. Dwight, or others may explain the cause of the growth or of the disease if it were that.

A double oriole's nest taken years ago when a youth, also interests me; one section of it containing the eggs, being larger and deeper than the apartment joined to it, perhaps for the accommodation of the male bird; certainly built at about the same time, judging from the condition of the materials; both sections being well woven, chiefly of wrapping twine and other string, and the egg receptacle lined with finer materials, as is usual with this species.

With well wishes for the Oologist and to its editor and readers,

F. W. HYDE.

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#### An Albino Bob White.

At the opening of the game season in Maryland, two white "Bob-whites" were noticed in a covey of that species near St. Michels. After much

faithful and patient gunning on the part of the gunners, one sportsman was fortunate enough to secure one of the much desired birds on November 18, 1909, which is now being mounted by a taxidermist. The bird was pure white with a few brown feathers on the head, the left wing had a brown blotch upon it, which covered about one-half of that member; also a few brown feathers on the right thigh and tail. The upper part of the bill was white and lower half black, feet pink. It was a very beautiful bird. The other bird is said to be entirely pure white.

EUGENE KEITHLEY.

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#### Notes on the Birds of California.

I was thinking that possibly a few of my notes on some of our California Birds might interest the readers of THE OOLOGIST.

March 8, 1908, I found a nest of the Western Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus pallescens*), placed in a tall sycamore tree thirty-five feet from the ground. The nest extended through a hole in the tree four feet with the entrance a foot and a half in diameter. The nest part of it consisted of bones, straw, leaves, bits of hair scattered here and there, and a few feathers. This great bird has nested here for two consecutive seasons. On mounting to the nest I found it to contain three eggs of a whitish color.

April 8, 1908, I found a Burrowing Owl's (*Cunicularia Hypogaea*) nest, placed snugly away down a squirrel's hole about three feet down, running under the outer coat of the earth. It contained five eggs of a whitish color. The eggs measured (average): 1.24x1.03. The Burrowing Owls are as cute as any one of the owl family. They will sit in pairs at the entrance of their hole and talk in low, murmuring

tones. While flying over the meadows and hills they are pleasing to the sight of any Bird Naturalist.

May 11, 1908, I collected a set of four eggs of the Cooper Hawk (*Accipiter Cooperi*). They were of a light blue color, and but faintly spotted with brown. The nest being placed in a live oak thirty feet from the ground. I think it was an old crow's nest. Three eggs averaged 2.06x1.62. This little falcon is the most common of our small hawks except the Desert Sparrow Hawk, that we have nesting in our country. He stirs up an awful racket in nesting season.

February 20, 1908. I discovered the nest of the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), in the San Gabriel Mountains of California. This nest was placed in a large Yellow Pine tree of the mountains, fifty-eight feet about from the ground. It was made up of large sticks, lined with straw, leaves, hair and feathers. Four feet deep and five feet in diameter. On climbing to the nest I found it to contain two eggs of a whitish color, light spotted with red. Early in the morning they take their morning bath in the brook, and are a beautiful bird to look upon, but rather a fierce one.

May 20, 1908. I flushed up a Valley partridge from her nest which contained sixteen eggs. The quail, which we call it, is a very common bird of the West.

May 18, 1908 I secured a set of four Scott Orioles (*Icterus Parisorum*). They were of a light blue, marked with brown and gray. They measured 0.96x0.68 in size. A pouch-shaped nest woven of grasses, string and Yucca fibre hung under Yucca plant.

This is one of California's favorites. Beautiful of color and grand in song. The eggs are rather rare now at present, for the bird is becoming scarce.

June 1, 1908. I secured a set of

two eggs of the Anna Humming Bird from an oak tree twenty feet from the ground.

June 8, 1908. I found a nest of the Sonoran Red-winged Black bird (*Agelaius phoeniceus* Sonoransis). The nest being placed in tules of a lake six feet from the water's edge. Rowing out to the tules I discovered a set of four, light bluish green, generally marbled, spotted and streaked with brown, black and purple. They measured 1.00x0.68. A very common bird of the rivers and swamps of California.

This is the latest I've collected this season.

ALFRED COOKMAN.

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#### FROM NEW ZEALAND.

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##### The "Moa."

Is an extinct New Zealand Bird; only the Skeletons are now found, and generally in Limestone caves. Only one known skeleton has been found with feathers. When the skeletons are set up, the head reaches the height of from nine to twelve feet.

