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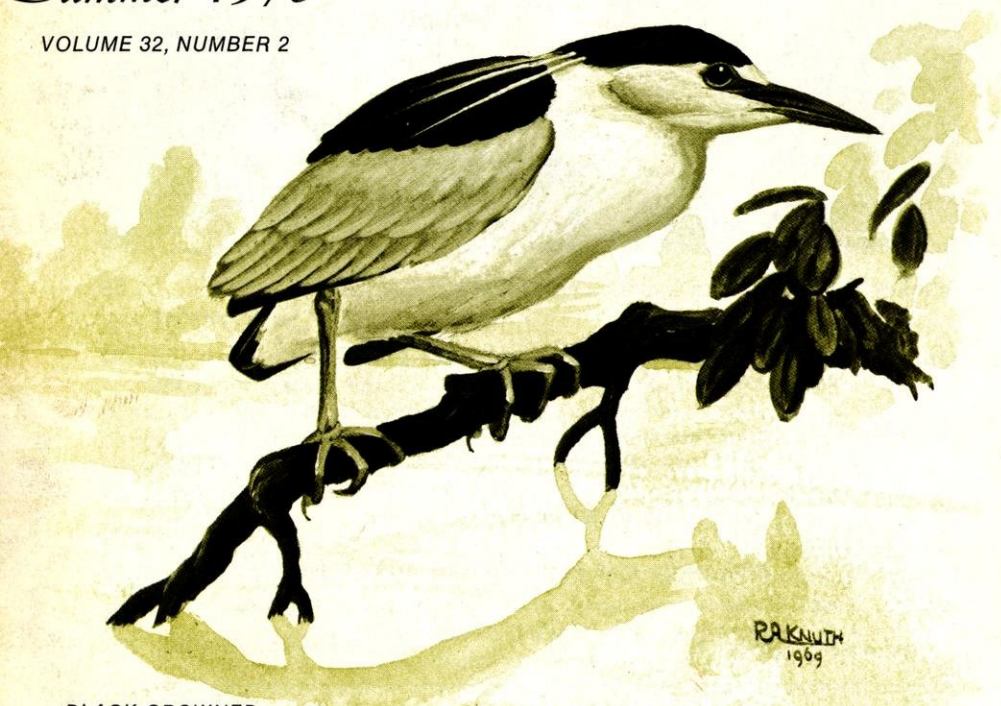
A MAGAZINE OF WISCONSIN BIRD STUDY

The Passenger Pigeon

Summer 1970

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 2



BLACK-CROWNED
NIGHT HERON

Painted by
R. A. Knuth

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Cover Art by R. A. KNUTH

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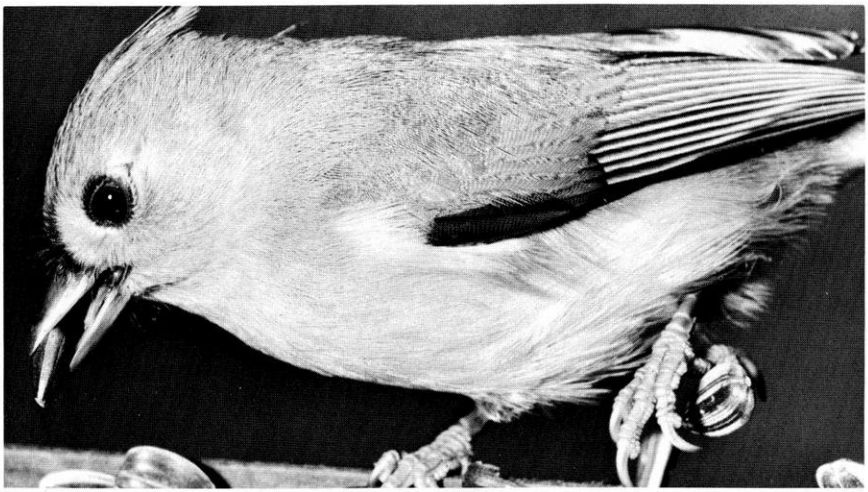
Automation in Bird Photography

By RICHARD P. HERZFELD

The PASSENGER PIGEON has been privileged to have some excellent photographs taken by Mr. Richard Herzfeld of Hartland, Wisconsin, used on its cover. These photos have aroused a good deal of interest.

After a good deal of correspondence we finally received permission to reprint from the JOURNAL OF THE BIOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATION, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 53-62, the following. For further technical details the reader is referred to this reference.



TUFTED TITMOUSE

— Photo by Richard P. Herzfeld

Photographing small birds in flight presents a somewhat different problem from that of ordinary bird photography. A spot should be found to set up the photographic equipment and enticing the birds to it, rather than bring the equipment to the natural habitat of the birds.

High speed flash equipment usually is heavy and difficult to transport. Availability of AC current is extremely helpful. If one would wish to set up high speed flash equipment in the field far from such current, a battery and transformer would be required adding consideraby to the overall weight problem. There have been successful attempts in this direction by using a transformer attached to an automobile battery.

A great many small birds are easily trained to come to a feeding station and this then can be the site for the photographic equipment. The birds become accustomed to it and will soon ignore camera, light beam and flash equipment if the camera is automatic and frequent visits to the feeder are minimized. In locating the "studio", consideration must be given to background so that bushes and trees will not clash with the picture of the bird itself. Trees and foliage should be close enough to give the birds a feeling of safety and yet not be so close as to allow them to

hop to the feeder from a branch without flying. Some birds will be brash enough to fly right to the nearby vantage point of the camera or flash equipment and then hop on to the feeder. Generally they prefer to be in a nearby bush or tree. If these are not too far away they will fly to the feeder in the direction of greatest open area. This will also be true when they depart from the feeder.

An ornithologist would have an advantage because he knows a great deal of what to expect from the birds he is attempting to photograph. He will know what type of feed to use, what time of day they prefer to feed, the kind of bushes and trees they like, etc. However, the problem is not insurmountable for the average individual without this specialized knowledge. A little time spent each day in watching the birds in the neighborhood and some reading of bird books will bring ample knowledge to begin.

It would probably pay to set up imitation equipment for a few days so that birds will get used to its presence. Tin cans representing a strobe flash, camera, and the light beam equipment located where you intend to install the real flash, etc., will be helpful. After the birds have become accustomed to the equipment, changes can be made to suit the conditions.

Having accustomed some of the birds of the neighborhood to come to the feeder a number of photographic problems will present themselves. In order to obtain good flight shots, consideration must be given to the location of the camera, light beam and strobe flash in relation to the feeder. The best pictures are those taken as the bird flies to the feeder or when he is about to make a landing; however, very interesting flight pictures are those showing the bird in full flight—side view.

Concentrating the food in a small pile directly in front of the lens should result in the bird flying to the food without stopping nearby and just hopping to the food. In fact, the shape of the feeder can be helpful in this respect. I use a board approximately 3" wide and 12" long set on a half-inch pipe with a flange on top.

I have found that a single light beam is reasonably successful although the percentage of (on target) shots where the bird is exactly centered in the frame is low. It is possible to arrange a double light beam system so that the camera and flash would only trigger if a bird flies through both beams at the crossing point. Additional equipment narrows the available flight area for the birds. I chose, therefore, in my setup to eliminate the second light beam.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

— Photo by Richard P. Herzfeld

Another factor of importance is the winding of the film and resetting the shutter after each exposure. Frequent visits to the feeder will frighten most wild birds and the feeder will not be popular. The answer to this problem is an automatic rewinding camera. There are several automatic cameras on the market, some with electric rewinds and others spring wound. Mine is a Robot Royal which is spring wound and will take eight to ten successive shots with one winding.

In using 35mm film, an image of at least one-quarter to one-half of the negative is highly desirable if 8x10 or larger prints are required. The standard 50mm lens on 35mm cameras would require a number two supplementary lens which brings the distance between the camera and the light beam to 19". This results in a usable image even for birds as small as the chickadee. I sometimes use a 75mm lens which makes it possible to set the camera somewhat farther away and leaves a larger flying area.

A further problem to be overcome is that of background. The flash equipment which I use consists of two high speed strobes with a fairly

short range. Background objects, such as bushes, are underexposed at ten feet. This brings about a dark background against which the birds will show up very well. Additional strobes to light up a suitable background might be desirable where there are dark colored subjects. Backlighting might be achieved, too, in this manner. Any additional equipment, it must be remembered, will tend to restrict the flying areas and therefore keep birds away from the feeder. A large sheet of plywood painted light blue or green can be fastened to ¾" pipes to serve as a permanent background if this does not prove to interfere with birds coming to the feeder freely. A temporary background can be made out of cloth or a window shade can be used. Care must be taken, of course, to have the background cover the areas encompassed by the lens.

Cameras with focal-plane shutters should not be used. These shutters will synchronize with strobe only at 1/25th to 1/50th of a second. In bright sunlight a secondary or ghost image will be created even if small lens openings are being used. The strobe flash should be the only light which will impress the film. The in-between lens type of shutters are sychronized for strobe up to 1/500th second so the ghost image is eliminated.

It will probably be necessary to make tests of the amount of light generated by the strobe flashes, placing them at various distances from the light beam in order to establish the best exposure for the type of film being used. My strobes seem to give good lighting at four feet using Kodachrome 1 at F8. If black and white film, such as Plus X, is used F16 is about right.

You may ask why it is desirable to use lens openings as small as F11-F-16. The smaller the diaphragm opening the greater the depth of field. At close range this is only a few inches at best. Even a small bird could, by the position of his wings, trigger the camera in passing through the light beam and be partly out of focus. Thus the smaller lens openings bring a dual advantage of helping to eliminate ghost images and increasing the depth of field.

If an artificial background is used there is a danger of shadows being thrown against it. To overcome this it might be necessary to have an additional strobe unit to light the background. Another way to avoid shadows would be to set the strobe units somewhat above the area covered by the lens so as to throw any shadows downward, out of range.

The solenoid triggering device I use was designed and made by Mr. Ed Moll of the Milwaukee Public Museum. The 110-volt solenoid is mounted on an aluminum frame which also acts as a camera support and is fitted with a tripod socket. The solenoid lever attachment should be made to suit the particular design of the camera.

The photo-electric equipment was made by Mr. Armin Schmidt, head of the Photographic Department of the Milwaukee Public Museum. The circuit used in this photo-electric cell system uses a thyratron tube so that there is zero delay in triggering when the light beam is broken. The importance of this can be seen when one realizes the small depth of field and the high speed movement of the birds to and from the feeder.

The strobe lights were designed by Mr. Ed Farber of Delafield, Wisconsin. These strobes are completely self-contained and recycle in about

COMMON GRACKLE

— Photo by Richard P. Herzfeld

seven seconds. The flash duration is 1/20,000th of a second. Slower strobe flash, such as the standard commercial types which operate at 1/1000th to 1/1500th, can be used but sometimes at these slower speeds the wing tips of the birds will be blurred. I have found that the 20,000th of a second flash will stop a humming bird's wings reasonably well.

