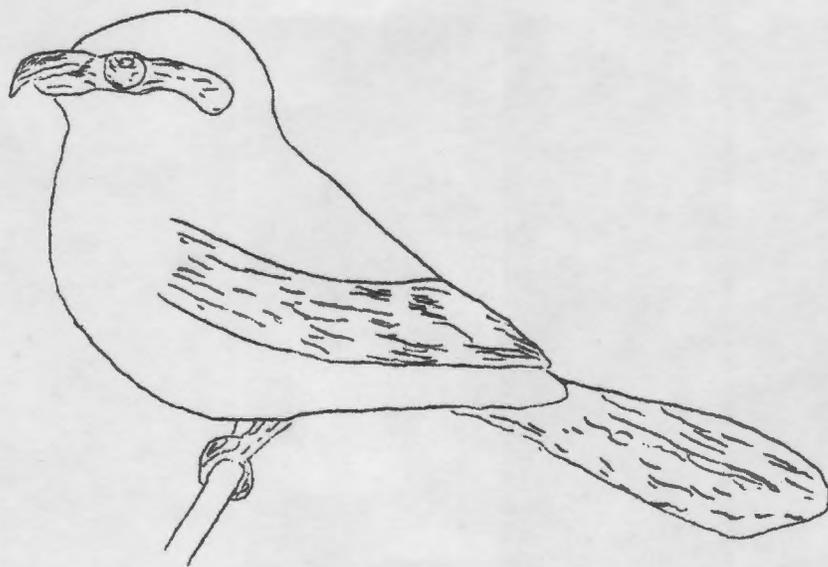


The Flicker



Volume 1

1929

Number 1

THE FLICKER

Vol. I

Minneapolis, Minnesota

No. I

A TRAGEDY IN BIRD-DOM by Charles Evans

One day in January as I was resting on a bridge which crosses the Minnehaha Creek below the falls, a bird, evidently a chickadee, came flying thru the tree tops with a Northern Shrike in pursuit. Darting back and forth they gradually came closer to the ground where the pursued one flew to a small patch of weeds with the shrike close behind. They emerged on the other side and the shrike forced the other into the snow where they appeared to be just a very animated bunch of feathers as the shrike attempted to get a grip.

I ran toward them, and the shrike, taken by surprise, flew to the top of a nearby tree leaving the small bird to flit to some bushes at a little distance. Not until then had I had opportunity to see that the bird was not a Chickadee, but the first Tufted Titmouse I have ever seen. It fluffed its feathers and seemed no worse for its harrowing experience, but suddenly the shrike swooped down and the pursuit was on again.

The butcher-bird drove its prey swiftly up-stream, and I followed, hoping to save the Titmouse, but hindered by the deep snow I was soon far in the rear. I was close enough, however, to see the shrike force the small bird to the ground exactly as before, and then I heard an anguished cry as the shrike got the death-grip and carried off the poor Titmouse.

I felt, of course, very sorry that the bird had been killed but felt also that I had witnessed an event which it is not the privilege of everyone to see.

RARE BIRD BOOKS IN THE TWIN CITIES

It may not be well known that the Twin Cities are singularly well supplied with copies of the rarer ornithological books.

In Minneapolis we find that the Public Library has a set of John C. Phillips' monumental "Natural History of the Ducks" and a set of Audubon's original edition of the "Birds of America". This last set is so valuable (about \$5000) that the library management will not allow the general public to use it, however, The Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota also possesses a set of each of these works, and the main library at the University has a set of William Bebee's "Monograph of the Pheasants", which, however, is not available to the general public.

The best collection of this kind of books is in the James Jerone Hill Reference Library at 4th and Market Streets in St. Paul. Here we find a copy of each of the works thus far mentioned as well as many others of interest among which are: Kirke Swan's "Monograph of the Accipiters", Thorburn's "British Birds", and his "British Waterbirds," and Seebohm's "Monograph on the Thrushes". There are many others worthy of mention but these are the most important.

Most of us will probably not be able to appreciate the text that accompanies these works, but we can all appreciate the wonderful plates, and it is worth anyones time to spend an afternoon looking over the plates in Beebe's Monograph. Make the Hill Library a visit; you will not be disappointed.

THE TALE OF A WOOD THRUSH

by Charles Evans

Bird-lovers as a rule have some pretty good yarns to tell; in fact, many of them have some that even the best of fishermen would be proud to relate around the traditional campfire. Here is one of mine which I think is worth telling.

One day last spring I was attempting to photograph an adult Wood Thrush at its nest but started out rather poorly by frightening all but one of the nearly fully fledged young birds from the nest. However, I continued my operations. After arranging the thousand and one things that must be arranged properly on a camera in order to secure a good photograph, I straightened up to make a final examination and was hit squarely on the cheek by the mother bird who had been unable to stop or vary the course of her angry dart at me in time to avoid the collision. She flew weakly to a nearby bush but soon regained her courage and with many an angry "chuck" resumed her attacks.

After giving everything a final "once over" I retired to a natural blind on a nearby path. To pass the time away I wrote a theme for my English class the next day, recorded my observations on birds for the day, and then spent the time listening to the beautiful (?) humming of the Mosquitoes as they waited for other skeeters to move over and make room for them on this obliging human being. After half an hour of this delightful amusement my attention was attracted to a young Wood Thrush that came running up towards me. A short distance behind came one of the adults. It too started up toward me but had gone only a few steps when it became suspicious at the appearance of my blue shirt. It stopped, stretched its neck to the utmost, and subjected me to the most careful scrutiny. Then, realizing that I was the terrible person who had placed that frightful three-legged thing with the staring glass at its nest, it uttered a few frightened "chucks" that were evidently intended to warn its offspring, and flew to a nearby bush.

The little fellow, who was as ignorant of his danger as was the path on which he was running, had been coming on all the time his parent was examining me. He paid no attention to his parent's warning but ran right up to my toes, hopped onto one of them, ran up my side to my shoulder, stopped a minute to see that there were no enemies around, then hopped up to a branch about five inches above me where it intended to roost.

Meanwhile the poor distracted parent chucked and clucked and figgetted around, hopping here and there not knowing what to do. Finally it decided that the camera was the lesser of the two dangers and went to the nest.

I pulled the thread that tripped the shutter, and after the bird had left the nest, crawled out from under my friend who

was greatly surprised to see what he must have considered a dead tree become a living enemy. He "stayed put", however, for want of a better thing to do while I prepared the camera to take another picture of the same subject and then crawled back under him to my original position. In spite of the fact that I crawled out from under him and back again each of three times I snapped a picture of his immediate ancestorg, he didn't desert his camping ground until I arranged the tripod and camera to shoot him as he was being fed by one of the adults.

Looking at things from an entirely different point of view it is interesting to note that the parent Thrush was unable to warn her youngster of the danger. This leads one to think that Wood Thrushes do not have a very efficient system of conversation.

THE BOOK WORM

The most recent publications on birds by the Bureau of Biological Survey are:

The European Starling in the United Stats by E. R. Kalmbach
Farmer's Bulletin No. 1571

The Spread of the European Starling in North America (to 1928)
by May Thacher Cooke, Circular No. 40, U. S. Dept. of Agr.

This last is illustrated with a fine colored plate by Mr. Kalmbach showing the various plumages of the Starling. To us these bulletins are of special interest because the bird has not yet been found in Minnesota, suppositions are that it will be found here within a very short time, if its range continues to grow at the same speed shown hitherto. Both bulletins may be obtained free from the Dept. of Agriculture, or if they have no remaining copies, at a price of five cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.

Two Minnesota notes in the January number of the Auk are of interest to local readers. They are by E. D. Swedenborg of Minneapolis and relate a sight record of Audubon's Warbler (first Minn. record) near Minneapolis, and the finding of a nest of the Golden-crowned Kinglet near Mille Lacs (second Minn. nest)

The January number of Good Housekeeping has an interesting article by H. S. Williams on "Our Winter Guests", which by the way are birds.

Outdoor Life for February has an article on the extinction of the Passenger Pigeon written by the authority on that subject, W. B. Merchen. The same number contains a colored plate of the Prairie Chicken painted by Miksch Sutton. The Plate is not up to Dr. Sutton's usual standard tho it is very good.

"Common Birds of North Carolina", by Laurence H. Snyder is a 48 page pamphlet dealing with 100 of the common North Carolina birds. It contains pen sketches of 76 of the species treated and has short descriptions of all. Little pamphlets like this are interesting to read, and it helps to give us an

idea of the bird life in other parts of the country. It will often surprise one to learn of the differences in the bird life of two localities separated by only a short distance. Some of the pen sketches are very good, some are just good, and some are not so good. The leaflet is published by the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering, N. C. Agricultural Extension Service, State College Station, Raleigh, N. C., and it may be obtained free of charge from this address.