A few of the eggs have been found, which are not so large considering the size of the bird. The Maories, or natives of New Zealand have a tradition that these birds used to pick up the babies and run away with them; and they chased them into the caves. (This is doubted).

##### The "Kiwi"

is a wingless bird of New Zealand. Burrows underground; only comes out at night. The eggs are large for the size of the bird.

##### The "Kea"

or Ground Parrot is most destructive to sheep. Will get on their backs and pick out the kidney fat. They live in burrows or tree stumps.

#### An Iowa Winter Tragedy.

January 29, 1909, there came one of the worst storms ever known in this section. Not the coldest, nor the deepest snow. It was more of a sleety snow, with a gale blowing from the North.

Many horses and cattle perished, all over Iowa. The sleet froze all over them, their eyes were frozen shut, and their nostrils filled and frozen up until they suffocated. One herd of thirty-nine young, fat cattle a few miles north of here all died. But what I started to tell, was that very few wild winter birds escaped. The number of Crows has greatly diminished. Many English Sparrows were found dead by the telephone "trouble men," the next day; though plenty of them were in well sheltered places, and lived through, though in greatly diminished numbers.

But our saucy, audacious Bluejay has not been seen; not one so far as my observation goes, while the little field birds, and the Nuthatches are nearly wiped out. I have not seen many Woodpeckers, where before they were plentiful. Quails also are all gone. I miss the scolding, mischievous Bluejay most of all.

By the way, why do they so persistently steal and fly away with hickory and walnuts? They will work from early morning to dark, stealing nuts from a shed where the boys have put them to dry; surely they cannot use them in anyway. Is it pure mischief, or is it one of nature's ways to propagate and scatter our forest trees? Do they steal them from the trees and carry them off a long distance and then drop them to become seed for a new forest?

I have never seen just how or where they dispose of them, but they will come back every few minutes all day for a nut, even in their zeal forget-

ting to scream and scold. Now tell us all about it, ye wise ones.

Kindest wishes to the Oologist and the Editor.

F. S. SMITH.

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#### Quail.

One of our subscribers reports a flock of Partridges (Quail) flying into the town of Petersburg, Va., and alighting in trees where a portion of them were killed by a young lady with a rifle; and adds, "The laws prohibiting the sale of partridges have evidently increased their numbers. I am told they are more numerous than formerly."

The common quail is increasing all over the West and would increase much more rapidly were it not for the incessant warfare waged against these very beneficial birds by hunters and allged sportsmen. Every Quail is worth \$5.00 per annum to the general public because of its energy in the destruction of insects. They should be taken from the game list entirely and protected for good.

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#### The Lizard Cuckoo.

*Saurothera merlini* dicolor; 1, 21 in. t. 12 in. Above brown with a tinge of olive; throat and breast grayish; under parts pale chestnut; primaries rufous tipped with olive; outer tail feathers tipped with white "with a subterminal bar of black"; bare skin around eye, and iris bright red.

This Cuckoo, with the exception of the Ani, is the commonest representative of the family Cuculidae which we have here. Although quite common, it has a way of getting about without being so often seen as it is heard.

Unlike our Cuckoos of the North, it prefers the undergrowth and low trees, to treetops. Its favorite resorts

are along the rivers, although it is found everywhere that there is sufficient undergrowth. When climbing, it runs up the tree spirally around the trunk by means of the small branches. From its quick movements, color, and long tail, one's first impression is that he is in the North, and there is fine fox squirrel. It feeds on the Stripped Lizards and Chameleons. Its notes are much more varied than those of the other Cuckoos; some of them are the familiar ones and others (the most often heard) are like a bird in distress, such as being slowly strangled to death by a snake.

A. C. READ.

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#### Isle of Pines Trogon.

*Priotelus timnrus viscus*, 1, 9 in., 4.6 in. t. 6 in. Crown, black with purple reflections gradually shading to bright green on the back; tail green shading to purple on tip; three outer tail feathers tipped and barred with white; more or less white on primaries; under parts grayish; lower mandible, under tail coverts and iris vermilion; upper mandible with several notches; stiff hair-like feathers at base of bill; toes, four; two in front and two behind.