There are a great many possible arrangements of the automatic bird "studio" which will be suggested by experiment. For example, the light beam could be set up vertically in front of a feeder instead of horizontally as in my case.

The whole process, although reasonably automatic, still has the element of sport. One never knows until the film is processed whether any good pictures resulted. I consider it a successful film if there are one or two well centered and well posed birds on a thirty-six exposure roll. Possibly a small investment in the common stock of one of the big producers of film would help reduce the wear and tear on the exchequer.

BLUE JAY

— Photo by Richard P. Herzfeld

Bird Species and the Tension Zone

By DON BEIMBORN
U-W Zoology

The border between prairie and forest in Wisconsin at the time of white settlement ran in a roughly north-west to south-east direction from St. Croix county to Milwaukee county. This border was certainly not a sharp line, but rather an area up to a hundred miles wide where both prairie and forest intermingled in bits and patches. Many species which were typical of one area migh tbe found in greatly reduced numbers in the other. However, plant species from both associations tend to reach range limits in this area. On the basis of a number of range maps of various plant species, a band can be drawn across the state which comprises a summary of the range limits of a number of plants (Curtis, 1959). This band has often been referred to as the "tension zone".

The location of this zone is indicated on figure 1.

Since birds have a strong dependence upon vegetation, it would be expected that a similar pattern of range limits would exist for bird species in Wisconsin, if for no other reason than the fact that habitats will be somewhat different on different sides of this tension zone. Curtis (1959) pointed out that the margins of the ranges of Mourning Dove and Bobwhite roughly coincide with the tension zone. The best source of range maps for Wisconsin birds appears to be those given by Gromme (1963). The range limits of fourteen of these are shown on figure 2. Some of these lines represent the margins of summer ranges, some of winter ranges. These fourteen were selected because of their close coincidnce with the tension zone. In fact, they nearly obliterate the zone in some portions. Another 25 or more species could also be added. This means that about 20% of the Wisconsin breeding bird species have ranges which show fair agreement with the tension zone.

There are certain problems involved in the assignment of a range to a bird species. Plants can be easily collected in a site where they obviously have lived nearly all their lives. Naturally, this cannot be easily done for bird species. Comparatively few bird specimens exist for most species. Records of nests are even more restricted in numbers and comprehensive records tend to be restricted chiefly to those birds whose nests are easily found because of their large size or relative commonness. Ideally, the range of a bird would be shown by dots on a map, where each dot represents a positive nesting record, or a dot indicates an individual obviously living in a given area. The technique will not only indicate the boundaries of a range, but will give an idea of relative abundance in different parts of the range. An obvious bias will be introduced as some areas are more intensively studied than others. It would be interesting to assemble dot maps of some of the species of birds which reach range limits in the state.

One of the more interesting aspects of the tension zone is the southward extension of northern species along the east shore of Lake Michigan. This aspect of the tension zone curve is shown by comparatively few bird species. However, the great mobility of birds may make it difficult

FIGURE 1:

The "tension zone" in Wisconsin. An area of high density of range limits, representing 180 plant species (Curtis, 1959).

★ marks the location of the banding site mentioned in the text.

FIGURE 2:

Range limits of fourteen bird species:
Ruddy Duck
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Tufted Titmouse
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Loggerhead Shrike
Blue-winged Warbler
Mourning Warbler
Canada Warbler
Western Meadowlark
and Purple Finch
superimposed on the tension zone

to detect such a minor variation in range. This should not be true if some of the qualifications of the previous paragraph were imposed.

It was with this background that I began to consider the southern dip of the tension zone where it narrows toward Lake Michigan in the southeastern corner of Wisconsin. It would appear that some of the species which are characteristic of the northern part of the state should be found in suitable habitats in this area. I have maintained a banding station in Ozaukee County since 1960. This site is indicated on figure 1. It is at the margin of a Tamarrack-Cedar-Ash lowland forest of about 600 acres. The larger expanse of the great Cedarburg bog is located about two miles to the south and east. A number of typically northern plant species such as the Black Spruce (**Picea mariana**) reach southern limits in this area. The netting site itself is located near a pond at the margin of the forest. Birds move to the pond and are caught.

A number of Canada Warblers have been banded over a period of several years. Some of these were banded as immatures in July or August and recaptured in subsequent years (Beimborn, 1967). Although no nest has been found, the bird is apparently a regular summer resident. During 1969, observations and netting was carried out at this site on an almost continuous basis from June 7 to July 18. During this time, Canada Warblers were again banded and also heard singing. In addition, a Winter Wren was found singing near the center of the forest on several separate days. A female Magnolia Warbler was seen near the center of the forest, and a female in brooding condition was banded on June 14. A White-throated Sparrow song was regularly heard in the evenings. These represent only four typically "northern" species whose ranges extend south along the west shore of Lake Michigan. If their ranges as plotted on the map were altered to account for this, the margins would show a close relationship to the range margins of plant species which first gave rise to the placement of the band known as the "tension zone". While these four species were almost certainly breeding in the area, there is as yet no real proof of this. In addition, I feel that this is only a partial list of those typically northern species which actually have range extensions south along the Lake Michigan shore in areas of suitable habitat.

The absence of a species is somewhat more difficult to establish. Observers should be alert to the possibility that some of the western and southern elements of our avifauna may not breed in this narrow band between the tension zone and Lake Michigan even though sightings may be regular during migration.

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Curtis, John T. 1959. The vegetation of Wisconsin. U-W Press, Madison.

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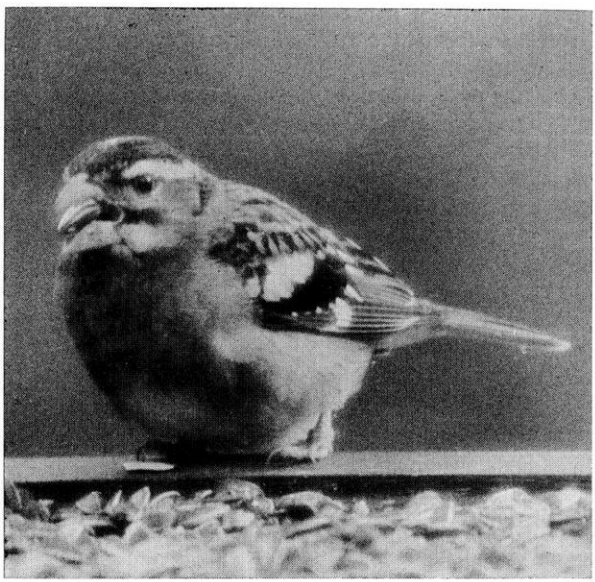
A Pair of Amateur Birders Encounter a New Bird

By DORIS G. BAKER

"There's a new bird at the feeder!" called a surprised George at 7:15 a. m., Nov. 11, 1969. His surprise had special meaning to us because just the day before, after successfully distinguishing a White-throated Sparrow from a female Purple Finch, he had said, "I can identify all these birds now. I'm ready for a new one." Something new to this pair of novice birders meant anything that had not been at our feeders long enough for us to become assured of the identification, such as the Pine Siskins, Redpolls, or Crossbills being seen elsewhere in the city. We were not prepared for anything quite so "new" as a **Black-headed Grosbeak**

The special visitor stayed at the sunflower feeder for three to four minutes, then dropped to the small fish pond nearby for a drink of water. Its total stay was no longer than four minutes, about the same duration as every visit since then.

He came again on Nov. 13 and Nov. 14, and these visits were again during our breakfast. By the end of the third visit, we had explored every plate in our three bird books. We decided it had to be a grosbeak, but there was nothing in the books which pictured a bird with an eye stripe, wings with black and white markings, and the breast almost the color of that of a robin. This orange-yellow color went across the back of its neck, and appeared again on its rump.



BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (juvenile male)
Nov. 22, 1969 at the feeder of Mr. and Mrs. George Baker, Madison, Wisconsin
— Photo by Peter G. Connors

After the third visit of the bird, I called neighbor Martha Lound. (It's very handy for amateur birders to have the Lounds as neighbors.) I told Martha that our new bird looked most like the picture of a Black-headed Grosbeak as it appeared in the National Geographic Society's Song and Garden Birds except that the head was not solid black like the male nor was the breast streaked like the female. Martha agreed to come over at seven a. m. the next morning. Barbara Vogelsang, another enthusiastic Madison birder, also came, and we are indebted to her reluctance to quit watching, for spotting the bird when the rest of us had given up and left the window area. It was 9:00 a. m. when the bird came that morning. Martha agreed—it did look as though it had to be a Black-headed Grosbeak. She left to check it out in Arthur Cleveland Bent's book and we arranged for her to return the next moriing with husband, Roy Lound.

Fortunately, the bird returned, too, and Roy Lound concurred in the identification. The markings on the bird are those described in the Bent book for the male juvenile Black-headed Grosbeak, in first year plumage. Subsequently, N. R. Barger visited and also concurred in the identification.

Peter Connors secured the accompanying photograph while lying prone on our porch in the cold. He had been patiently focusing on the feeder at which the bird had been seen most frequently, but the bird chose a feeder totally out of range of Peter's camera. It attests to Peter's skill that while propped on his elbows, only six feet from the bird, he shifted himself and the camera sufficiently to take pictures. Martha Lound and I secured color photographs, still undeveloped as of this writing.

The grosbeak has been seen most often between 7 and 9 a. m., but we have also noticed him at 10:30 a. m., around noon, at 2:00 p. m. and also 4:00 p. m. His visits remain brief. He impresses all of us as being wary or shy. While he usually feeds at one of the feeders, we have seen him feed on the ground with cardinals, finches and white-throats. He also shares the feeders with other birds.

After his brief visit, he disappears into the dense shrubby growth behind our home, where there is no doubt a plentiful supply of food. The sunflower seeds would seem to be only a diet supplement, for his visits are brief and infrequent. We have not seen him **every** day since November 11, and in fact thought several times that he was no longer around because we had not noticed him for several days in a row. (This may be our fault, not his.) We did think his Thankesgiving Day visit was the last, but were pleased to see him reappear during the snowfall on December 7 at 4:00 p. m.

We hope the flock of Evening Grosbeaks which wintered with us last year reappears before he leaves. It would be interesting to see whether he might join his gregarious cousins.

The black-headed visitor has given us the pleasure of meeting some W. S. O. members and becoming acquainted with **The Passenger Pigeon.** An additional pleasure has been that of providing the well-traveled Lounds with an addition to their life lists—right in their own neighborhood!

Reappearance of Red-Shafted Flicker

By JOAN KLINK

Every flicker that I see I watch carefully. Last year as 1968 was about to become a real snowy Wisconsin winter I observed a flicker at our feeding station. Mentioning it to my husband first brought little response. However on another day as I said "there is that flicker now", my husband with his keen sense of observation said "look, he has a red whisker" and as he flew away we also noted the red shaft. A Red-shafted Flicker at our feeder? We had seen this bird out west but had the feeling that it must be rare in this area.