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak group is the last one completed at the Museum of Natural History at the U. of M. Mr. Breckenridge is at present working on a portable group of the Black Tern together with the nest and eggs, and also on a medium sized group of the Duck Hawk.

The Flicker

VOLUME I, NUMBER 2

Minneapolis, Minnesota

April 1929

"The Flicker" is issued bi-monthly to members of the club and to subscribers. In either case the price is one dollar per year payable now to the secretary - treasurer, Charles Evans, 3250 47 Avenue South, Minneapolis, from whom also any information about the club or the papers may be secured.

Minutes:

The first meeting of the club was held in the Walker Branch Library at 29th and Hennepin at 7:30 P.M. March 15, 1929.

A series of lantern slides was shown by Gustav Swanson, after which a business meeting was held at which time it was decided to issue an official bi-monthly organ to be called "The Flicker". The club itself was named, "The Upper Mississippi Bird Club." Dues of one dollar per year were established, and Gustav Swanson was elected president. Thirteen members were present. The meeting was adjourned.

The second meeting was held at the Walker Branch Library at 8:00 P.M. on March 27th with an attendance of eighteen.

Mr. W. J. Breckenridge, Preparator at the University of Minnesota Museum of Natural History, gave a very interesting talk on his ornithological experiences in the northern and western portions of Minnesota.

The several members told of birds which they had seen recently after which a brief business session was held during which Charles Evans was elected secretary - treasurer. The meeting was adjourned.

Each member is urged to do his utmost to get new members and subscriptions, for only in this way will we be able effectively to improve our paper.

The Upper Mississippi Bird Club is an organization of young men interested in the acquiring of more knowledge about birds, chiefly those of Minnesota. Its publication, "The Flicker", is issued not only to the members of the club, but to anyone who may be interested enough to subscribe. It will consist of short articles and notes on birds with one page in each issue devoted to natural history as a whole.

THE CHRISTMAS CENSUS IN MINNESOTA
by E. D. Swedenborg

Having been especially interested in the winter birds of the state for the past several years I have often wondered which was the most common species at this season, that is the typical winter bird of Minnesota. Being unable to decide to my own satisfaction from personal observations I thought of the plan of using Bird Lore's Annual Christmas censuses. The accompanying table is the result. These are the totals for all the censuses recorded from Minnesota during the twenty-nine years that Bird Lore has conducted this interesting experiment.

These observations were made over a period of twenty-four years and represent the results of about 330 hours work in the field by a large number of observers, under varying conditions of climate, the ground bare at times and buried under over a foot of snow at other times. The temperature ranged from eight below zero to forty-two above. The greatest number of species seen by any one observer was sixteen at St. Peter in 1918. The greatest number of individuals recorded on any census was at Minneapolis in 1925, three hundred and eighty-two. This was a winter in which the Redpolls came down in great numbers and the half-hardy species, such as the tree sparrows, juncoes, purple finches, goldfinches, and brown creepers lingered in the north in more than their customary numbers. The smallest number of species recorded by any observer was at Minneapolis in 1910, two, bluejays and redpolls. The smallest number of individuals was six at Oslo, in 1912, far up in the northwestern corner of the state.

And yet I'm still in doubt. What makes a certain species the most common bird or the typical bird? The one seen in the greatest number of years or the one seen by the most observers or the one which the most individuals were seen during this period? Only two species were seen every year, the black-capped chickadee and the white-breasted nuthatch. But five observers missed seeing the nuthatch and ten the chickadee. The two species seen by the most observers were the bluejay and the white-breasted nuthatch, each seen by sixty-three of the sixty-eight observers. The bluejay was also well up in the list of individuals seen, being surpassed by only two other species, the tree sparrow and the redpoll. These two species ran quite a close race in this respect, 754 tree sparrows and 621 redpolls being seen. But these same species are almost if not entirely absent during some winters, the tree sparrow being recorded by thirty-five observers twenty years and the redpoll by thirteen observers in eleven years. The weather conditions have considerable to do with the presence of these species, the tree sparrow usually remaining in numbers only during open winters and the opposite conditions probably bringing the redpolls down. So obviously neither of these species is the typical winter bird in Minnesota.

It would seem to me that the species well up in the list in all these respects would be the typical. Such a bird is the blue jay, its only rival being the nuthatch. The jay missed being recorded in only one year, 1914, and in that year only one census was taken in the state and that one in the northern section, at Eagle Bend. It was seen by every observer from the Twin Cities and missed by only five from the rest of the state. The nuthatch was seen every year and by the same number of observers as the blue jay, but the latter far surpassed the former in numbers seen, 577 to 435. So I'm inclined to feel that the blue jay is the typical winter bird, and the one you are most apt to see in the field any day during any winter at any place in at least the southern section of the state.

But even more interesting than the common and numerous species are the rare stragglers and unusual winter visitants. Perhaps the most unusual record in the entire list is that of the Harris sparrow reported from Fairmont in 1913 and again at St. Peter in 1918.

Three unusual species of woodpeckers were found reported in these records, the Flicker at St. Peter in 1913, the red-headed woodpecker at Dassel in 1925 and 1926, at Red Wing in 1923 and at St. Paul in 1928, and the red-bellied woodpecker at Minneapolis in 1919 and 1923 and at Red Wing in 1923. The pileated woodpecker was recorded but six times, not very often when one considers that it is a permanent resident in the state.

The golden-crowned kinglet was found during two years, at Mankato and St. Peter in 1921 and at Minneapolis in 1924. The red-breasted nuthatch was recorded from the same locality, St. Peter in 1916, 1917, and 1918. The bluebird was seen but once, at Minneapolis in 1920, but the robin was reported during seven different years.

Only two species of hawks were reported, the goshawk three times, and the sharp-shinned at Minneapolis in 1923. Other interesting stragglers seen were ring-billed gulls at Minneapolis in 1923, Wilson Snipe at St. Peter in 1917, Mourning Dove at St. Peter in 1918 and 1921, a Kingfisher at Minneapolis in 1928, and three species of ducks, the red-breasted merganser, mallard, and golden-eye.

Then there are the winter visitants to consider, perhaps as interesting as any because they are here for such brief periods. Among these the following were recorded but once each: the snowy owl at Harris, 1926, the hoary redpoll, Lapland longspur and Hudsonian chickadee at Cambridge in 1915, and the American and white-winged crossbills at Fairmont in 1913. The Bohemian waxwings were recorded by two different parties at Minneapolis in 1921 and again in 1928, and the pine grosbeaks at Minneapolis and St. Paul in 1925 and at Excelsior in 1906. The snow bunting was seen during four different years, at Minneapolis in 1906 and 1908, at Dassel in 1926, and at St. Paul in 1927. Other winter visitants were N. shrike and horned larks. The table follows:

Species	No. Yrs. seen	Number of Observers			No. Individuals		
		In T.C.	out	whole state	In T.C.	out	To-tal
Ring-billed Gull	1	1	0	1	27	0	27
Red-breasted Merganser	2	2	0	2	7	0	7
Mallard	3	1	3	4	1	5	6
Golden-eye	4	4	0	4	10	0	10
Wilson Snipe	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Bob-white	11	11	6	17	76	91	167
Ruffed Grouse	4	0	4	4	0	18	18
Prairie Chicken	4	0	5	5	0	116	116
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	10	1	11	91	2	93
Mourning Dove	2	0	2	2	0	6	6
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Goshawk	3	2	1	3	2	1	3
Barred Owl	4	1	3	4	1	6	7
Screech Owl	11	6	6	12	6	6	12
Great Horned Owl	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Snowy Owl	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Belted Kingfisher	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Hairy Woodpecker	22	25	23	48	88	55	143
Downy Woodpecker	23	31	22	53	126	75	201
Pileated Woodpecker	5	3	3	6	4	4	8
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	2	1	3	2	5	7
Flicker	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Prairie Horned Lark	2	0	2	2	0	21	21
Blue Jay	23	37	26	63	409	168	577
Crow	11	8	7	15	21	22	43
Red-winged Blackbird	4	1	3	4	2	65	67
Evening Grosbeak	2	0	2	2	0	17	17
Pine Grosbeak	2	2	1	3	4	10	14
Purple Finch	6	6	1	7	38	15	53
American Crossbill	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
White-winged Crossbill	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Hoard Redpoll	1	0	1	1	0	5	5
Redpoll	11	7	6	13	306	315	621
Goldfinch	7	9	6	15	63	76	139
Snow Bunting	4	3	1	4	11	200	211
Lapland Longspur	1	0	1	1	0	4	4
Harris Sparrow	1	0	1	1	0	2	2
Tree Sparrow	20	18	17	35	321	433	754
Junco	11	15	5	20	113	76	189
Fox Sparrow	2	0	2	2	0	4	4
Cardinal	3	4	1	5	9	4	13
Bohemian Waxwing	2	3	0	3	91	0	91
Cedar Waxwing	6	4	2	6	44	7	51
Northern Shrike	5	4	3	7	4	4	8
Brown Creeper	17	18	13	31	30	37	67
White-breasted Nuthatch	24	34	29	63	309	126	435
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	0	3	3	0	7	7
Black-capped Chickadee	24	32	26	58	316	259	575
Hudsonian Chickadee	1	0	1	1	0	4	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	1	2	3	2	5	7
Robin	7	5	2	7	6	2	8
Bluebird	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
TOTAL	315	254	569	2545	2292	4837	

(Errata: The totals in the line just above should all be shifted over one column; there is, of course no total for the first column. On the preceding two pages Fairmount has been wrongly spelled Fairmount)

(Strnad: Fairmount has been corrected in this revision and the columns correctly totaled are: 314 251 565 2544 2285 4829)

PINE GROSBEAKS

On the afternoon of November 8 I was at Como Park to see what feathered friends were there. It was getting dark and I had started home when I heard some strange, soft warbling notes. I discovered that they came from a flock of about twenty birds of slow actions of a Bluebird's build, but slightly larger. By the time I had reached them it was too late to identify them as it was getting dark.