The Trogon, one of our most brilliant birds, is a lover of the thick jungles and may often be seen sitting on a branch where a ray of sunlight falls upon its iridescent back. I have often seen it feeding flycatcher fashion and return to the same perch after some successful flight after an insect. It seems more plentiful during the rainy season than during the winter, although a tramp through the jungle at almost any time rarely fails to produce at least one or two individuals. From the natives I learn that it nests in hollow branches, trees, etc., but I have been unable to find any nests yet.

A. C. READ.

**Additions.**

I wish to add the following to my list of Isle of Pine Birds:

West Indian Killdeer.

Yellow Palm Warbler (1 individual seen after a heavy storm.)

Marsh Hawk (Seen on several occasions.)

Black-throated Green Warbler (2).

Wilson's Snipe.

Pigeon, *Columba inornata*. ✓

Myrtle Warbler.

Tennessee Warbler.

Cuban Crested Flycatcher.

A. C. READ.

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**Strange Nesting Sites.**

Sunday, May 9, 1909, about ten o'clock a. m., a friend and I were walking along a road nine miles north of Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. We came to a school house yard, and while we stopped to rest a few minutes, I went into a small outhouse to look for Wren's nests, and seeing some dry grass protruding from the hollow in the cave, I pulled myself up to look down into it, and to my surprise there sat an American Sparrow Hawk. I put my hand down and lifted her up. After securely fastening her in a covered basket, which I carried, I returned to examine the eggs. There were five of them, far advanced in incubation. This must be of rare occurrence.

In June, 1909, a man told me that he had found a "Redbird's" nest in an old shed about a half mile from town. As I passed this shed some time later, I happened to think of what the man had told me, and went in the shed to look for the nest, and sure enough I found it. It was built in a space, between a large roll of fence wire, which hung from a nail on the wall, and the wall of hrough boards. The young had

left the nest only a short time previous.

Has any reader of THE OOLOGIST ever heard of the Cardinal nesting in a building?

S. S. DICKEY.

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**Unusual.**

Monday, April 12th, 1909, while I was walking through an orchard three miles West of Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, I passed by a good sized apple tree, on which were several large dead limbs about eight feet from the ground. From one of these dead limbs, flew a Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*). I climbed up to the limb and there resting in a hollow, close to the trunk was the nest. It contained two fresh eggs and to my surprise, close to the eggs was a dead Field Mouse, with its head partly eaten. It had likely been there for a day or two, as its head, where the blood had flown out was dry.

I do not know whether the Dove had been eating the mouse or not, but this is surely a strange circumstance.

S. S. DICKEY.

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**Additions to Our Cabinets for 1909.**

We have recently added to our cabinet, a little over three fifths of the entire collection of birds eggs of F. T. Corless, of Portland, Oregon.

In January, 1909, we came into possession of the entire collection of birds eggs, formerly belonging to W. Lee Chambers of Santa Monica. Mr. Chambers is one of Southern California's best known bird men; and is at present Secretary of the Cooper Club and business manager of The Condor. His collection contained an unusual percentage of rare and choice specimens. Philo W. Smith, whose name

is well known to all leading oologists in North America first started collecting birds eggs many years ago at Smithsburo, Illinois. Later he removed to Greenville, where he continued his explorations. Then he removed to St. Louis and while there added very largely to his collection, both by purchase, exchange and personal collecting trips extending into Northern Minnesota, Southern Texas and Arizona. Of late years Mr. Smith has done little in oology and is now located at Eureka Springs, Arkansas, where he is engaged in the jewelry business. His entire collection has lately become the property of the proprietor of this magazine. Mr. Smith prided himself while gathering this collection together on the careful preparation of the specimens.

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#### Bird Accidents.

Mr. Rockey's note in the last Oologist regarding the accidental "hanging" of a Green Heron, prompts me to record the somewhat similar fate of a Robin, which I found a few days ago hanging head downward from the branch of a shade tree in Ithaca. Its feet were entangled in a quantity of cotton twine with which it had evidently begun the construction of a nest on the branch from which it hung. The condition of the bird indicated that it probably perished in the spring or summer.

Another similar case, in which a young House Wren figured, came to my attention last summer. The House Wrens had reared a brood of nestlings in a bird box and the young had been out of the nest two or three days; yet one of the parent birds occasionally returned to the box with food. This led me to investigate and a young Wren was found a prisoner bound to

the nest by one foot which was hopelessly caught in the materials of the nest. The bird seemed strong and vigorous, but its struggles to free itself were in vain. Examination showed that the toes of this foot were gone, possibly had been amputated by the bird as a last, though fruitless means of escape. It was carefully extracted from the nest and before night had joined its brothers on the wing.