Our house is located in a heavily wooded, sparsely populated section of Eau Claire, near the northern city limits and about 400 feet from the Chippewa River. We soon decided to invite Dr. Charles Kemper of Chippewa Falls to come see our bird. The flicker usually came daily around noon and sometimes we would see it in the early morning or late afternoon. It fed at our feeder, eating regular wild bird seed and sometimes would choose suet instead.

A day was chosen for Dr. Kemper to come and all were excited. We found that there was no authenticated record of this bird in Wisconsin. We were all planning for our flicker to feed at noon that day. Dr. Kemper came, set up his cameras and got all adjustments made, looked out the window and there was our flicker—a Red-shafted Flicker—now on film record. Paul Blanchard of Eau Claire also visited and made film records.

I last caught a glimpse of the bird on March 3, 1969 as I saw his red shaft as it flew over a nearby woodlot. That is, until today, November 19, 1969—a Red-shafted Flicker visited briefly at our feeding station, two red whiskers and that red shaft. It looks as if another exciting and interesting winter season is at hand.

Searle Offers Pill to Ease Pigeon Problems

Reprinted from the WALL STREET JOURNAL

Drug-Coated Product Acts As Oral Contraceptive, Reduces Bird Population

SKOKIE, Ill.—How does a maker of birth-control pills cash in on the public's new-found enthusiasm for cleaning up the environment? By devising an oral contraceptive for pigeons, of course.

For most people, pigeons are gregarious, harmless birds with an affinity for public parks and statues and an insatiable appetite for popcorn. But scientists at G. D. Searle & Co. claim pigeons contaminate food and water, breed insects, carry diseases, and interfere with aviation. And, according to their research, more than 150 U. S. cities have serious pigeon problems,

To combat the growing pigeon menace, Searle has developed a kernel corn bait coated with "a low level but potent inhibitor" that sterilizes the pigeon without harming it. The new product, called Ornitrol, is "too large to be eaten easily by desirable species such as song birds," said John O. Gwin, director of Searle's animal-products division.

When Ornitrol was tested in Bangor, Maine, from 1967 through the 1969 mating season, it reduced that city's pigeon population of between 2,000 and 2,500 to about 300 birds, the company said. Fieldkork in Florida established Ornitrol's efficacy in warm climates.

Searle said it already has manufactured enough Ornitrol to "meet requirements" of the 1970 pigeon mating season, which runs from February through April. The product already has been cleared by the Department of Agriculture, the company said.

According to Mr. Gwin, the U. S. Air Force and aviation arms of the other military service branches have expressed interest in the product because of the danger to planes flying from bases with large pigeon populations. "Some serious plane accidents have been traced to birds being drawn into jet engines on takeoff, causing loss of power and crashes," Mr. Gwin said.

The company said each corn kernel is coated with 0.1% by weight of 20.25 diazacholestenol dihydrocholoride. Reproduction can be greatly diminished for up to six months by daily feedings, for 10 days, of 7½ pounds a day for each 100 pigeons, Searle said. Ornitrol works on a physiological principle entirely different from that of human oral contraceptives.

Starlings as Callers

By HAROLD A. MATHIAK

On my Christmas bird count on December 20, 1969 I found Starlings to be of great help in bringing other birds close to me. Sometimes I did not even suspect there were other birds nearby until the distress calls of a Starling brought them toward me. I have used Starlings for many years but the results this year were exceptionally good.

Using a Starling at the edge of a woodlot usually brought action from nuthatches, woodpeckers, chickadees, etc. Some Starlings are much better callers than others. Calling can usually be induced by changing the method of holding the Starling or shaking it slightly. My first good luck on the recent count was when two goldfinches landed in a nearby tree just long enough for me to identify them. All morning I had been having trouble in not being able to identify finches flying over. Later, when I was working a Starling near the Rock River, three redpolls landed to investigate the shrieking Starling. This was my first identification of redpolls for the day. Finches can sometimes be whistled down, but Starling calls seem to work much better.

Kinglets provided the next action. A Golden-crowned Kinglet flushed shortly after I entered a swamp woodlot. I stood next to a spruce and started with a Starling. Soon there were three kinglets in the spruce, approaching at times within five feet of me. About an hour later I studied a flock of 45 redpolls feeding beside the road, but found nothing but the Common Redpolls. After I had moved down the road about 400 feet, I used a Starling to call a Downy Woodpecker. Many of the redpolls followed and perched in the willows close to the car. Later I returned along the same road and spotted a flock of about 80 small birds feeding at the far end of a long field. They were too far away to be checked from the car so I held a Starling out of the window and let it shriek. About half of the flock flew to a woods and the rest approached the car and landed in tall ragweeds beside the road. These were redpolls again. A few fluttered by within a few feet of the car.

While driving west across the federal dike, I just saw one bird, a hawk much too far away to identify. Finding the road impassable at the west end, I retraced my route and soon spotted a shrike close to the dike. As I was holding a Starling out of the left front window, the shrike moved to a tree at the edge of the dike but on the right side of the car. At this stage, I was worried about my fingers should the shrike decide to attack over the top of the car. A few minutes later it flew away. Although I have tried caller Starlings many times on hawks and Snowy Owls, I have never had any response from these larger predators.

My last stop for the day was at a planted spruce-hardwood woodlot. Because it was getting late I just stepped out of the car and let a Starling call. Within a few seconds three Blue Jays and a slightly smaller gray bird approached. The gray bird moved to several branches within 10 feet of me from where I could see it was a Pine Grosbeak. Without the Starling, I probably would not have had a chance to observe it while it perched. Pine Grosbeaks are uncommon on the Horicon Christmas bird counts.

Using Starlings as callers would seem to have great possibilities in getting close-up photos of birds under natural conditions. The action often is fast and you really don't need a blind. Mist netting for banding is another activity which would probably benefit from the use of Starlings as callers. It may be a problem to get the Starlings. Usually they are quite easy to trap in winter. It is not much of a problem to hold them outside in cages if they have food and snow. They may be difficult to trap in summer except for those which can be taken in nest boxes.

"McNamara" Flies Again

By CHARLES A. KEMPER, M.D.

Early in November, 1965, Mr. Lyman Reynoldson, federal game warden, brought me two Bald Eagles which were in pitiful condition. The first was unable to lift its head from the floor and obviously very ill, cause undetermined. It did not survive the night.

The second eagle had a shattered wing and was very thin from famine. It had been shot by someone in northern Wisconsin and left to die. I dressed the bird's wounds with an aerosol spray of Zephiran solution, gave it injections of antibiotics (triandoleomycin or TAO), vitamin B^{12} and B complex twice daily and fed the bird once daily with liver and fish.

After a few weeks the eagle's general condition had improved. It would feed more readily but still was very wild, hard to handle, and intolerant of people. I kept it enclosed outdoors at a large pen throughout the winter. Gradually the fracture healed, the gangrenous fleshy tissue on the wing sloughed out, and new granulation tissue replaced it.

When snows were heavy, it was necessary to feed the eagle more than usual to insure survival. Although our eagle, nicknamed "McNamara", did well it was extremely doubtful he would ever fly again. It was decided that the bird would be given to a zoo if it could not fly by spring.

One subzero day in February with the ground covered by a foot of snow, I was startled to see McNamara sitting on a fence post in the back yard. Somehow he had gotten the door of his cage open and escaped. Knowing he would be in severe jeopardy, unable to fly, and loose in a busy neighborhood, I made haste to recapture him. I grabbed a fish landing net, my overcoat, gloves (no time for overshoes or galoshes) and dashed out after him.

Although "McNamara" couldn't really fly, he could get a few feet off the ground. He led me a merry chase through back yards, snowbanks, across streets and driveways. As I chased him breathlessly, I could just imagine some housewife talking on the phone, "Mabel, you won't believe this, but I just looked out the window and an eagle ran through the yard. And then . . ." I finally cornered and captured "Mac" in a garage three blocks from where we started. It was difficult to get my mind back to sick people for the rest of that day.

Although the exercise almost finished me, it must have benefited the eagle. In early April, Mr. Reynoldson and I released him in the country. It was a great thrill to see him fly off into freedom, once again a healthy wild Bald Eagle.

How They Got Here

By ROCKNE KNUTH

HOUSE SPARROW

The House Sparrow or English Sparrow is familiar to all or us. It is by far the most successful bird species in the world, now occupying more than one-quarter of the earth's land surface. It is believed to have had its origin in the vicinity of the Mediterranean, and finding man's agricultural practices beneficial, it spread north and east. Although it is commonly called a "sparrow", it is not related to the true sparrows. Rather, it is a member of a family known as the Weaver Finches. In the Mediterranean region it has three very close relatives: the Italian Sparrow, Spanish Sparrow, and the European Tree Sparrow. The latter has been introduced in the vicinity of St. Louis, Missouri, where it does well. [Ed. Note: One was caught and banded in Wisconsin by James Fuller in March, 1966.]

In the mid-1800's, homesick Europeans took it upon themselves to bless our land with a familiar bird of their own. In New York, the Brooklyn Institute appointed a committee to introduce the House Sparrow into the United States. Nicholas Pike, who was a member of the board of directors, was appointed as chairman for the committee. He arranged that eight pairs of House Sparrows be shipped from England to the Brooklyn Institute. The prized cargo was received in the winter of 1850. A large cage was constructed and the birds were reverently cared for through the winter. In the spring of 1851, they were liberated and all died or disappeared soon after.

The committee, in 1852, was provided with the sum of $200 for expenses in a second attempt to introduce the "Sparrow". This time Pike personally went to England to get the birds. In Liverpool he purchased a large lot and made arrangements for them to be shipped on the steamship **Europa.**

On the arrival of the shipment in New York, fifty birds were released at the Narrows and the others were housed in the tower of the Greenwood Cemetery chapel. They did not do so well and John Hooper, a committeeman, took them into his own home and cared for them through the winter months. When spring came the "sparrows" were released on the cemetery grounds and a man was hired to keep an eye on them. They flourished!

At the same time they were being introduced at Portland, Maine and Peace Dale, Rhode Island. Some of the birds being shipped to Rhode Island escaped in Boston where the ship was docked. These were joined ten years later when plantings were made in Boston Common. About one dozen were released in Madison Square in 1860 and others in Central Park in New York in 1864. In 1866 the New York population was again supplemented by 200 birds liberated in Union Park. Soon other states were caught up in the frenzy and the House Sparrow found its way into such scattered areas as Galveston, New Haven, Cleveland, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Halifax and Quebec City. The municipal government of Philadelphia joined in by releasing 1000.

Most of the imported House Sparrows were taken from their homes in England and Germany. As populations increased in certain areas in the United States, some were live trapped and taken to other parts of the country. The birds were so admired that extensive efforts were made to protect and feed them.