The next morning I was there again. The members of the flock were more or less separated. Two birds were resting in a tree but I didn't identify them until they lit on the ground to feed. Soon others joined them. They were all very tame, and their markings were now very clear. I had Chapman's "Handbook" with me, and found them to be Pine Grosbeaks.

It has since occurred to me what a time I would have had in identifying them if I had only had pictures, for all those I have seen of the bird have shown adult males with the whole back and breast red. All the birds, but one, that I saw were either females or young males, having the back, having the back slate-gray, breast whitish, and only crown and rump yellow or orange, and the one male that I did see had the back almost as dull as the others, with only head and rump bright red.

The birds were feeding on ordinary weed seeds in regular sparrow fashion. I saw them at the park on later dates, but then they were broken up into groups of four or six individuals. One of these groups was feeding on the berries of some trees which I do not know. On December 8 I saw three at Fort Snelling, all feeding on weed seeds.

The habits and actions of these Grosbeaks are unlike those of any other birds with which I am familiar. Their slow movements as they hop about either on the ground or among the branches of the trees are unusual. They seem to be quite indifferent to one's presence. As I stood watching them, they ^{paid} no attention to me. When I walked up closer, they stopped a few seconds to stare at me, as a dog does when you speak to him suddenly, and then returns to his own business. I will always remember this, my first meeting with these interesting birds, as among my most enjoyable experiences of 1928.

----- Alden Risser, St. Paul, Minn.

The migration dates on the following pages were compiled from dates furnished by Mr. E. D. Swedenborg, Charles Evans, John Alden Stowers, Alden Risser, and Gustav Swanson of the Twin Cities; Donald and Leander Fischer, Stanley and Ernest Stein, and Eddie Deller, of Shakopee; and Jerome Stoudt of Hastings.

Besides the dates in the table Mr. Swedenborg reports that a few Robins, Purple Finches, and Goldfinches have been found wintering this season. His last date for Pine Grosbeaks is Mar. 4 and for Bohemian Waxwings Mar. 18.

Alden Risser reports his last Snow Bunting on March 24 (Risser correction - 14) and a Pileated Woodpecker on Mar. 21.

SPRING ARRIVALS
(to Apr. 1, 1929)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Twin Cities</u>	<u>Shakopee</u>	<u>Hastings</u>
Pied-billed Grebe		March 28(Very early)	
Loon	March 29		
Herring Gull	March 25		March 24
Ring-billed Gull	March 23	March 23	March 24
Red-breasted Merganser		March 26	
Hooded Merganser	March 25		March 17
Mallard	March 29	March 25	March 24
Shoveller		March 29	
Baldpate			March 29
Pintail	March 25	March 29	March 24
Redhead	March 27	March 25	March 30
Canvasback	March 28	March 26	
Lesser Scaup	March 25	March 23	March 25
Ring-necked Duck	March 26	March 25	March 25
American Goldeneye	March 25	March 25	
Bufflehead	March 26		
Canada Goose	March 28	March 26	March 17
Whistling Swan (5)	March 30(Bob Leighton)		
Great Blue Heron		March 27	March 29
Coot	March 26	March 23	March 16
Woodcock	March 25(flight song also heard)		
Wilson Snipe	March 25		March 29
Killdeer	March 16	March 14	March 16
Mourning Dove	March 31		
Turkey Vulture	March 25		
Marsh Hawk	March 17	March 23	March 16
Sharp-shinned Hawk	March 17(Swanson)		March 27
Cooper Hawk	March 27		March 16
Red-tailed Hawk	March 18	March 26	March 10
Broad-winged Hawk	March 21	March 29	
Sparrow Hawk	*March 17-Risser	March 28	
Kingfisher	March 25	March 16	March 28
N. Flicker	March 29	March 27	March 16
Crow	March 2	March 2	Feb. 24
Phoebe	March 27	March 29	
Horned Lark(Prairie)	Febr. 22		March 2
Red-winged Blackbird	March 16	March 15	March 16
E. Meadowlark	March 18	March 26	March 24
W. Meadowlark	**March 17	March 16	
Rusty Blackbird	March 23	March 25	March 16
Bronzed Grackle	March 18	March 26	March 16
Vesper Sparrow		M	March 30
Song Sparrow	March 17	March 18	March 24
Fox Sparrow	March 21	March 19	March 24
Tree Swallow			March 24
Cedar Waxwing	March 3		March 15
Migrant Shrike	March 29	March 25	March 29
Golden-crowned Kinglet	March 29		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	March 30		
Robin	March 14(30 in flock)	March 15	March 16
Bluebird	March 16	March 15	March 16

(Risser corrections: *March 27; **March 16)

ALL NATURE

At the second meeting of the club it was decided to have a page in each issue devoted to general natural history other than birds. Members are urged to send in their observations on animals other than birds as well as on the birds.

Although there was a short open season on muskrats this spring the animals seem to be as common or more common than usual. They are seen especially commonly along the Minnesota River bottoms from Fort Snelling at least as far as the Cedar Avenue bridge.

Mourning Cloak Butterflies (*Vanessa antiopa*) were very common as early as March 25th. This is one of the few butterflies which hibernates here in the adult stage. Usually it is seen just shortly after the first really warm weather; often it comes out while there remains a good deal of snow in sheltered places.

Chipmunks were quite common on March 17th. Their dates of appearance after the long hibernation is surprisingly constant year after year.

Fresh mounds of the pocket gopher were found on March 25th, showing that the animals had at this time appeared above the ground. According to Seton the pocket gopher does not hibernate at all, but remains active thru-out the winter.

On March 25th a Bell's Painted Terrapin, the commonest Minnesota turtle, was found at the Long Meadow Gun Club preserve along the Minnesota River, and on the same date a Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) was found nearby.

Stanley Stein and Leander Fischer of Shakopee are kindly taking care of the work of mimeographing "The Flicker".

+++++

Besides the migrants in the table found in another part of this paper (P.10), Jerome Stoudt of Hastings reports the following interesting birds: Jan. 2-American Merganser, American Goldeneye, Mourning Dove, White-throated Sparrow (there are only a few winter records for the white-throat(ed) in Minnesota)
Jan. 3-Tufted Titmouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker,
Jan. 13 - A Hooded Merganser - evidently wounded - hardly able to fly.
Jan. 19 - a Flicker. Feb. 3 - A Northern Shrike.
Feb. 12 - Robin Mar. 3 - a stray female Red-winged Blackbird.
Mar. 10 - Bald Eagle Mar.11 - Ruffed Grouse
Mar. 28 - Barred Owl

THE BOOKWORM

Birds of Illinois by Orpeus Moyer Schantz, 1928

Publication No. 6 Illinois Dept. of Conservation, Springfield

This is a booklet of 130 pages giving a brief resume of Illinois bird-life, which is so similar to Minnesota bird-life that the publication is of interest here for comparison. It has a cover page plate of a Cardinal in full color, and pen sketches of nearly all the species treated. These sketches are by several artists, but in general only those by Louis Aggassiz Fuertes and George Miksch Sutton are good; the others are rather indifferent. The publication is distributed free of charge.

Reproductions of Bird Paintings by Allan Brooks

The Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, has issued a set of twelve reproductions of Allan Brooks' bird paintings at a price of fifty cents. The reproductions are without a doubt the best we have ever seen of bird paintings if those in William Beebe's Monograph of the Pheasants are excluded. Admirable as are the reproductions in Forbush's "Birds of Massachusetts" these do the artist even more justice. The plates are 9 x 11 inches and all of the birds pictured are commonly found in Minnesota.

Trees and Shrubs of Minnesota, by Rosendahl and Butters
University of Minnesota Press, 1928, illustrated,
Four dollars. 384 pages. imperial octavo

This book will be of interest to the nature lover who wishes to know the trees of the state. It is a reference work, not the kind of a book which one reads to pass the time away, but its purpose, that of identifying all Minnesota Trees and Shrubs is very well served.