A. D. DuBOIS.

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#### Virgil W. Owens.

We have never had the pleasure of either meeting or knowing Mr. Owens by correspondence. His work, however, is well known to us. In years gone by, he collected largely in Southern California, Arizona and New Mexico and in our thirty years of experience in handling Oological specimens, we can truthfully say we have never seen specimens from the hand of any collector which averages as neat in their preparation as those accompanied by the datas signed, Virgil W. Owens.

Mr. Owens is certainly a small hole crank; be it to his credit. We have many, many hawks eggs in our collection prepared by Mr. Owens blown with a No. 0 drill, and smaller eggs with holes in proportion. In marking his specimens, Mr. Owens has been exquisitely neat and it is a pleasure to testify to his careful painstaking work along these lines. Without doubt, a man with habits of this character in this line of work would be equally painstaking and conscientious in the every day affairs of life.

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#### Appreciated.

More than thirty-five percent. of the members of the Cooper Ornithological Club of California are at this time

subscribers to THE OOLOGIST; and more than twenty-five per cent of the members of the American Ornithologists' Union now have their names on our subscription list. This may give our readers some idea of the rank and standing of our readers.

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#### Volume 26.

With this issue we close Volume 26.

In January, 1884, THE OOLOGIST first saw the light of day. From that time on it has had a precarious existence, sometimes riding the foamy crest of the wave of success and other times wading laboriously through the slough of despond. We leave it to our readers whether or not since the first issue of the magazine under our management, in April last, it has improved or retrograded.

There are not many bird publications that have lived for twenty-six years. The mere fact that THE OOLOGIST has survived that long is of itself evidence that there is a field for it, and that with proper support it will remain a recognized medium for the interchange of specimens and ideas appertaining to oology, ornithology, and taxidermy. And we bespeak of our readers, such support.

---

#### Mean!

William Hartley of Pierre, South Dakota, Robert W. Glenn of Worcester, Ohio, and Dr. J. B. Newton of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, belong to the class of little people who will regularly take our journal from the post office for a long period of time and then all at once refuse it, and decline to pay for it because of the fact that the subscription price is so cheap that they know it will not pay us to take legal steps to collect that which is justly due us. There are

some people that would take the penalties from their dead grandmother's eyes; not many of them however.

---

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#### Fair Warning.

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R. M. BARNES.

---

#### The Towhee in Kansas.

The Towhee is a common resident in eastern Kansas although seldom seen. It was in the National Military Home that I first made my acquaintance with the shy little birds.

One rainy morning, as I was going through the woods, I noticed a Towhee hopping about in the underbrush, and stopped to watch it. I had been there but a short time when I saw the female a little way off and naturally transferred my attention immediately. Being the first time I had ever seen any Towhees, I was quite an interested watcher. The little lady did not pay any attention to me, for I kept in the background as I was anxious to learn more about them.



After about two hours watching, she finally disappeared in a bunch of grass so I started out to investigate. Upon nearing the place, she fluttered out and to my delight disclosed her neat little nest.

The nest was made of fine grasses and rootlets, placed in a depression under a large plant. It was only about three feet from a small spring, on a little hill. The eggs were four in number, but there was also a Cow-bird's egg in the nest.

URI B. WORCESTER.

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**To The Farmers.**

The Audubon Society truthfully says in a recently issued leaflet "If the bird laws are to be improved, it can only be done through the powerful influence of the grangers, who are more deeply interested than any class of citizens. Every bird that is wastefully destroyed, means a loss of money to the agriculturist of New York.

The millinery trade does not wish the bird laws changed. It fights every attempt to improve them. Have you ever contrasted the relative size of the two interests—millinery and agriculture? If not, carefully examine the following figures taken from the last United States Census report.

Capital invested in the wholesale and retail millinery business in the State of New York.....\$11,805,903

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There are 226,720 farms in the state almost a quarter of a million farmers and their families depend on the products of these farms. There are 22,648,109 acres in these farms. Every acre harbors swarms of insects and

rodent pests that destroy crops, entailing an enormous loss annually.

Birds are the means supplied by the Creator that keep in check insect and rodent pests. Farmers, are you willing to have your best friends destroyed? In 1900 you spent \$27,102,130 for labor; the birds work for you without pay. Can you do less for them than to see that they have the fullest legal protection?"