Ornithologist Arthur Cleveland Bent tells of when he was a small boy in Tauton, Massachussets and how his uncle first introduced the House Sparrow in that vicinity. He kept them in a large cage until they

became so numerous that the cage became overcrowded. To solve the problem he asked his coachman to place nesting boxes over the area, and when this was done the birds were released. Soon the nest boxes were filled. The neighborhood cats began to ravage the "sparrows" and Bent's uncle became furious. He ordered his coachman to arm with a shotgun and kill any cat that entered his property. One night he was greeted by his coachman displaying nine of the neighbor's cats.

L. H. Smith of Strathroy, Ontario, was the first to introduce the House Sparrow into his community. He wrote on October 11, 1886: "If all the sparrows in our town are mine, and my neighbors say they are, then I have at least plenty for my money. . . ." He bought them from a New York bird dealer at $1.00 each. His original purchase consisted of six pairs. He goes on: "They are now in thousands in our town and are plentiful in every town, city, and village in this part of Ontario. . . ."

By 1889 the bird lost the beloved image it had had previously. It was becoming a serious pest. Bent's uncle, who had cherished the little creatures, became alarmed at their rapid increase. Martins, Swallows and Wrens had disappeared from his property. On his orders, his coachman dug a trench and filled it with grain; then with one raking blast of a shotgun, large numbers of the "sparrows" were killed. Like Bent's uncle, many people turned to thoughts of how to eliminate the wretched little beasts.

All laws that protected the "sparrows" were revoked in 1887. Michigan offered 1 cent per bird in lots of 25 or more. The novelty was gone, the public outraged, and the "sparrows" securely established in the country.

W. T. Hill of Indianapolis had a brilliant idea. He began trapping the birds and selling them to gun clubs throughout the Midwest to replace the pigeons used in live pigeon shoots. They would pose a much more difficult target than pigeons and would be much more of a challenge. In 1887, Hill reported that about 75 percent of the birds shipped were killed, leaving only 25 percent as escapees. He estimated that he had trapped and sold about 40,000 birds; that would mean that about 10,000 had gone free to colonize new areas.

After it was discovered that these birds were eaten in Europe, they were soon offered on the market. In 1887 they brought about $1.00 per hundred in Albany, New York. On November 18, 1887 an article in the **Albany Express** read: "They make excellent pot-pie and are regarded as excellent eating by those who have made the trial."

The House Sparrow is now found throughout the United States and Mexico. They are living proof of what can happen if man continues to tamper with nature. The practice of introducing exotic species into new areas is seldom profitable. Removed from their natural environment they can spread quickly to the point where no corrective measures can be taken. As for the "sparrow", it is here to stay and it joins the Dandelion, Cabbage Butterfly, Carp, Starling, and Norway Rat as a reminder of our past mistakes.

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STARLING

In the 1880's while the effects of the House Sparrow introduction were being observed, a New York drug manufacturer, Eugene Scheifflin, was already planning to unleash another plague, the Starling. Within thirty years the House Sparrow had developed from a dream to a reality in nightmarish proportions. One would expect that people would learn from one mistake, but Mr. Schiefflin was making arrangements for another. He was not homesick for Europe as the "sparrow-lovers" were, nor was he concerned with the control of insects. It was a strange combination of hobbies that led him to his plan to release the Starling on North American soil. He was very interested in birds, and he was also a reader and admirer of Shakespeare. His plan was simple, he was going to attempt to introduce all the bird species that Shakespeare had mentioned. So the next time you see a Starling in your yard, and wonder how and why it is there, pick up a copy of **Henry IV.** In it you will find a passage that reads: "Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak nothing but 'Mortimer'." So it is that the Starlings that feed in your back yard owe their success to Eugene Scheifflin and William Shakespeare.

Mr. Scheifflin introduced his birds in 1890. In that very same year they nested. The first birthplace of the new Americans was in the eaves of the northeast wing of the American Museum of Natural History. After each nesting season, adult and young birds flock together and make excursions into new areas. Following these expeditions, they colonize new areas and their spread is rapid. The tremendous population increase creates a pressure which continues to force birds into new areas. So the Starling began to spread. In six years they covered Long Island, Brooklyn and the suburbs. They became residents in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1915. By 1917 they began to show up in Georgia. In another ten years they reached Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa; and south into Mississippi and Louisiana. In New York they became the most abundant species of birds. By 1928 it could be found anywhere east of the Mississippi River.

By this time there was much concern. The people began to realize that they had another problem on their hands; the Starling had joined the House Sparrow as the most notorious birds in the country. There was only one hope. It was believed that the bird may be held back from reaching the west by one of two barriers. The first was the Great Plains. Here the wide, expansive treeless grasslands provided little of what could be considered as favorable nesting sites. This barrier failed completely with the birds nesting in farm buildings. The second barrier was the Rocky Mountains. Surely they could not cross them. In 1889 and 1892 there were attempts to plant the Starling in Portland, Oregon. The people on the west coast were relieved that the attempts had failed, never realizing that fifty-five years later the Starling would conquer the Rockys, and Oregon and the entire Pacic Coast would have their Starlings.

The Starling, once strictly a native of Europe, India and North Africa, now inhabits the entire United States. It appeared in Alaska in 1952. Not only should Mr. Scheifflin have learned from the House Sparrow but also from the experience New Zealand had had with the Starling. The bird was introduced there in 1867 and was reported as being numerous by 1870. Here it was introduced to control insects but unfortunately it adopted a fruit-eating habit and became a serious pest.

In the United States it has also become a pest. Joining with the native blackbirds, they ravaged grain fields in the Midwest. Livestock specialists have placed food damage in the millions of dollars.

Probably the most disturbing result of the Starling's success is felt by residents in large cities. Here the birds roost in large numbers in urban trees and buildings. The sidewalks and eaves become whitewashed with excrement. Several methods have been tried to keep the birds from these roosts. Police and volunteers have perched on roof tops blasting them with shotguns. Other methods have been placing electric wires on window ledges, displaying stuffed owls, noise makers, firecrackers, and recordings of their distress calls. None of these methods has proven successful, the Starling is a hard bird to beat.

In October of 1960, a Lockheed Electra rose from the runway at Boston's Logan International Airport. It was not in the air more than twenty-five seconds when its great form plunged to the earth. The plane had intercepted a flock of 10,000 Starlings. They were sucked into the two-foot air intakes causing the engines to flame out. From the blazing wreckage the bodies of sixty-two people were removed.

FIELD NOTES

By HAL and NANCY ROBERTS

Summer Season **June 1 - August 15, 1969**

For the third consecutive year, June was a record breaker for precipitation and cool temperatures. There was rain on 26 days of the month in many areas of the state. Early July continued cool and wet, after which it became hotter and drier to the extent that August set a forty-year record for drought in Portage county.

The abundance of moisture which made hay cutting late may have benefitted waterfowl nesting and field nesting birds. Alta Goff reports seeing many big broods of Mallards, Blue-winged Teal and Wood Ducks in the Barron county area. Successful waterfowl nestings were also noted in Crex Meadows, Burnett county, by N. R. Stone. Mrs. Carol Rudy says that in Summit Lake Short-billed Marsh Wrens were "unusually common this summer. Possibly because of all the rain, I have found it in farm fields far from its accustomed marshes. Twice as many on my Breeding Bird Survey routes this year."

On the minus side, Alfred Bradford reports that water skiers, speedboats and the building of cottages has severely reduced the nesting of Mallards, Blue-winged Teal and Common Mergansers, eliminating them entirely as nesters from some Vilas county lakes.

The dark, wet and cool early summer and the resulting shortages of insects may have affected the population of Flycatchers and Swallows. Several reporters noted decreased numbers this summer. Many Martin houses were again unoccupied and Bluebirds had little competition from Tree Swallows for nest boxes. Fewer Black-billed Cuckoos were noted by at least two observers.

The most spectacular event of the season was an invasion of Pine Siskins, Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills. After being down in numbers the preceeding winter, the three species were present in numbers far exceeding the expcted. Pine Siskins which are usually present only in the extreme north were found as far south as Juneau, Columbia and Manitowoc counties. They were present throughout the period and were noted as early as June 4 in Douglas county by Richard Bernard. Usually there were scattered individuals except for occasional groups of two and

three and one flock of ten in Forest county was found by Dennis Gustafson. The only report of any nesting activity came from Alice Vincent in Price county. She had four to six present all summer at her feeder and on August 6 saw one feeding young birds.

The Red Crossbills came from mid-July on and were in flocks of from ten to forty. The distribution was from the north as far as Sauk county. White-winged Crossbills were not quite so numerous; at least they were not picked up by so many observers. They travelled in flocks and individually. A flock of 200 at Pelican Lake, Oneida county, found by E. R. Reutenbers was the largest. There is no evidence of any nesting activity for either of the Crossbills.

A total of fifty-five observers made reports this year which is an increase of eight over the previous year. The observations were made in sixty counties. The area best represented was Oneida county with nine observers. Next were Douglas, Forest, Langlade and Waukesha counties with five observers each. The counties which were missed were Pepin, Wood, Kewaunee, Calumet, Green Lake, Sheboygan, Richland, Washington, Crawford, Jefferson, Grant and Walworth. The shortage of observations in the south and southwest could account for the missing of such species as Bewick's Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird and Kentucky Warbler.

The rarities for the season included Red-necked Grebe, Little Blue Heron, Peregrine Falcon, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Little Gull, Least Tern, Short-eared Owl, Saw-whet Owl and Cassin's Kingbird. All are discussed in more length in the season summary which follows.

Season Summary

Red-throated Loon: On July 30, nine were carefully observed swimming close to the shore of Lake Superior near the Douglas-Bayfield county line (Daryl Tessen).

Red-necked Grebe: After no summer records for at least six years, there were reports from four counties this summer: one in Iron county on June 22 (David Snarski), one mostly in spring plumage at Crex Meadows, Burnett county, on July 22 (Dennis Gustafson), one brood in St. Croix county in July and August where five young were seen on August 9 (Alta Goff, Sam Robbins) and two broods were at Rush Lake, Winnebago county (J. R. Marsh).

Double-breasted Cormorant: An encouraging increase in nesting birds was noted. They were found in Douglas county from June 2 on (Richard Bernard). N. R. Stone reports an increase in nesting at Crex Meadows, Burnett county, where up to nineteen individuals and nine nests were counted (Bernard, Howard Young, Gustafson, Jerome Rosso). One adult was noted in the town of Peshtigo, Marinette county (C. H. Richter).

Common Egret: Noted throughout the summer season at Horicon Marsh, Dodge county, where 44 were seen on June 28 (Rockne Knuth) and 25 on July 26 (N. R. Barger). Also found throughout the period in LaCrosse county (Tessen, Rosso) and Vernon county (Viratine Weber, Margaret Morse). Two were in Buffalo county on June 14 (Robbins) and one in Dane county August 10 (Mr. and Mrs. Tom Ashman). One in Racine county August 1 was with a Little Blue Heron (Gustafson).