Mother and Ann Nature Series Insects
by Glen Eaton Hodson. Webb Book Publishing Company. 1928
about 150 pages. price \$0.72 postpaid.

This book, written primarily for children, may be of interest to adults as well. It is the first of a series of books by the same author on different groups of organisms which the child should know better, and which can be observed without going too far afield. The book is well illustrated with pen drawings by Kathleen Kane.

The death during the past few weeks of Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr., Robert Ridgway, and Edward Howe Forbush reduces the ranks of the truly great American ornithologists considerably. All of these three men were fellows of the American Ornithologist's Union.

T H E F L I C K E R

Vol. I

Minneapolis, Minnesota

No. 3

EDITORIALS

"The Flicker" is issued bi-monthly to members of the club and to subscribers. In either case the price is one dollar per year payable now to the secretary-treasurer, Charles Evans, 3250 - 47th Avenue South, Minneapolis, from whom also any information about the club or the paper may be secured.

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The Minnesota Bird Club is an organization of young men interested in the acquiring of more knowledge about birds, chiefly those of Minnesota. Its publication, "The Fleiker", is issued not only to the members of the club, but to anyone who may be interested enough to subscribe. It will consist of short articles and notes on birds with also articles on natural history as a whole.

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As editor I will be very glad to accept suggestions that will improve our publication and I know there is a great deal of room for improvement. One thing puzzled me this issue. I had an argument with one of my English teachers as to whether the names of birds should be capitalized. She said they should not but I still think they should. You will notice that in most cases I have not capitalized. I would be interested in knowing what other members think.

Sterling Brackett

A THRILL A DAY KEEPS THE
DOCTOR AWAY

Sometimes in the course of a field trip, one gets a glimpse of a bird in the shrubbery or sees one from afar, which leaves an impression that there is a strange bird on hand. After following up this hunch, one is often disappointed to find that the rare bird is an everyday one. The song sparrow has fooled me more often in this manner than any other bird. But on April 20th of this season, the reverse of this happened to me; that is, I saw a bird, judged it to be a common one, and was most pleasantly surprised.

While on my way to Feldman's Lake, a marsh in the Minnesota River bottoms north of Shakopee, I noticed a hawk soaring above me. The bird was very high and the light was poor, so it was impossible to observe any distinguishing

marks. Its manner of flight and soaring, led me to call it a red-tail, and for the time being I forgot about it.

A horned grebe in the ditch along the east side of the highroad now commanded my attention. The little fellow was exceedingly tame, and I easily approached within twenty feet of it. I wanted a camera, but had none along (as usual in cases of this sort). I think the horned grebe has the most peculiar eyes of any bird I have ever seen. They are very large for a bird of its size, have a light red color, and look watery enough to almost run out of their sockets; at least that is how they appeared to me when I focused my glass on the bird at a very short distance

After a half hour, I started for a large ash on the shore of the lake. It was my intention to climb it, and look the lake over with a telescope. As I was just topping a rise in the prairie, an enormous bird rose off the ground just ahead of me. With wings as big as a great blue heron's, it flew away from me. It was not dark enough for a vulture, which at first I thought it was. I noticed some white feathers in its tail; then it turned to the right showing a large yellow beak. An eagle, without a doubt.

I watched it flap its way along until it was over a half mile away, when it began to soar. I then remembered the hawk I had noticed some time before. It had disappeared in the same direction that I had taken and had soared in the same manner.

On examining the place where the bird arose, I found a partly eaten mallard. The duck had the appearance of having been dead for some time, at least several days.

The bird was evidently an immature Bald Eagle. It had the yellow beak of that species and some white showed in the tail. Its head was dark gray like the rest of the body. It is said that bald eagle does not obtain full plumage until its fourth year. In flight the tail of an eagle does not appear much larger than the tail of a red-tailed hawk. It is the wings that are much greater in size; an eagle's wing is half again as big as a Red-Tail's.

by Don. Fischer
Editorial Note
by Gustav Swanson

The immature bald eagle has a dark colored beak, while the adult has a yellow beak. The same is true for the color of the

iris. Our only explanation for the situation described above is that it was a bald eagle just reaching maturity - thus the yellow beak. This is further supported by the white in the tail, which is not found in strictly immature birds. The golden eagle does not have

THE BITTERN'S COURTSHIP ANTICS

Very few people have had the experience of seeing an American bittern emit it's singular call. It was just by luck that I found two bitterns calling to each other in the middle of May in 1928.

The process of making the call is quite extraordinary. First it contracts it's neck as far as possible to make "oomp", then it suddenly stretches it's neck to make the last sound, a "la". When the bittern has its neck contracted it swells up like a balloon, making the bird rather short and squatty looking.

The male had another note which I suppose was one of its courting expressions. He would emit a singular "Ca" then lower his head a few degrees and make the sound again. He did this until his head was in a horizontal position, then he would raise his head and look around the neighboring territory as if he expected to see his lady beautiful.

When I started walking at an angle toward the bittern, it kept its breast pointed toward me. I shall count this as one of the most interesting things I have seen on my field trips, as indeed, it is a difficult task finding one of these birds on the ground, let alone seeing it make its call.

by Carl Olson

PILEATED WOODPECKER NOTE

Several of our birds, such as the pileated woodpecker, upland plover, and wood duck were abundant in early years before the Minnesota territory was settled, but owing to an absolute lack of protection for many years as well as the destruction of their natural breeding grounds became very rare and on the verge of extinction but at present, under complete protection, are gradually increasing in numbers.

I am particularly interested in the Pileated woodpecker, having seen the bird in four different places within a month. I hope that it has not merely been exceptional luck on my part, but that my observations have been typical of its increased abundance throughout the entire state, or range of the species. My records of "four different places within one month" are as follows:

Mar. 21 - Pair at Hoyt Nursery, near Como Park, in St. Paul.

Apr. 2 - Pair at Fort Snelling

Apr. 13 - One at Pine Tree Lake, near White Bear Lake.

The pair at Fort Snelling and Pine Tree Lake were seen at those places on several subsequent occasions, but at the other two places only once.

The pair at Fort Snelling was the first on which I had an opportunity to study. The two birds were flying about the wooded region of the Fort Snelling reservation along the Minnesota River. Although their calls do not vary much, they are hard to describe. They bear some resemblance to those of the Flicker and White-breasted nuthatch, and although they could never be mistaken for the latter, the tone seems to me to be more like that of the nuthatch.

When excavating for food, they pound on the tree so hard that they must throw their long necks way back from the trunk before striking, and as a result it is done comparatively slowly. On one occasion I was approaching the bird from behind the large tree at which he was working, and at each stroke several pieces of bark two or three inches long were loosened and fell to the ground. The bird is, as one would imagine, wary, and when I had approached him within twenty yards from behind the tree, he stretched his neck farther back than usual, either by chance or because he had heard me, and saw me. He was so frightened that he didn't commence to voice his loud indignation until he was a block away. When seen in flight from the rear, they could be mistaken for crows.

As I have said, these birds produce a very great sound in pecking on the tree when digging for insects, but I was very much disappointed the first time I heard one performing the typical woodpecker "tattoo". I had expected this to be unusually loud and sonorous, but it was not even as loud as the average tattoo of the hairy woodpecker.

I have noticed one other habit of this interesting bird. From my observations it is the most terrestrial of our woodpeckers except the flicker, they vary frequently climb down to the base of a tree and then ~~keep~~ ^{lie} about awhile on the ground. Their appearance when in this attitude is rather awkward but amusing. The body is horizontal, and the neck and head stretched skyward. On one occasion I flushed a bird from the grass several yards from a stump. Apparently he had been resting there.

by

Alden Risser

EDITORIAL NOTE
Sterling Brackett

I have seen the pileated woodpecker in three different places at Minnetonka and a reliable report was made of a pair at a different location.

Charles Evans and I also found the nest of the woodpecker this spring. When we first approached the nest to take pictures the young were just hatching so the parents were very anxious and wouldn't stay away long which was lucky for us. The birds made some wonderful poses but as luck would have it neither of us got a good negative.

FISH IN CAPTIVITY

Observations over a period of several months on the fish in the aquarium of the University of Minnesota Museum of Natural History have brot me to believe that fish are not as stupid as one would think from seeing them strike at a red and white piece of wood with twelve or fifteen hooks fastened to it.

For instance, the single pickerel or northern pick (Esox lucius) in the aquarium was very timid when it was first brot to the muscum. Whenever anyone passed its tank so as to cast a shadow on the water the fish would dart away and stay as far from the passer by as possible. Now, however, it has commenced to connect the passing of this shadow across its tank with its regular meals, and whenever I pass the tank the fish comes to the top and waits as close to me as possible for the frog which it is fed.