All of which we fully endorse and are decidedly sorry to see the backward step taken by the present Federal administration through Collector Leob of the port of New York in ordering the vast number of aigrettes recently seized in a New York Custom House to be sold and thereby get into the channels of commerce instead of being destroyed as they should have been.

---

Our friend Prof. H. E. Hall of the Mansfield, Ohio High school is associated with Prof. S. S. Hine Ohio State University in the publication of a new work entitled, "The Mammals of Ohio." Without doubt it will be up to standard, coming from the hands of two such scientists as Professors Hall and Hine.

---

**SAMPLE COPIES.**

With this issue we are mailing a large number of sample copies, and especially request our subscribers that if they receive more than one copy of THE OOLOGIST to give or send the duplicate to some person interested in birds, nests or eggs. By so doing, they will confer a favor on the present management, and also add to the subscription list, and thereby help build up the magazine.

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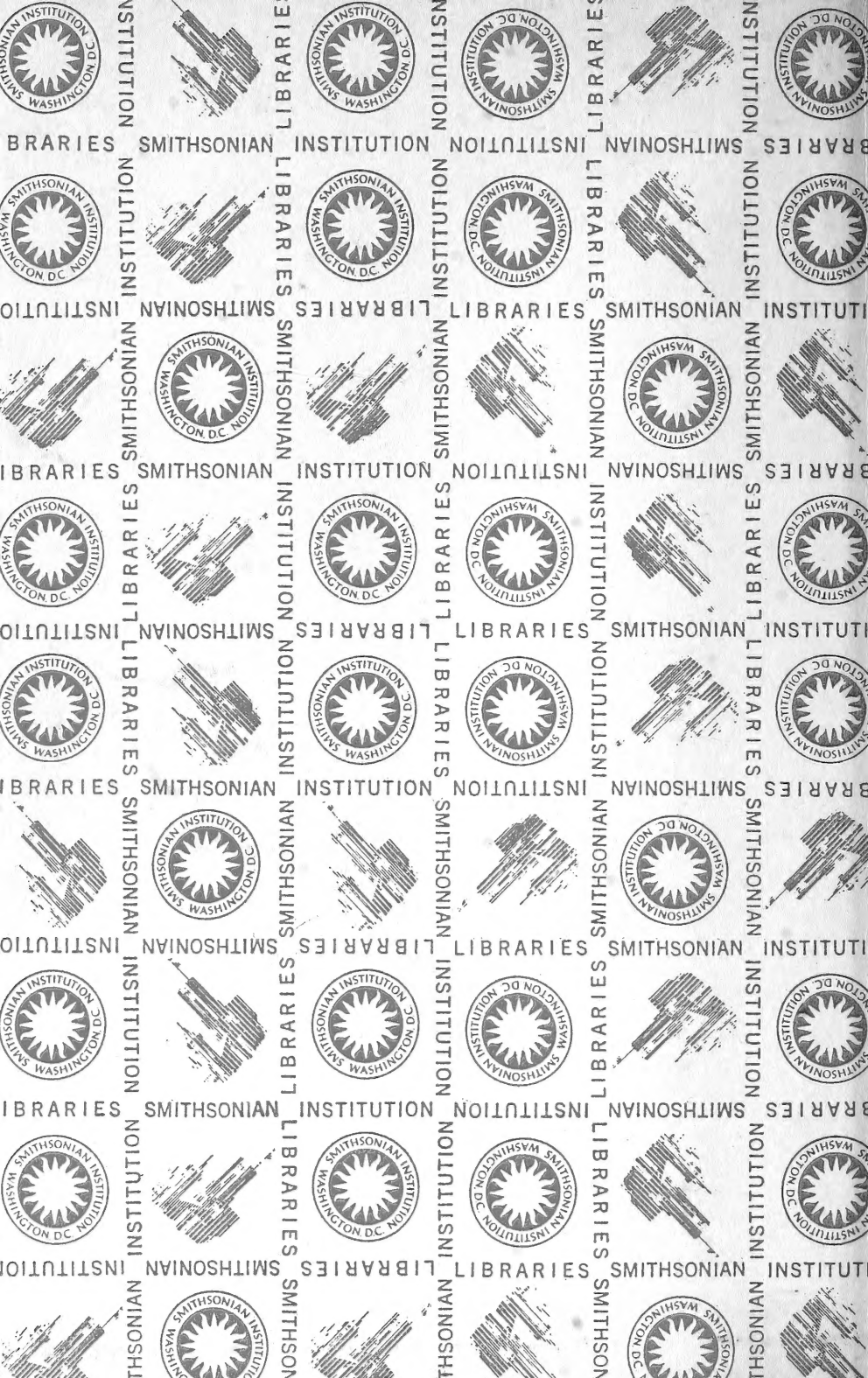
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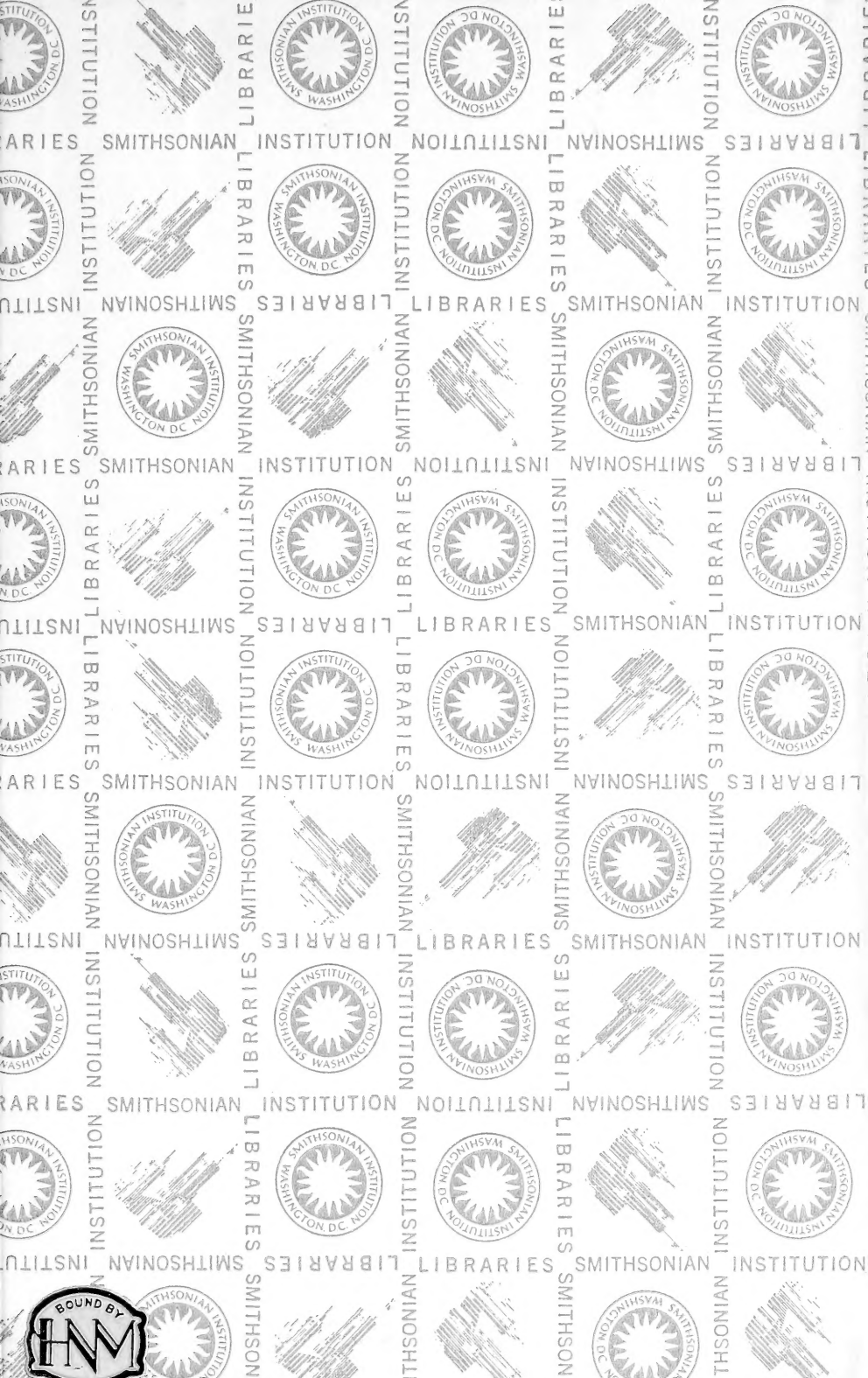
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