Little Blue Heron: One in Racine county on August 1 was side-by-side with a Common Egret for easy comparison (Gustafson).

Yellow-crowned Night Heron: One June 14, two found on the state line in LaCrosse county were apparently nesting in Minnesota (Tessen).

Least Bittern: Largest concentration reported was a group of 26 males and 9 females at El Dorado Marsh, Fond du Lac county on July 13 (Knuth). Nine nests were found in Dane county in July (Libby S. Zimmerman).

Canada Goose: Successful nesting at Crex Meadows where 54 broods were counted with 4.5 the average brood size (Stone). Also found in Brown county where there were 65 on August 6 (Tessen), in Fond du Lac county (Knuth) and Juneau county (Robbins).

Gadwall: Six in Fond du Lac county on July 23 (Tessen) and two in Racine county on July 23 (Tessen).

Pintail: Found in Brown county on July 23 (Tessen) and two in Racine county on August 1 (Gustafson).

American Widgeon: A count of 25 in Brown county on July 23 (Tessen), two in Fond du Lac county on June 1 and again on July 13 (Knuth) and also noted in Burnett county August 14 (Rosso).

Shoveler: Observed in Douglas county June 3 to June 6 (Bernard), in Fond du Lac county June 1 (Knuth) and from August 13 on in Waukesha county (Emma Hoffman).

Redhead: On August 4, two adults with six young were found at Horicon Marsh (Gustafson). Other observations were two in Fond du Lac county on June 7 and again June 14 (Knuth), and four in Columbia county June 21 (Dryers).

Ring-necked Duck: Again nested in Crex Meadows where eight were seen on July 21 (Gustafson). Also noted in St. Croix county June 8 and Dunn county June 19 (Robbins).

Greater Scaup: Appear to have nested in Superior where they were seen from June 2 on (Bernard). Lesser Scaup were found from June 8 to July 14 in St. Croix county (Robbins). One Greater Scaup in Fond du Lac county on June 1 (Knuth) and one Lesser in Winnebago county June 14 (Tessen).

Ruddy Duck: An increase in numbers was noted by several observers including at least 25 in Brown county on August 6 (Tessen).

Hooded Merganser: Unusually far south are the birds noted in LaCrosse county from June 21 to August 8 (Rosso).

Red-breasted Merganser: The seventeen found in Price county on August 9 were gone by August 16 (Alice Vincent).

Turkey Vulture: Found in southwestern counties and during the second week of July in Price county (Vincent).

Goshawk: A nest with three young birds was found in Washburn county near Minong on June 20 (Lanz Carter). A nest with one young bird which fledged between July 1 and 6 in Brown county. Neither adult nor young was seen after July 9 (Harold Lindberg). A single bird was observed in Langlade county on June 1 (Lynn Schimmels).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reported in Oneida county June 25 (Robbins) and Ashland county July 30 (Tessen). Also in Langlade county June 1 and 17 (Schimmels).

Cooper's Hawk: Noted in Bayfield county July 30 (Tessen), in Washburn county July 2 6(Mrs. Carol Rudy), in Eau Claire county June 20 (Gustafson) and in Winnebago county June 7 (Tessen).

Bald Eagle: Reports, many with evidence of successful nesting, from the following counties: Bayfield, Iron, Price, Barron, Langlade, Washburn, Vilas, Marinette and Burnett.

Osprey: Reports from nine northern counties; also four were observed in Juneau county on August 14 (David Bratley).

Peregrine Falcon: On July 26 one was seen flying over Highway 2 in Douglas county (Tessen). This is the first summer season record in many years.

Sandhill Crane: Found in Portage county where three were heard calling on July 10 (Gustafson), on July 12 in Jackson and Juneau counties (Robbins) and two on August 14 in Crex Meadows (Rosso).

King Rail: One in Brown county August 6 (Tessen), in LaCrosse county July 12 (Rosso) and one in Waukesha county June 7 (Gustafson).

Semipalmated Plover: Last spring migrant was noted in Bayfield county on June 8 (Bratley) and first fall migrant arrived in Vernon county on July 12 (Rosso).

Piping Plover: Two were found in Douglas county on June 11 for the fourth consecutive year (Robbins).

American Golden Plover: Two early fall migrants were found in Outagamie county on August 9 (Tessen). Also found in Ashland county August 10 (Bratley) and in Racine on August 15 (Tessen).

Black-bellied Plover: Lingered in Douglas county until June 2 (Bernard).

Ruddy Turnstone: Spring migrants were present in Douglas county until June 6 (Bernard) and fall birds were in Milwaukee by August 5 (Gustafson).

Whimbrel: Ten were found at Wisconsin Point, Superior, on June 2 and 3 (Bernard, Goff).

Solitary Sandpiper: Earliest arrival of fall birds was July 6 in Brown county (Father Melvin Wierzbicki), followed by July 12 in Vernon county (Rosso) and Dane and Juneau counties (Robbins).

Willet: One in Racine on August 1 and 2 and another there on August 7 (Gustafson).

Greater Yellowlegs: Returned July 14 to Brown county (Wierzbicki).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Earliest return to Dane county July 12 (Robbins) and to Columbia county July 13 (Dryers).

Knot: Found in Douglas county June 2 and 3 (Bernard, Goff) and a bird in spring plumage on August 1 in Brown county (Tessen).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Fall birds were in Columbia county on July 16 (Dryers) and Brown county July 17 (Wierzbicki).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Found in Douglas county on June 3 (Bernard) and June 11 (Robbins) and two in Bayfield county on June 3 (Bratley).

Baird's Sandpiper: After being reported last year, fall migrants were found on August 6 in Barron county (Goff) and Brown county (Tessen). Twenty-five were seen at the latter location and two were found on August 10 in Fond du Lac county (Knuth).

Least Sandpiper: Earliest fall migrants were found in Vernon county on July 12 (Rosso). The largest number reported was 25 in Racine on August 1 (Gustafson).

Dunlin: A spring bird lingered in Waukesha county until June 7 (Gustafson).

Dowitcher: Short-bills returned to Chippewa county on July 30 (Robbins) and one Long-bill in Brown county August 9 (Tessen).

Stilt Sandpiper: Early fall migrants were in Brown county on July 14 (Wierzbicki). The largest number reported was 13 in Outagamie county on August 9 (Tessen).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Eight spring birds stayed in Douglas county until June 11 (Robbins). Early fall birds returned to Vernon county July 2 (Rosso). The largest number reported was 150 in Brown county on August 9 (Tessen).

Sanderling: Lingered in Douglas county until June 8 (Bernard) and returned to Fond du Lac county on July 28 (Knuth).

Western Sandpiper: One in Douglas county June 3 for the third year (Bernard). Also one in Milwaukee on August 7 (Gustafson).

Hudsonian Godwit: Found in Douglas county on June 2 (Bernard) and in Brown county June 10 Wierzbicki).

Wilson's Phalarope: Spring transients lingered in Burnett county until June 7 (Rosso). A male and female were seen regularly in Brown county until June 24 and were not seen after a severe wind and rain storm on June 26 (Wierzbicki). Three fall birds were in Racine on August 1 (Gustafson).

Little Gull: Seventh record for the state; one in Manitowoc on July 27 (Charles Sontag). See **By The Wayside.**

Ring-billed Gull: Found in Douglas county June 3 to 21 (Bernard), Menominee county July 6 (Tom Soulen), and Ashland county July 26 (Tessen).

Bonaparte's Gull: Three were still present in Douglas county on June 11 (Robbins). Several remained throughout the period in Milwaukee (Gustafson). Five fall birds arrived in Brown county on August 1 (Tessen).

Forster's Tern: Two birds lingered in Fond du Lac until June 1 (Knuth). Found in Dane county on July 2 (Ashman) and Milwaukee county July 9 (Don Hanbury).

Least Tern: The third record for the state was made on June 3 and 4 when a bird was seen at the mouth of the Fond du Lac River, Fond du Lac county (Knuth, Walter Gilles, Mrs. Franklin Conover). The bird was carefully studied and 8 mm. movies were taken.

Short-eared Owl: Found in Douglas county August 8 (Bernard). One was found on July 18 in Winnebago county in the same locality where as many as five birds were present in April and May (Tessen). Five were seen throughout the period until August 11 in Fond du Lac county (Knuth).

Saw-whet Owl: An immature was found in Vilas county in Compton's yard on June 21 by the WSO summer campout campers. Also one was found in Lincoln county on June 30 (Robbins).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Noted to be very scarce in Outagamie county (Alfred Bradford).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: The two immature birds at Honey Creek, Sauk county on July 21 were south of the usual range (Kenneth Lange).

Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: On June 28 a female was seen on Green Point Road near Teal Lake, Sawyer county (Goff). There was no report from the Brule River location where they have been found the past five years.

Cassin's Kingbird: One was observed in Racine county on June 17 (Louise Erickson. **See By the Wayside.**

Western Kingbird: Again nesting near Hudson, St. Croix county, for the ninth consecutive year (Gustafson, Peter Tweet).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Early June reports came from Kenosha (Hamers), Rusk and Douglas (Robbins) and Brown (Ed Cleary and Brother Columban) counties. Midsummer observations in Douglas (Bernard), Forest and Langlade (Soulen), Lincoln, Oneida and Menominee (Robbins) counties.

Acadian Flycatcher: In addition to expected observations in southern counties such as Dane (Ashman), Rock (Thomas Ellis) and Waukesha (Father Hoffman), this bird was also found in Brown county until June 29 (Cleary and Columban) and Fond du Lac on July 5 (Knuth).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Northernmost counties of Douglas (Bernard), Forest (Soulen), Oneida (Soulen, Robbins) and Barron (Goff). Mos tsouthern location was Menominee county (Robbins).

Tufted Titmouse: Only in most southerly counties except for one found in St. Croix county on June 8 (Robbins).

Winter Wren: Large numbers reported in Forest and Oneida counties (Soulen). Increased numbers were also noted in Langlade and neighboring counties (Rudy).

Swainson's Thrush: In Brown county, two adults and one young bird were banded on August 1. Two other young birds were banded there August 6 (Wierzbicki). Two were found on June 21 in Menominee county (Soulen) and one there on June 28 (Robbins). Found in Lincoln county July 25 and 26, and Chippewa county August 8 (Robbins).

Bluebird: Noted to be continuing to increase slightly in Langlade county (Rudy).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: More noted in northern counties than in the past few years; found in Douglas county June 11 (Robbins), "fairly common" in Iron county (David Snarski). One was singing in Forest county on July 9 (Gustafson), in Oneida county (Robbins, Soulen), in northeastern Langlade county on July 4 and two in Antigo on July 6 (Soulen), and in Lincoln county July 1 and 26 (Robbins).