Exactly the same demonstration of ichtian intelligence has been made by the group of sunfish and yellow perch in one tank.

Here quite an interesting appearance is given by the group of ten or twelve fish all coming to the top and expectantly looking for minnows to be tossed to them.

Another interesting performance was noted in the case of the lake or rock sturgeon. This fish has been feeding chiefly on crayfish while it has been kept in the aquarium. One day while watching it I noticed that it was moving convulsively as if it were coughing and while I watched it it coughed up, so to speak, part of a crayfish. The parts coughed up were all hard and indigestible, i.e. claw, etc. So it seems reasonable to one to assume that it was something similiar to the habit of birds of prey of regurgitating the indigestible portions of their prey, tho I had not known that fishes do this.

Gustav Swanson.

THE BOOK WORM

"Life Histories of North American Shorebirds (Order Limicolae, Part II)"

by Arthur Cleveland Bent
U. S. National Museum

Bulletin 149

This, the eighth in Mr. Bent's series of life histories, treats the second half of the shorebirds, from the solitary sandpiper to the end of the order. It is a 412 page book with 66 half-tone plates from photographs by various students. Many of the photographs are nothing short of marvelous.

A useful feature of Mr. Bent's treatment of the shorebirds has been the paragraph under each species on "Field Marks". He has compiled the field marks given by many different authorities, notably

Ludlow Griscom and J. T. Nichols, and thus this particular subject is treated about as completely as is possible.

The book may be secured for one dollar from the superintendent of Documents, Washington D. C., or possibly from the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.
"G. S."

The club is grateful to Mr. W. J. Breckenridge for the drawing which adorns the cover of this issue, and to Mr. S. A. Grimes for making the cut of the drawing.

SNOW GOOSE AT HASTINGS? MINN.

The snow goose which Jerome Stoudt, Carl Olson, and the writer saw on the field day, May 19, 1929, at Hastings, Minn. has been shot, because of the extreme lateness of the season and the extreme tameness of the bird, to be a bird escaped from some game farm. Snow Geese are ordinarily very timid and at this season of the year should be hundreds of miles to the north, because of the rather unusual features of this record it is not desirable to place this on record as a late migrant, tho the bird was perfectly able to fly and seemed to be in perfect condition.

Gustav Swanson

THE FLICKER

VOLUME I

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"The Flicker" is the official organ of the Minnesota Bird Club and is issued bi-monthly. Subscription price one dollar per year payable to the secretary, Charles Evans, 3250 - 47th Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Members are urged to remember that we are still trying to build up a bigger and better subscription list. If you know of any one who would be interested send their names and addresses to the secretary.

The present season has been one of the most successful that Minnesota ornithology has had in recent years, as the current issue of the Auk will testify. The discovery within the state of two nests of the elusive Connecticut warbler would be sufficient to awaken interest, and to this has been added the find of a Nelson's sparrow nest. This bird has been almost as much an oologists' anathema as the warbler, very few nests having been recorded.

Another ornithological venture which is being watched with interest by Minnesota bird people is the study, initiated this year, of the ruffed grouse, being made by Mr. King under a fellowship established with the aid of the Sporting Arms Ammunition Company.

THE 1929 NESTING SEASON

by Sam Grimes

The following is a summarized report of the combined nest records of several members of the Minnesota Bird Club. Only earliest and latest dates and records of more or less unusual interest are given. Unfortunately, some members did not send in their list, so a number of good finds are not recorded here. Except where special mention is made, the nests were in the Twin Cities region.

Readers are asked to tolerate occasional digressions into topics not pertinent to the title of this paper.

Pied-billed Grege: Three nests of the pied-billed grebe, containing 2, 7, and 8 eggs, found May 14th by the writer, are, from the records at hand, the first ones for the season. In all, 19 nests were reported. One set of 9 eggs was found. Late dates are June 25th, a nest with 7 eggs (Charles Evans), and July 19th, another with 7 eggs (the writer).

Loon: On three different days of the third week in June the writer observed a pair of loons with one young, on Anderson Lake, a few miles southwest of Minneapolis.

Black Tern: Two black tern nests with one egg each and one nest with two eggs, found May 22nd at Rice Lake by Charles Evans, are the earliest ones reported. By the 26th of May full sets were common, and on this date 11 nests, 8 of which held complete sets of eggs, were found by Gustav Swanson. The first chicks were seen June 12th (Carl Olson, E. D. Swedenborg, and the writer), and the first young on the wing June 29th (Charles Evans).

American Bittern: On the 17th of June Alden Risser found an American Bittern nest with three eggs --- the only one reported.

Least Bittern: Two nests of the least bittern were found, both at Rice Lake, by Charles Evans. One of these held five eggs on June 21st, the other held four on the 25th.

Great Blue Heron: Several great blue herons were observed and three of their nests were found in a tamarack swamp near Minneapolis on May 19th (E. D. Swedenborg and the writer), Carl Olson climbed two of these nests on June 1st and found it empty. It is quite unlikely that any eggs were laid in this "herony".

Green Heron: Stanley Stein reports an unfinished nest of the little green heron on May 15th and one with five eggs on the 28th.

Virginia Rail: A pair of very solicitous Virginia rails was encountered near an empty nest on June 26th by Charles Evans, but he was unable to find any of the young. A nest with 6 eggs on July 7th was the only other reported.

Sora: Alden Risser found an empty nest of the sora on May 14th. The first nests with eggs were reported on May 24th - a nest with one egg (Charles Evans) and 4 nests with 1, 5, 6, and 11 eggs (the writer). Gustav Swanson found a nest containing 7 eggs June 9th but no really late nests were reported.

Florida Gallinule: The first Florida gallinule nest was one that held 5 eggs on June 2nd (the writer). A nest found by Charles Evans on June 29th, when it held one egg, contained 6 eggs on the 4th of July.

Coot: The first coot nests were reported May 14th, when Alden Risser found 3 nests with 1, 3, and 10 eggs, and the writer 2 nests with 8 and 11 eggs. Newly hatched young were seen May 28th at Oxboro pond (the writer). The latest nest was one containing 4 eggs on June 29th, found by Charles Evans.

Spotted Sandpiper: A nest with three eggs of the spotted sandpiper was found May 19th by Alden Risser, and the same observer reports 3 nests with four eggs each on June 1st and one nest with 3 eggs and 3 with 4 apiece (some hatching) on June 17th.

Killdeer: The first nest of the Killdeer for the season was one with four eggs, on a knoll in an alfalfa field, shown to several observers May 4th, by a farm lad. On May 19th downy young were seen; and in another locality a nest with one addled egg was found near which there must have been young hiding, judging by the frantic crying and simulation of helplessness on the part of the two adult birds. On June 18th, 6 tiny young in one place were found by Ralph Woolsey. Though there was but one parent bird present, it is improbable that these six young were of one brood.

Ruffed grouse: Stanley Stein reports a nest of the ruffed grouse with 11 eggs on May 15th, and a nest with 11 newly hatched young was found June 5th by Alden Risser.

Pheasant: Four nests of the ring-necked pheasant were reported as follows: 13 eggs, May 12th (E. D. Swedenborg); 16 eggs, May 18th (Alden Risser); 15 eggs, May 21st (Marius Morse); and 12 eggs June 3rd (the writer). The bird on the nest mentioned last was touched while sitting.

Mourning Dove: Marius Morse reports the first mourning dove nest - one with two eggs on April 19th. Gustav Swanson found a nest in a rain trough at Fort Snelling. No late nests were reported.

Marsh Hawk: On June 6th a nest of the marsh hawk with 4 eggs and one tiny young was found near Minneapolis (E. D. Swedenborg) and the writer). None of the four eggs ever hatched. When able to crawl about, the nestling would seek shelter from the blazing sun in the vegetation surrounding the nest. On the 29th of June it was caught near the nest and banded by Gustav Swanson. On July 2nd it could not be found, but on the 6th when almost a month old, it was flushed near the nest. At this time it flew rather feebly a hundred yards or so, repeating when approached.

Broad-winged Hawk: A broad-winged hawk's nest with 2 eggs was found in Glenwood Park on the 9th of May by the writer. Another egg was laid on the 10th or 11th and the 4th and last one on the 13th. Three eggs hatched (the exact date was not determined), and all three young left the nest July 11th, probably a day or two sooner than they would have if left unmolested.

Long-eared Owl: In an old crow nest, twenty-five feet or so from the ground in a tamarack, in a swamp of these trees, Carl Olson and the writer found five young of the long-eared owl, on June 1st. A week later, though still unable to fly, four of the owlets had left.

Screech Owl: The first nest of the screech owl reported was one in which a bird was incubating on April 4 (E. D. Swedenborg). The young left this nest on June 6th. Charles Evans noted young on the verge of breaking home ties on May 29th, and Stanley Stein reports a nest with young on June 25th.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: The only yellow-billed cuckoo nest reported was one containing young a few days old on the 17th of June, found by Alden Risser.