Bell's Vireo: Found in Trempealeau county July 20 (Tweet). One was in Lafayette county June 28 (Barger), one near Mazomanie, Dane county on July 5 (Gustafson), in the Arboretum at Madison on June 19 (Soulen) and three singing males in Rock county between June 2 and August 14 (Thomas Ellis).

Loggerhead Shrike: Noted June 8 in St. Croix county (Robbins), throughout the period in Waukesha county (Bratley) and in Rock county (Mrs. John Brakefield, Mrs. Joseph Mahlum).

Prothonotary Warbler: One singing north of Arena, Iowa county, on June 20 (Soulen) and three in Buffalo county on July 14 (Robbins).

Lawrence's Warbler: One individual of this hybrid was found in Sauk county on June 10 (Ashman).

Tennessee Warbler: Two lingered in Milwaukee until June 1 (Gustafson). Fall migrants arrived in Chippewa county on July 30 (Robbins).

Parula Warbler: In Forest county, Soulen found the numbers down in comparison with what he observed in 1966 and previously.

Cape May Warbler: One was seen in Douglas county on June 11 (Robbins) and one in Price county on August 15 (Maybelle Hardy).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: One was heard near Scott Lake, Forest county, on June 16 (Soulen).

Cerulean Warbler: Two were found at Mazomanie on August 13 (Gustafson).

Blackburnian Warbler: Two remained in Sauk county during June and July (Kenneth Lange).

Palm Warbler: At least one present in the Three Lakes bog in Oneida county on June 15, in the location where they have been found for three summers previously (Soulen). One at the Lake Tomahawk WSO summer campout on June 21 (Ellis).

Louisiana Waterthrush: One singing in Rusk county on June 7 is unusually far north (Robbins).

Connecticut Warbler: Spring migrants lingered in Kenosha to June 5 (James Hamers) and three in Douglas county until June 11 (Robbins). One in Forest county on June 16 (Soulen) and two singing July 1 in Lincoln county (Robbins) may have been breeding birds.

Yellow-breasted Chat: One was found in Green county on June 28 (Barger), one sniging in the Arboretum at Madison on June 19 (Soulen) and one singing in Milwaukee on June 20 (Gustafson).

Hooded Warbler: One was singing in the Arboretum at Madison on June 19 (Soulen).

Wilson's Warbler: Found in Douglas county on June 3 (Bernard).

Orchard Oriole: A first year male was observed in Green county on June 12 (Barger). Also found in Vernon county (Morse) and in Milwaukee on June 7 and 16 (Gustafson, Hanbury).

Dickcissel: Many observers noted that this species was scattered and not so abundant as in some years.

Evening Grosbeak: Found in six northern counties: Douglas (Bernard, Robbins), Bayfield (Bernard, Bratley), Florence (Barger), Price (Hardy), Forest (Soulen) and Menominee (Soulen, Robbins) throughout the period. No large numbers were reported, the most being four in any one location.

Pine Siskin: There seems to have been a genuine invasion with many observers noting many more birds than usual. They were found in the following counties: Douglas (Bernard, Robbins), Bayfield (Bernard, Bratley, Tessen), Iron (Snarski), Forest (Barger, Gustafson, Soulen), Price (Vincent), Langlade (Soulen, Rudy, Schimmels), Menominee (Soulen), Washburn (Rudy), Oneida (Rudy, Tessen, Robbins), Door (Rudy), Pierce (Rudy), Chippewa (Robbins), Lincoln, Juneau, Marathon, Columbia, Taylor (Robbins) and Manitowoc (Marjorie Albrecht).

Red Crossbill: Another invasion. The Crossbills seemed to be in larger numbers than the Pine Siskins with flocks of up to 40 being reported. The bulk of the invasion came in mid-July and after with the earliest birds noted in Douglas county on July 4 and 5 (Bratley). Also found in the following counties: ten each in Bayfield and Ashland on July 30 (Tessen); hundreds in Langlade county, Pierce and two in Chippewa county on August 9 (Robbins); two with White-winged Crossbills on July 24 in Portage county (Arol Epple); eight in Winnebago on July 8 (Mrs. Edward Natzke); ten in Sauk on July 27 (Bratley, Peartree, Kruse) at Honey Creek where David Cox banded a bird on August 15, a male was seen on August 13 (Gustafson) and twenty were seen August 11 and 12 (Lange).

White-winged Crossbill: Again many more reports than usual. These birds seem to have come earlier than the Red Crossbills with several June observations and more in early July. Earliest is one in Douglas county on June 11 (Robbins). About twenty were noted in Central Park in Superior from July 19 to August 8 (Bernard). Found in Oneida county June 15 (Soulen) and June 25 (Robbins). At least 75 were found in northeast Langlade county on July 4 (Soulen) and 200 were at Pelican Lake on July 6 (Rutenbers). One was in St. Croixx county on August 9 (Goff) and Juneau county July 12 (Robbins). Fifteen, together with two Red Crossbills, were feeding on young cones of Norway Spruce in Portage county on July 24 (Epple).

LeConte's Sparrow: One singing bird was found in Crex Meadows, Burnett county, on July 21 and 22 (Gustafson). Sam Robbins lists the following observations: in Sawyer county on June 14; Price county August 10; Rusk county June 14; four in Taylor county July 29; Langlade county June 27 and July 2; seen and heard at four locations in Chippewa county; at least fifteen separate singing birds in the Merrill area, Lincoln county, between June 27 and July 28; Marathon county on July 28 and Jackson county on July 12. This would suggest that Sam finds the birds not so rare in the summer season as it has been thought to be.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow: One singing bird was heard for two days at Crex Meadows, Burnett county, on July 21 and 22. "The bird was not seen as it remained in the thick reeds, but identification was positive as I had just heard and seen four Sharp-tailed Sparrows only one month before in North Dakota" (Gustafson).

Lark Sparrow: One in Adams county and two in Monroe county June 14 (Robbins), one in Waushara county June 14 and two on August 14 (Tessen), one in Sauk county July 5 and one in the usual spot south of Mazomanie on June 20 (Soulen).

Clay-colored Sparrow: "Have seen this species only once before in the Appleton area during the summer. Apparently quite a few around as in one brushy area I counted six to eight singing on July 18", Winnebago county (Tessen).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Again possible nesting birds in Forest county June 16 (Soulen) and on June 15 two at Three Lakes bog, Oneida county, and five at Pelican Lake, Oneida county (Soulen).

By the Wayside . . .

LITTLE GULL IN MANITOWOC ON JULY 27, 1969

All the field marks Peterson described were easily found. I was able to get within fifteen feet of the bird, so I have some excellent movies of the bird (adult in summer plumage). It was most exciting for all of us. The bird was observed in good light at about 100 feet with 20X Balscope. Hood was more complete than Bonaparte's—no white eye ring; the bird was about two inches shorter than Bonaparte's; wings and back a uniform gray with a white trailing border; the underwings were very dark gray; legs and feet bright red; white rump and tail; bill black (this is the only questionable field mark). —Charles R. Sontag.

* * *

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD IN RACINE ON JUNE 17, 1969

Just south of Highway 11 on my route (stop 21) I saw a fairly large yellow-breasted Kingbird. He was 40 feet away from me on a fence post. He flew about flycatching and landing many times on the same post, sometimes closer, up to 30 feet, then gradually farther down the fench row and toward the pond behind a nearby farm house. I watched him about ten minutes (adding on to my counting time). He had a dark "kingbird" head, no eye ring, white under the throat, gray chest band, yellow breast and belly. His back and wings and tail were dark brownish gray. He did not have any white on the sides of his tail, but the amazing thing to me was that his tail was forked and had a band of white across the end. The forked tail was very obvious and to me most unusual. However, on a transect count one cannot stop and ponder such things for long. When I returned home and looked up my kingbird in Robbins I found to my huge surprise that this was not some aberrant of the Western Kingbird, but that the bird I had seen and written down conformed in every detail to the Cassin's Kingbird. Perhaps the stormy May and June brought him in the same way our Green-tailed Towhee found his way here in the winter.—Louise Erickson.

* * *

RED-TAILED HAWK COPULATION

At 8:45 a. m. on April 4 I saw two adult Red-tailed Hawks copulating on the upper branches of an elm tree near Plainfield, Wis. The birds were perched on the very thin outer branches of the tree about 50 feet off the ground. Both birds drooped their wings but to my surprise they didn't seem to need them for balancing, although the wind was quite strong. As I drove toward them, copulation stopped although the male remained mounted on the female. They held this position for a full minute with little difficulty and then flew off together. I found no nest site in the immediate area.

Alan Beske
Waupun, Wis.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER AND A DEAD FAMILY OF TREE SWALLOWS

"On a telephone pole about 35 feet from our house in the country in northern Wisconsin near Medford, I had placed a Tree Swallow house about 15 feet from the ground. The house, designed for Tree Swallows, and occupied by them in the past year, was long contested by English Sparrows and the swallows this year. After my Tree Swallows had set up their tidy house, it wasn't long until one day I heard the squeaking and cheeping of another year's generation inside the house. My enjoyment of the darting adults catching food for the young came to a sudden and horrifying end one morning. Knowing Red-headed Woodpeckers' affinity for telephone poles, I was not surprised to hear an occasional Red-head tapping on this particular pole. But on this particular morning, the tapping did not stop high up on the pole but rather, the sleek Red-head horrified the adult swallows and myself by just squeezing his head into the swallows' hole and pulling out the helpless babies one by one, onto the roof of the house – smashing and beating each to death with the forceful blow of his bill.

"The fearful screaming of the young gradually ended as all that existed was a mush of pounded babies strewn on the roof to bake in the sun. With swallow blood dripping from his deadly bill, the Red-head took off across the open field without a care in the world, to land upon another post. What provoked all this, I'll never know. The two adults needless to say moved on the next day, never to come back to the house. I really can't blame them. I just hope another pair will take up residence this year and not fall prey to this unusual massacre."–David J. Prohaska, Medford.

* * *

FOREST ENCOUNTER, JUNE 5, 1969 ON THE MANITOWOC-SHEBOYGAN COUNTY LINE

Three feet ahead and to my right a Ruffed Grouse, flushed from last year's brown sugar maple and beech leaves, flew low over the trees and with a cry dropped out of sight on the forest floor. Startled, I paused for a moment and was about to walk on when the leaves at the spot vacated by the grouse seemed to come alive. Just in time to prevent my utter confusion, I perceived that the movement was that of some fifteen small chicks hurrying outward from that spot like the spokes of a wheel. They scurried along until they had enlarged their circle to a three foot radius, or thereabouts, stopped and disappeared.

Since it was impossible to keep an eye on all of them, I had watched the one pittering toward me. There it was almost at my feet – a tiny soft-brown precocial chick, surrounded by leaves of the same color, its round blinking black eye seemingly focused on me. I took several pictures and then picked it up. Not a muscle twitched and only an occasional blink of the eyes betrayed consciousness. When it was set down among the leaves it froze and, perfectly camoflauged, disappeared. Very carefully I retreated.

Note: Later sightings were made about 400 feet from the above spot: June 27. Adult and at least 6 young. Adult cried out and flew short dis-

tances; young flew off low through the trees. August 31. Three grouse seen in same area as above sighting.—Marjorie Albrecht, Rt. 2, Kiel, Wis.

* * *

AN ADDITIONAL NESTING OF THE SHORT-EARED OWL IN WISCONSIN

Hamerstrom and Berger (**Passenger Pigeon** 23:46-48, 1961) have commented on the scarcity of Short-eared Owl nesting records for Wisconsin. On June 1, 1969, a student, William Valentine, and I found a Short-eared Owl nest in the Hoffmann Marsh, on the northwest edge of Ripon. There were three young birds in the nest, that looked as though they would be able to fly in one or two weeks. The nest was on the ground in an open area of last year's marsh grass (**Calamagrostis**) which stood to a height of two feet above the nest. It was well-trodden, consisting only of grass and owl excreta, beaten down flat at the time we found it. There were the wing feathers of an unidentified species of sparrow accompanying the young owls. The sparrow had been a meal, and the wings were now serving a decorative purpose, no doubt.

On June 7 another visit to the area disclosed only two young owls, both of which seemed to be healthy, and nearly ready to fly, so the other may have already left the nest. It may also be, however, that it was down one of the tunnellike pathways leading away from the nest, hiding.

On June 12 there were no owls on the nest, although one adult was, as usual, patrolling the area in our vicinity. We had always seen only one adult, and it invariably patrolled the area when we were present, usually escorting us to the edge of the marsh, and leaving us there, hoping we would never return.

Since there were no signs that the nest had been disturbed, and no remains of young owls about the area, we assumed that the nesting had been successful.—William S. Brooks, Department of Biology, Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin 54971

* * * * *

Letters To The Editor . . .

January 31, 1970

THE PASSENGER PIGEON
Mr. Charles A. Kemper, Editor
733 Maple Street
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729

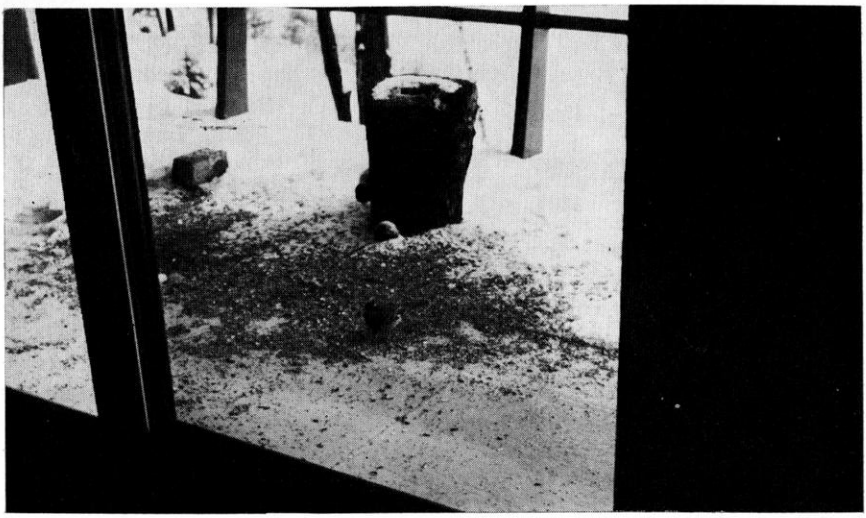
Dear Mr. Kemper,

Enclosed is an article and picture of a Varied Thrush which my husband and I thought might be of interest to you and your readers.

We live on the lake shore surrounded by woods, both hardwood and pines, and of course encourage wildlife. We have been very fortunate to have thus far had a steady stream of birds and are able to observe them at close range. This is of course the very first Varied Thrush we

have ever seen and are hoping he will continue to make this his home until spring.

Respectfully,
Mrs. Clifford W. Lewis
Route 2, Long Lake
Clintonville, Wisconsin 54929



VARIED THRUSH

VARIED THRUSH VISITS WISCONSIN

On Wednesday, December 10, 1969 at approximately 7 a. m., my husband and I noticed a strange looking bird feeding on our sun-deck. At first glance he had looked like a Robin, however we noticed a black band across his orange breast and distinct marking on his back. Upon closer observation, we noticed the orange eye stripe. The bird appeared very nervous and soon flew away. We wanted to be very sure of what we had seen and consulted our friends the Russel Rill's of Clintonville, who encouraged us to keep a close watch on our new found friend and confirmed that we had indeed seen a Varied Thrush.

The thrush has faithfully returned almost every day, feeding from the sun-deck and also from ground spill from a lawn feeder. We have put apples out to help encourage him to stay around as we were informed they love apples and will stay as long as they are available. We have continued this practice only to discover that he won't touch them which makes the squirrels happy, as they then gobble them up. However we do put bread out along with the wild bird feed and sunflower seeds and have noticed the thrush eats the bread. His habits are very punctual, as a result we have been able to watch him at extremely close range (approximately 6 feet) taking pictures and recording on paper his actions, which appear as a very cautions, nervous twitching while feeding. We have been able to observe, however, that when he is very hungry, he

loses some of this timidity and one morning stood off six very angry Blue Jays so as to have the sun-deck feeding all to himself. We felt like applauding him for this show of courage.

We have had several Saturday morning bird-watching sessions to share this beautiful bird with our friends and I feel he's a "ham" at heart because he performs almost on schedule with a good bit of showmanship in his head turning, tail twitching restlessness. As of this writing he has not uttered a sound within our hearing that I can report. To climax all of this, the Rill's were able to record "Our Varied Thrush" in their Christmas bird count which made us very happy indeed.

The Clifford Lewis's
Rt. 2, Long Lake
Clintonville, Wis.

Feb. 12, 1970

Dear Dr. Kemper,

I am enclosing this article of a Mute Swan, **Cygnus olor,** that appeared in the February 11 edition of the Beloit Daily News. I don't know how long the swan has been on the Rock River but I observed it for about 20 minutes on February 10. Although it is probably a tame escapee it was not confined in any way when seen on the river so I'll relate my observations of the bird.

The body plumage was entirely white. The bill had a nail and was orange except for its blackish tip and a black line at the base and part way down the center. The black knob on the forehead was hardly noticeable. The feet and legs were grayish but the feet had a pinkish tinge when the sun's rays hit them. Three toes were webbed. The bill was held pointing down towards the water. While feeding on corn on the ice it arched its secondaries over the back. The neck was held in the S-shape quite often. When feeding on the river bottom it simply lowered its head and neck as needed in the shallow water.

I could use some help from W. S. O. members as the following comments on the bathing habits of Vireos indicates: During the fall migration of 1968 I observed a Solitary Vireo, **Vireo solitarius,** bathing in the bird bath in my back yard. Just a few feet from the bird bath there is an apple tree. The bird would fly from the tree, hit the water and fly back to the tree – too fast for identification during the act. On returning to the tree the bird would shake off the water and preen for a short time. This procedure was repeated several times.

This incident had been forgotten until I saw a Warbling Vireo, **V. gilvis,** that was nesting in the neighborhood during the breeding season of 1969 repeat this bathing procedure several different times. When I realized that two vireo species had bathed in this unusual fashion I began to wonder if this was a trait of the vireos in general or just these two species.

I'm still wondering so I would appreciate comments from anyone who has any information on the bathing habits of vireos.

As long as I'm writing I might as well include this interesting observation.

Sneaky Catbirds. On June 1, 1969 at about 3:30 p. m. I was watching an Olive-sided Flycatcher, **Nuttallornis borealis,** flycatching from the top of a dead tree near the Beloit municipal golf course. On the last attempt I saw it catch a butterfly and return to the tree. As it landed three Catbirds, **Dumetella carolinenus,** flew up from beneath the tree and one of them stole the butterfly from the flycatcher. The Catbird then returned to the dead tree, pulled off the wings and ate his stolen prize.

Yours sincerely,
Thomas R. Ellis
P. O. Box 445
Beloit, Wisconsin

ED. NOTE: Thank you. The Mute Swan record is most unusual. This is only about the fifth record in our state archives. However—was it an escape from a zoo? The vireo bathing habits I believe is a vireo characteristic. It matches my own observations.

February 4, 1970

Dear Dr. Kemper:

So little is published on central Wisconsin birds that I have wondered if any of this 10 year summary might be of value to the **Pigeon?**

I'm writing a weekly nature column for our local paper and it keeps me humping, along with the final-final (we hope) re-writing of the Oklahoma Bird Book, on which we have been working some twenty years.

We like your **Pigeon.**

Sincerely,
Marguerite Baumgartner

The composite list for the 10-year period includes the surprising total of 75 species. Of these 18 have been seen every year, many of them in abundance; 17 have been recorded on at least half the counts; 20 occur infrequently. The 20 species that have been tallied only once must be considered strays—birds that are crippled or weak, birds that remained behind when the rest of their kind migrated southward. Some species may be in the area regularly, but are widespread or difficult to identify.

The 1969 count included the following, arranged by frequency groups:

— Seen every year: Golden-eyed Duck, Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Starling, House Sparrow, Cardinal, Goldfinch, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting.

— Seen half or over: Rough-legged Hawk, Mourning Dove, Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Robin, Northern Shrike, Common Grackle, Evening Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll.

Seen infrequently (2-3 years) and exciting by any standards: Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Pheasant, Bohemian Waxwing, Cedar Waxwing,

Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, Red Crossbill, White-winged Grossbill, Oregon Junco.

The Common Redpoll ranked as the overwhelmingly most abundant species (1,219). Runner-up was the House Sparrow (841).

— Seen only once: Black Duck, Scaup, Ringneck (cripple), Green-winged Teal (cripple), Red-tailed Hawk, Herring Gull, Magpie (escape), American Raven, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Baltimore Oreole, Cowbird, Chipping Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Rufous-sided Towhee, Song Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Fox Sparrow.

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16 Grand Ave.
Madison, Wi. 53705
Feb. 11, 1970

Dear Charles,

It was good to see the "notable message" from Congressman Reuss in the Winter issue of the **Passenger Pigeon.**

Having heard Prof. Paul Ehrlich on the Johnny Carson program Monday night, and recently having read his "The Population Bomb," I feel Reuss understated the case against American parents having only as many children as the "wish to have." They should stop at two, period, and so should parents all over the world.

At any rate, it would be a good move for WSO to pay more heed to environmental problems and for the **Pigeon** to carry an editorial, guest or otherwise, in each issue. I might get the notion to submit one myself!

As for Mr. Mostek's suggestion that WSO pay attention to Sanguine and to the Sylvania question, fine. Sanguine is being studied by a committee set up by Gov. Knowles and headed by Dean Bock of the UW Graduate School. How ecologically sophisticated the committee and its report will be remains to be seen, but perhaps what is needed now is factual information.