Black-billed cuckoo: The black-billed cuckoo fared little better only two nests being reported - one with 4 eggs, June 10th (Alden Risser) and one with 3 eggs and 2 young, June 15th, (the writer).

Kingfisher: Two nests of the belted kingfisher, both with young, reported May 26th and June 25th, by Stanley Stein, are the earliest and latest dates for this species.

Hairy Woodpecker: From the 15th to the 20th of May, 4 nests of the hairy woodpecker were reported, all with young. Gustav Swanson reports 3 and Charles Evans accounts for the other.

Downy Woodpecker: A pair of downy woodpeckers was observed at their nest hole on April 29th (Gustav Swanson). A nest with young nearly fully fledged was found on the 17th of June by E. D. Swedenborg.

Sapsucker: Near Hastings, on May 19th, Gustav Swanson found a yellow-bellied sapsucker nest with eggs.

Pileated Woodpecker: Charles Evans reported a nest of the pileated woodpecker, a short way from Excelsior, containing two eggs on May 5th. The eggs hatched May 16th, and the single fledgling in the cavity on June 9th appeared about ready to leave.

Red-headed Woodpecker: A red-headed woodpecker was noted sitting June 5th (E. D. Swedenborg). Stanley Stein reports 4 nests, from May 20th to August 1st.

Flicker: An apparently finished nest of the flicker on May 6th is the earliest record for the season (E. D. Swedenborg). Marius Morse found a nest with 6 eggs on May 18th. Young ready to leave the nest were seen on the 20th of June (Charles Evans).

Chimney Swift: Several nesting sites of the chimney swift were noted, but no nests were seen.

Hummingbird: Two nests of the ruby-throated hummingbird were reported - one with young June 26th, the other (at Prior Lake) with young August 14th, by Stanley Stein.

Kingbird: A pair of kingbirds were seen building on the 5th of June (Gustav Swanson); the first nest with eggs was found June 10th

(Alden Risser); and two nests with young were reported July 15th, the latest date (Stanely Stein).

Crested Flycatcher: The only nest of the crested Flycatcher reported was one at North Branch, about 45 miles north of the Twin Cities, that held 3 eggs on June 15th, found by Gustav Swanson.

Phoebe: A nest of the phoebe with four eggs on May 1st was the first one reported (Gustav Swanson). Stanely Stein reports a nest with young as late as August 5th. In the pine woods in northern Cass county on the 23rd of June the writer chanced to step into a vacant log cabin, when for an instant the place was literally alive with birds. The commotion was over in a few seconds, and one fledgling phoebe lay dead on the floor, having flown against the window pane instead of through the open door, as did its four or five nest-mates. The nest was just above the door.

This incident recalled a somewhat similar one a few years ago. A pair of phoebes was noted working industriously on their nest on the sheer, almost smooth side of a concrete culvert. Below the nest flowed a brook filling the culvert to a depth of several inches even in dry weather. The writer watched this nest rather closely hoping to get some photographs of the young when they were old enough to perch alone. At the time of the last visit the young appeared to have reached the desired stage, so boots were donned and the nest approached. To the chagrin and astonishment of the photographer, the intended subjects sprang from their nest and flew out of the culvert with apparent ease and grace, one alighting nearly a hundred yards away.

Something, through the ages, has taught the young phoebes not to tumble out of their nest as soon as they are able to do so, as it seems the young of many other passerine birds do, but to remain in their hatching-place until they are strong enough to fly a good distance on their initial venture into the outside world. Since cowbirds frequently deposit their eggs in the nests of the phoebe, it would be interesting to know whether or not their offspring, too, in the event of necessity, are endowed with the instinct to make use of this unique means of escaping the usual water hazard.

Wood Pewee: A nest of the wood pewee was found May 30th, at Jordan (Stanley Stein). Its contents could not be determined. A nest with 3 eggs was found June 15th, another with eggs the following day, and one in Cass County June 23rd, the bird sitting. (the writer).

Least Flycatcher: The first nest of the least flycatcher was found June 4th, when it held 4 eggs (Alden Risser). A nest with young about a week old was found June 18th by E. D. Swedenborg. Two nests with four eggs each were found June 23rd and 24th in Cass and Isanti counties, respectively (the writer).

Horned Lark: The only nest of the horned lark was one with four eggs on May 15th, found by John Stowers.

Evans

Blue Jay: Charles/reports an apparently finished nest of the blue jay on April 20th. E. D. Swedenborg reports a nest with five eggs May 11th. The writer found a nest only five feet from the ground. Two nests with young were found July 28th (Stanley Stein), and a nest with three nearly fledged young was found August 4th (the writer).

Crow: A nearly completed nest of the crow was found April 13th (Charles Evans and the writer). Gustav Swanson found a nest May 5th that held young less than a week old. A nest with 2 or 3 well feathered young was found June 20th by the writer.

Bobolink: E. D. Swedenborg found a nest of the bobolink with a fragment of an eggshell, June 6th. Ten days later, in the same field, the writer found a nest with one egg and 6 newly hatched young.

Cowbird: The first egg of the cowbird was noted May 22nd (E. D. Swedenborg); the last, June 30th (the writer). Eggs were found in the nests of Brewer's blackbird, goldfinch, chipping, clay-colored, field, song and swamp sparrows, indigo bunting, red-eyed vireo, Nashville, yellow, and blackburnian warblers, Maryland yellowthroat, catbird, and wood thrush.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: A half-finished nest of the yellow-headed blackbird, found May 14th by the writer, was the first one reported but at least two nests found later are instances of earlier nesting. One of these is Marius Morse's record of a nest with 4 eggs on the 15th of May; the other, Gustav Swanson's record of a nest with one nestling and 3 eggs on May 26th. The latest date is June 21st, a nest with young (Charles Evans).

Red-winged Blackbird: The first nest of the red-winged blackbird reported was one with four eggs on May 6th, found by E. D. Swedenborg. The same observer reports a nest with eggs July 1st, the latest.

Meadowlark: Alden Risser reports a nest of the meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) containing five eggs on May 11th. Stanley Stein found a nest with young of this species on June 5th.

W. Meadowlark: A nest of the western meadowlark (*S. neglecta*) with 6 eggs was shown to several observers on April 28th, by a farm lad. A nest with 5 young was found May 12th (E. D. Swedenborg and the writer). A nest containing 6 eggs was reported May 24th, by Alden Risser.

Orchard Oriole : The only nest of the orchard oriole reported was one that held 5 eggs on the 8th of June (Alden Risser).

Baltimore Oriole: On May 30th Gustav Swanson observed a pair of Baltimore orioles working on their nest. E. D. Swedenborg noted a female brooding on June 5th. Stanley Stein reports an occupied nest on August 7th. To the writer this seems an exceptionally late date.

Brewer's Blackbird: Two Brewer's blackbird nests with 4 eggs each on May 11th were the first ones reported (the writer). Marius

Morse found a nest with two young on May 25th, and on the same day Charles Evans found two nests with five eggs apiece and one with four. In an added note he says, "Two nests had one egg each with a much lighter ground color than the other eggs". A single egg with a noticeable deficiency of pigment is the rule in sets of a good many birds, especially English sparrows.

Grackle: A pair of bronzed grackles was seen building a nest April 21st (Gustav Swanson). Marius Morse reports a nest with five eggs on May 4th. A nest with eggs was reported May 27th (Stanley Stein).

Purple Finch: In Cass County the writer found a nest of the purple finch with one egg, on June 22nd.

Goldfinch: Marius Morse found a goldfinch nest containing one egg on July 15th, and another with six eggs on the 25th of July.

Vesper Sparrow: Gustav Swanson reports a nest of the vesper sparrow with four eggs May 5th. On the 22nd of June the writer found a nest with four half-grown young, in Cass County.

Savannah Sparrow: Young of the savannah sparrow were seen by several observers the first week in June.

Lark Sparrow: A nest of the lark sparrow with four young June 10th "on the ground under a pasque flower plant" was reported by Gustav Swanson.

Chipping Sparrow: The first nest of the chipping sparrow reported was one that held three eggs of the owner and one cowbird egg on May 23rd (Alden Risser). Eggs were hatching July 19th in a second brood nest, and the young left when 10 days old (E. D. Swedenborg). Marius Morse found a nest with three eggs on the 25th of July, and Stanley Stein reports a nest with young August 14th.

Clay-colored Sparrow: A clay-colored sparrow nest with two eggs was found June 8th (the writer). Alden Risser reports a nest with newly hatched young on June 10th. A nest held three fresh eggs July 7th (the writer).

Field Sparrow: On the 8th of June two nests of the field sparrow with four eggs each were found by E. D. Swedenborg and Carl Olson. Gustav Swanson reports a nest with four young on June 10th; and at Red Wing, on the 29th of July, he found a nest with a young and observed a pair engaged in nest building.

Song Sparrow: The first nest of the song sparrow was one found with five eggs on May 5th (Alden Risser). On May 29th Gustav Swanson saw a young bird able to fly. The writer found two nests with six eggs apiece. Alden Risser's record of a nest with three fresh eggs on July 29th is the latest one for the season.

Swamp Sparrow: Three nests of the swamp sparrow were found - one on June 6th with four eggs and a cowbird egg; one the next day with five eggs, and one the following day with two eggs and a cowbird egg (E. D. Swedenborg and the writer).

Cardinal: The only nest of the cardinal reported was one with two eggs on June 8th, found by Alden Risser.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: E. D. Swedenborg observed a male rose-breasted grosbeak incubating on May 27th. Stanley Stein reports a nest with three young June 23rd, and on the same day the writer found a nest with four half-fledged young in Itasca County.

Indigo Bunting: A nest of the indigo bunting with one egg and two cowbird eggs, June 9th; one with one egg and a cowbird egg, June 15th; and one with two eggs, two young, and one cowbird egg, June 30th, were the only ones reported (the writer).

Purple Martin: There are a good many apparently thriving colonies of purple martins in the Twin Cities region.

Cliff Swallow: A small colony of cliff swallows was located by Mr. Swedenborg. The nests, under the eaves of a barn, were twelve in number on the 2nd of June. Eggs could be seen in two nests on this date.

Barn Swallows: On May 25th, in northern Mille Lacs County, E. D. Swedenborg noted a barn swallow breeding. Alden Risser found a nest with recently hatched young on June 7th. Stanley Stein noted an occupied nest on August 7th.

Tree Swallows: Gustav Swanson saw a pair of tree swallows at a hole in a stub on May 30th, and a nest with eggs was found at Jordan that day by Stanley Stein. A pair was seen feeding young in a woodpecker hole in a telephone pole on June 22nd, in Morrison County (the writer).

Bank Swallow: Numerous bank swallow colonies, large and small, were noted by most observers. A nest dug out by the writer on June 8th contained five eggs. Gustav Swanson and the writer found young on the wing June 29th, and some nests almost unquestionably held eggs on that date, for adult birds were found to stay in some nests more than an hour at a time.

Rough-winged Swallow: On June 20th E. D. Swedenborg found a nest of the rough-winged swallow with small young. The little swallows left their nest July 1st. An adult of this species was captured June 29th at its nest, which probably held eggs or tiny young, and another was captured at another nest on the next day (Gustav Swanson and the writer).

Cedar Waxwing: An apparently finished nest of the cedar waxwing, found in Chisago County June 15th by Gustav Swanson, held six eggs on the 4th of July. On July 28th Alden Risser found a nest with fully fledged young.

Migrant Shrike: Two nests of the migrant shrike, both being lined, were found April 14th in Anoka County by the writer. A nest found by E. D. Swedenborg held six eggs on April 20th. Three sets of six were reported. Stanley Stein reports a nest with two young on June 12th

Red-eyed Vireo: Marius Morse found a red-eyed vireo nest with 2 eggs on June 7th. A nest with one egg of the owner and three of the cowbird was found June 17th by Alden Risser and is the last reported.

Warbling Vireo: On the 3rd of June Gustav Swanson found two nests of the warbling vireo that seemed to be completed. On June 9th Charles Evans found a nest with three eggs that was only five feet above the ground, and on the same day Carl Olson and the writer observed an incubating bird singing freely. A nest with young was found July 28th (Stanley Stein).

Black and white Warbler: A nest of the black and white warbler with four almost fully-fledged young was found in a spruce swamp in northern Mille Lacs County on July 21st (E. D. Swedenborg and the writer).

Golden-winged Warbler: Near the swamp mentioned in the previous paragraph the same observers saw young of the golden-winged warbler out of the nest being fed by two adults, late in July.

Nashville Warbler: A Nashville warbler nest with two young and two young cowbirds all newly hatched, was found in Cass County, June 22nd (the writer).

Yellow Warbler: Charles Evans observed yellow warblers building on May 25th. A nest held five eggs and a cowbird egg May 31st (E. D. Swedenborg). Alden Risser found two nests with one egg each, one with 3, 2, and 4, and one with four and a cowbird egg, on the 1st of June. A double-storied nest with four eggs was seen June 3rd (Gustav Swanson). The last nest was reported June 30th (the writer).

Myrtle Warbler: Marius Morse found a nest of the myrtle warbler with four young on June 28th. He says in a letter: "The nest ... was located on a small crotch of a horizontal limb in a white pine tree at a very high elevation. I found the nest in a dense forest, near Beaver Bay, Minnesota, on the north shore of Lake Superior.... Within two days after I had made my discovery, one of the fledglings left the nest and I had the pleasure of holding it and watching the mother feed it.

Blackburnian Warbler: On the 22nd of June, in Cass County, a nest of the Blackburnian warbler containing two eggs and two cowbird eggs was found by the writer. On July 21st E. D. Swedenborg and the writer located a nest with four well-feathered young, in a spruce in a spruce swamp in northern Mille Lacs County.

Pine Warbler: The only nest of the pine warbler reported was one with half grown young on June 23rd in Cass County. The nest was in the tip top of a pine sapling. To the writer the finding of this nest was the thrill of the season, the experience being reminiscent of countless hours afield in the seemingly endless pineries of northeastern Florida, where the pine warbler is a permanent resident. In Florida the pine warbler is a most abundant bird, and some pairs begin nesting late in February.

Maryland Yellowthroat: A pair of Maryland yellowthroats was seen nest building on May 29th (Gustav Swanson). Marius Morse found a nest with six eggs (all yellowthroat eggs) on June 4th. The latest nest

reported was one with four eggs on the 24th of June, in Isanti County (the writer).

Louisiana Waterthrush: Charles Evans found a nest of the Louisiana waterthrush with two eggs and two newly hatched young on the 9th of June near Fort Snelling. He says that the nest was "well concealed in the roots on the side of a sunken pool forming the head of a small stream..." On June 10th at Nine Mile Creek, Gustav Swanson observed young out of the nest.

Redstart: Redstarts were noted engaged in nest making on May 25th by Charles Evans. Alden Risser reports two nests with two eggs each and one with five on June 10th. A nest with one egg and a cowbird egg on the 30th of June was the latest one reported (the writer).

Catbird: Stanley Stein reports a nest of the catbird with young on August 4th, the latest date. The earliest was a nest found by E. D. Swedenborg on May 22nd when it was apparently finished. This nest held eggs, two of the owner and two cowbird eggs, on May 28th.

Brown Thrasher: A nest of the brown thrasher with three eggs was found May 11th by Marius Morse. On the same day several observers were shown a nest with three eggs that was on the ground at the base of a mullein stalk. No really late nests were reported.

House Wren: Stanley Stein observed a pair of house wrens building on May 24th. The 7th and last egg was laid in this nest on June 1st. Three of the eggs hatched on the 13th; the rest had hatched by the 14th. All the young left the nest on the 30th. Near Princeton a house wren was seen entering its nest in a mail box, but the nature of the contents of the nest was not satisfactorily determined. Eggs were just hatching on July 20th in a nest found by E. D. Swedenborg and the writer in northern Mille Lacs County.

Long-billed Marsh Wren: A nest with eggs of the long-billed marsh wren was reported May 30th, by Stanley Stein. Charles Evans reports a nest with three eggs on June 16th, and a nest containing seven eggs was found June 18th (the writer). Young on the wing were seen June 2nd (Charles Evans).

White-breasted Nuthatch: A white-breasted nuthatch nest with bird incubating was found May 6th (E. D. Swedenborg). A bird of this species that the writer followed to its nest hole in an oak in Glenwood Park the first week in May surely sat tight, refusing to leave after several minutes of vigorous pounding on the tree. Young were being fed in a nest found May 14th by Alden Risser.

Chickadee: The only nest of the chickadee reported was one with young on May 27th, in a dead birch tree in Glenwood Park (the writer).

Wood Thrush: On May 25th Alden Risser found a nest of the wood thrush with three eggs. The latest nest was reported by Stanley Stein - one with young on June 25th.

Robin. Charles Evans observed a pair of robins building a nest on the 20th of April. A nest found by E. D. Swedenborg held four eggs on April 23rd. These hatched May 6th and the young left the nest thir-

teen days later. Charles Evans, too, saw young out of the nest on the 19th of May. On May 25th, near Onamia, Mr. Swedenborg found a nest in a most unusual situation - on the ground under a slanting log. A pair was seen engaged in making a nest on August 14th (Stanley Stein).

Bluebird: A bluebird nest near Hastings held four eggs on May 5th (Gustav Swanson). On May 24th the writer found a nest with three eggs in a hole in a willow stub. Less than two feet above the bluebird's nest, in the same stub, was a red squirrel's nest in another hole with five young whose eyes were just opening. Stanley Stein found on occupied nest of the bluebird on June 15th. No late nests were reported.