The Sylvania tract was purchased by the Forest Service (U. S.) with the understanding by local (Upper Peninsula) people and governments that it would be developed for recreation use. It is not all virgin wilderness, or "pristine". I'm not sure at all that I like all the plans, but I am sure that the Forest Service doesn't plan its "destruction", as Mostek suggests. If you do plan to cover this issue, why not ask the Forest Service, at its regional office in Milwaukee, for its point of view?

Keep up the good work.

Gene Roark

02-10-70

Chas.

This came to me by way of the good Dr. Stocking.

I would like to see this printed in the "Pigeon" as it makes much sense.

Sincerely,
Ed Peartree

Smokey The Bear Sutra

Once in the Jurassic, about 150 million years ago, the Great Sun Buddha in this corner of the Infinite Void gave a great Discourse to all the assembled elements and energies: to the standing beings, the walking beings, the flying beings, and the sitting beings – even grasses, to the number of thirteen billion, each one born from a seed, were assembled there: a Discourse concerning Enlightenment on the planet Earth.

"In some future time, there will be a continent called America. It will have great centers of power called such as Pyramid Lake, Walden Pond, Mt. Ranier, Big Sur, Everglades, and so forth; and powerful nerves and channels such as Columbia River, Mississippi River, and Grand Canyon. The human race in that era will get into troubles all over its head, and practically wreck everything in spite of its own strong intelligent Buddha-nature."

"The twisting strata of the great mountains and the pulsings of great volcanoes are my love burning deep in the earth. My obstinate compassion is schist and basalt and granite, to be mountains, to bring down the rain. In that future American Era I shall enter a new form: to cure the world of loveless knowledge that seeks with blind hunger; and mindless rage eating food that will not fill it."

And he showed himself in his true form of SMOKEY THE BEAR.

A handsome smokey-colored brown bear standing on his hind legs, showing that he is aroused and watchful.

Bearing in his right paw the Shovel that digs to the truth beneath appearances; cuts the roots of useless attachments; and flings damp sand on the fires of greed and war;

His left paw is in the Mudra of Comradely Display – indicating that all creatures have the full right to live to their limits and that deer, rabbits, chipmunks, snakes, dandelions, and lizards all grow in the realm of the Dharma;

Wearing the blue work overalls symbolic of slaves and laborers, the countless men oppressed by a civilization that claims to save but only destroys;

Wearing the broad-brimmed hat of the West, symbolic of the forces that guard the Wilderness, which is the Natural State of the Dharma and the True Path of man on earth; all true paths lead through mountains –

With a halo of smoke and flame behind, the forest fires of the kali-yuga, fires caused by the stupidity of those who think things can be gained and lost whereas in truth all is contained vast and free in the Blue Sky and Green Earth of One Mind;

Round-bellied to show his kind nature and that the great earth has food enough for everyone who loves her and trusts her;

Trampling underfoot wasteful freeways and needless suburbs; smashing the worms of capitalism and totalitarianism;

Indicating The Task: his followers, becoming free of cars, houses, canned food, universities, and shoes, master the Three Mysteries of their own Body, Speech, and Mind; and fearlessly chop down the rotten trees and prune out the sick limbs of this country America and then burn the leftover trash.

Wrathful but Calm, Austere but Comic, Smokey the Bear will Illuminate those who would help him; but for those who would hinder or slander him, HE WILL PUT THEM OUT.

Thus his great Mantra:

Namah samanta vajranam chanda maharoshana
Spahataya hum traka ham mam

"I DEDICATE MYSELF TO THE UNIVERSAL DIAMOND
BE THIS RAGING FURY DESTROYED"

And he will protect those who love woods and rivers, Gods and animals, hobos and madmen, prisoners and sick people, musicians, playful women, and hopeful children;

And if anyone is threatened by advertising, air pollution, or the police, they should chant SMOKEY THE BEAR'S WAR SPELL:

DROWN THEIR BUTTS
CRUSH THEIR BUTTS
DROWN THEIR BUTTS
CRUSH THEIR BUTTS

And SMOKEY THE BEAR will surely appear to put the enemy out with his vajra-shovel.

Now those who recite this Sutra and then try to put it in practice will accumulate merit as countless as the sands of Arizona and Nevada,

Will help save the planet Earth from total oil slick,

Will enter the age of harmony of men and nature,

Will win the tender love and caresses of men, women, and beasts,

Will always have ripe blackberries to eat and a sunny spot under a pine tree to sit at,

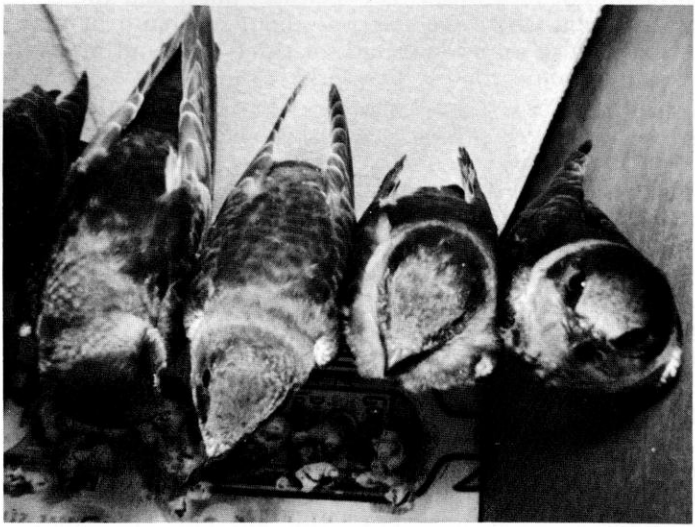
AND IN THE END WILL WIN HIGHEST PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT.

Thus have we heard.

By Gary Snyder
written for circulation without copyright

One Swallow May Not Make a Summer — but FIVE!

By EMMA F. LEWIS



BABY MARTINS

"Our martin house blew down in the storm last night and we have five baby martins. We don't know what to feed them. Can you help us?"

Seeing the worried faces of our four neighbor children and their box of wet, sand-sprinkled, cold looking young martins that they were carrying, I immediately answered, "Yes, of course, bring them in."

I put towels and newspapers in the bottom of a big box, and cut small holes in both ends of the box. Through these openings I inserted a pencil sized stick to make a perch. The children helped me set the birds on the perch. All clung onto it except the smallest. He kept falling off.

The food of martins, I knew, could be summed up in one word — insects. However not having any insects, I tried them on raw ground beef and boiled egg yolk. They spurned it. I tried force feeding them. They spit most of it out.

The children offered their services as insect catchers, but while these might help, it would not be enough. So I set out for a pet shop that I knew carried mealworms, and as a starter bought twenty dozen. At home I began to try to force some worms into the tightly clamped bills. It wasn't easy. After the second or third trial, though, one of the birds reached out and took a worm. In another try or two, two more birds grabbed a worm. Soon four were feeding on their own. I fed them by sticking a toothpick into a mealworm and then holding the wriggling worm near the bird. They'd grab for it. I had to be careful though and

keep a firm grip on the toothpick or they would try to swallow it too. In a little while the four were eating ravenously. The smallest bird, the one that couldn't perch well still had to be force fed. It was three or four days before it would take food on its own, and then his appetite became tremendous.

I saw my two hundred and forty mealworms disappearing like magic. Pet shop buying of mealworms is expensive, but I had the address of a place in California where the cost was about one-tenth of that of local shops, so I sent them an SOS airmail for three thousand mealworms and hoped that they would comply promptly.

I had to ration my supply of worms. Each bird, if I gave it all that it wanted, would eat ten worms every half hour. The few dragonflies and moths the children caught helped only a little. Even at fifty an hour the birds could easily eat five hundred a day. They were always hungry. If I didn't feed them often they not only begged vocally, but they got restless, fell off the perch or, if they could, climbed out of the box.

By Wednesday morning I was back in the pet shop. This time I asked for fifty dozen. The shop owner sighed.

"I'll help you count, if you'll trust me," I said.

Without a word he passed me a dipper of worms and a little paper cup. Soon, between us we had five cups filled.

"I'll take more if you'll let me have them," I said.

"I can't, lady, I have to have some for my customers who want only a dozen."

Well, six hundred would help.

The young martins were beautiful, soft gray underparts, with a lighter gray neckline, and shining blue-black heads, backs, wings and tails. Like all insect eating birds they had large luminous eyes.

The birds were not from the same nests, and even though they resembled closely, they were not identical in appearance and disposition. Almost from the first I could tell them apart. I named them Eeny, Meeny, Miney, Mo, and Little Bit.

They always awakened early, even though I covered their screened box to try to fool them into sleeping late in the morning. It was no use. By five-thirty they were awake and begging for food.

My California order came on the fifth day. Now I could give them as much as they wanted. They grew, and gained flying ability rapidly. Soon they were flying around our glassed in porch and I was afraid that they would injure themselves. So nine days and approximately four thousand mealworms later, from the time I got them, I decided it was time to release them.

I had spoken to a neighbor close by, who has an aluminum martin house that can be raised and lowered with a crank. He suggested that I bring the quints over, and put them in some of the unused compartments of his martin house.

We carried the box over, lowered the house and set the birds in the compartments. They stuck their heads out of the holes and just looked around for about fifteen minutes. Suddenly Eeny and Meeny took off. They circled out over the lake and flew back to rest on a TV aerial where other martins were perched. In about ten minutes Miney and Mo took off in much the same manner. Little Bit hung back. He'd start to fly and

then go back into the house. Finally he flew to some shrubbery and sat there crying. An adult martin flew to him, touched his beak, decided he wasn't hers and flew off. I watched Little Bit and was just about to go into the house for some worms for him, when suddenly he flew to the top of the house. There he sat, stretched, flexed his wings and watched the other martins. I watched the martin houses throughout the day. No birds came to be fed. Evidently my birds were launched. They were on their own. One swallow may not make a summer, but five of them kept me busy for nine days.

Book Reviews

S. F. Welty, KNIGHT'S RANSOM. Chicago. Follett. 1951. $X.XX.

Falconry reached its zenith in the middle ages, when knighthood was in flower. During this era, falcons were flown only by aristocracy – only noblemen could keep falcons. And, reserved for princes was the pride of all falconers, the magnificent Greenland Falcon (Gyrfalcon).

Knight's Ransom is a story twined about the high value placed on these magnificent birds of prey, relating how the knights of the crusades were captured by the Turks and held prisoner until they could be ransomed. The ransom was twelve Greenland Falcons. The story continues recounting the perilous quest to secure the falcons. It details the many obstacles and dangers encountered in undertaking the long trip to far off Greenland and back.

Here is a story young people should enjoy reading. It is easy to read – about junior high school level – and it employs all of the ingredients of a good mystery with lots of adventure, all fully authenticated with historical background.

Donald J. Hendrick

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