(The above list includes 91 species - ED.)

RAMBLINGS REWARDED

Alden Risser

On account of the fact that the cardinal is a newcomer in Minnesota and that it is seen most frequently in winter or early spring, it has always been my ambition to find one of its nests, and because one pair is seen regularly at Fort Snelling in the region under the Mendota bridge I decided to make a rather thorough search there this season.

Accordingly I examined three different parts of the Fort. In one locality I looked because I most often heard the male singing there in the early morning, and I presumed he was singing to his mate while she was building or incubating; in another locality I hunted because there were the densest and most suitable bushes in which to nest, and I still believe they must have nested there although that search was fruitless. A third place I watched because I had seen a few grasses in a bush which might have been the start of a cardinal's nest, and later when the nest was finished it contained only a cowbird's egg and although it looked like a catbird's nest the latter seldom uses any grasses in the composition of its nest; however, on my nest visit two deep blue eggs betrayed their owner.

There was only one more chance. There was a piece of woods across the Mississippi from the Fort which is an island in the spring when the water is high. Here I had heard a cardinal a few weeks before and had also seen some grasses in a bush. In this case the nest was about half-finished and as much grass as this surely couldn't be the beginning of a catbird's nest. So I returned to this nest when I was on my way to Fort Snelling on the 8th of June and on the nest was Mrs. Grosbeak, but the wrong kind, not Cardinal Grosbeak, but Rose-breasted Grosbeak, with three young in the lowest nest of this species that I have ever found, about four feet above the ground.

Well, the cardinals were still in the locality, and it was still

the height of the nesting season, but the cardinal is a resident and most residents nest before the migrants. However, I thought it might pay to search the island. After twenty minutes I saw a female cardinal fly out of a bush, but I didn't expect to find a nest there because she flew from it when I was farther away than would be necessary to flush a bird like a catbird when it is only feeding. Of course I hurried on enthusiastically nevertheless, and I had barely moved a branch of the bush when two rather large, cinnamon-speckled eggs stared me in the face!

Realizing the opportunity of watching and studying further developments in the nest, I didn't disturb the eggs, nor even stay there very long because I was afraid of desertion on account of the wariness of the female and the fact that the set was not complete.

Two days later I was taking my nest census for the club and thought it would be nice to have a cardinal's nest on my list so I returned to it only to find it empty and the birds not around. I have never learned why, but I had a little satisfaction in taking the nest home and adding it to my small collection while it was still in good condition despite the much greater dissatisfaction in not being able to follow up the developments and welfare of the cardinal family.

The rather loose foundation of the nest is of stiff grasses and weeds. The next layer is entirely separate, a cup of brown strips of bark from one fourth to threefourths of an inch wide. Inside and above these are finer pieces of black bark, while the lining is of light brown rootlets unlike the curly ones used by catbirds and thrashers. It is about the size of a catbird's nest.

--- St. Paul, Minn.

NORTHERN PHALAROPE NEAR FORT SNELLING

On a recent visit to what is rather vainly called the "Dakota County Museum" in Mendota, Carl Olson and the writer discovered a beautiful mounted specimen of the northern phalarope (*Lobipes lobatus*) The bird was a female in full breeding plumage. The exact date of the collection of the bird was not forthcoming, but Mr. Burton L. Baker, proprietor of the so-called museum, said that he shot the specimen himself in the spring of 1925 in Dakota County a short way up the Minnesota River from Mendota.

Owing to the scarcity of records of this bird in the eastern part of the state this is one deemed worthy of publication though the lack of the exact date destroys much of its value.

Gustav Swanson, Minneapolis, Minn.

* * * * *

The club held its first fall meeting September 26th at the University Museum of Natural History at which time a reel of motion pictures of bird-banding was viewed. The remainder of the time was spent in discussion of the summer's experiences. Donald Fischer told of the birds seen in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Alden Risser related experiences on a trip through the eastern states during the past summer.

The club was royally entertained on Thursday evening, July 11, 1929, when Mr. William Kilgore of the Minnesota University Museum related some of the experiences which he and Mr. Breckenridge had in the northwestern part of the state while on a several weeks field trip for the museum.

Among the interesting records of which Mr. Kilgore told were the following: nest and eggs of Nelson's sparrow, nest and eggs of Sprague's Pipit, nest and young of Connecticut Warbler.

The meeting was held in the museum and an audience of about twenty-five was present.

THE BOOK WORM

Bird Song, by Aretas A. Saunders
State Museum Handbook 7; 50 cents
New York State Museum

This is a charming and practical booklet which every bird-lover should own. In its 202 pages may be found more information about bird song than in any other publication of equal size, for the author has devoted years and years of his life to the study.

Mr. Saunders has recorded hundreds of bird songs in his notebook and many of them are reproduced here. Its readability, practicability, and charming make-up combine to make this a work which we recommend that you secure immediately from:

The New York State Museum
University of the State of New York
State Department of Education
Albany, New York

G.S.

The October number of the Auk contains several articles of interest to Minnesota observers. There is a long paper by Mr. N. L. Huff on the nesting of the Connecticut Warbler in the state. There are shorter notes by Mr. Kilgore and Mr. Breckenridge on the booming of the prairie chicken, the nesting of the Nelson's sparrow, and the nesting of the Connecticut Warbler.

A plate of drawings which Mr. Breckenridge made for his paper on the prairie chicken reproduced splendidly and are really beautiful.

G.S.

OUTING OF BIRD CLUB

On Saturday and Sunday, October 19th and 20th, 1929, the Minnesota Bird Club held an outing and field day near Excelsior, Minnesota, just outside of the Twin Cities. Such trips are valuable not only for the birds which may be seen, but for the opportunities of becoming better acquainted with the fellow members, and this particular outing was very successful from both angles.

On Saturday afternoon before dinner a small group took a short hike in the vicinity of the log cabin which was made our headquarters. The most interesting bird seen on this trip was the bufflehead duck, a small flock of which was recorded.

During the night, between the scattered snatches of sleep which some of the members were able to get, a barred owl and a screech owl were heard not far from the cabin and in the morning the barred owl was seen.

On Sunday morning, after an early but very hearty breakfast, the whole group set out on the big field trip of the outing. On Lake Lucy almost just outside the cabin door a flock of seven hooded mergansers gave everyone a thrill and started the day off right.

Three of the members had for a while been separated from the group and reported four strange birds which were seen under conditions not sufficiently adequate to warrant positive identification. When, however, the entire group later saw three Canada jays they were sure that the four seen previously were the same species and very likely the same individuals. The Canada jay is far from his native element when here in the southern part of the state, but those seen by the entire group acted with characteristic lack of timidity, one of them coming within three feet of one of the observers.

Hardly had the excitement of seeing the jays worn off when a flock of twenty-five ducks was seen coming over the hill to the small lake on whose shores we were standing. They landed not far away in plain sight and our pleasure knew no bounds when we found that they were wood ducks, most of them resplendent males. No one present had ever before seen as many wood ducks at one time. The many reports of this species this fall indicate that without a doubt it is becoming more common in Minnesota.

Even bird-lovers must eat so about this time we returned to the cabin for our Sunday dinner. After dinner a short trip was made added two pileated woodpeckers, two red-tailed hawks, four double-crested cormorants, and a ruffed grouse to our list for the day. The total number of species seen on the two days was found then to be forty-five, all except one, of which were seen on Sunday.

The members present and participating were Donald and Leander Fischer, Stanley and Earnest Stein, and Ralph Woolsey from Shakopee, Alden Risser and Gordon Ekholm from St. Paul, Sterling Brackett from Excelsior, and Carl Olson and Gustav Swanson from Minneapolis. All are very thankful to Sterling Brackett for arranging this very enjoyable trip.

Gustav Swanson, President

THE FLICKER

VOLUME I, NUMBER 5 Minneapolis, Minnesota December 1929

The Flicker is the official organ of the Minnesota Bird Club and is issued bi-monthly. The subscription price is one dollar per year, payable to the secretary, Charles Evans, 3250 - 47th Avenue South, Minneapolis.

At a meeting of the Minnesota Bird Club held at the University Museum on Thursday evening, October 31st, 1929, Mr. Martin Grant of the Botany department gave a very interesting talk on an ornithological trip through the western United States, Mr. Grant told much about the western forms which take the places of similiar eastern birds which we have here. After the talk the members present told of the interesting bird records made recently.

Records of the bird thus far indicate that this will be a "Redpoll Winter" for nearly everyone who has been much afield has found the redpolls quite common. The last similar season was the winter of 1925 - 1926. One is tempted to raise the question, "Why are so many of the winter birds such as Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks, Bohemian Waxwings, Redpolls and others so very erratic and irregular in visiting us? Some winters one species will be very common and then it will be absent for years before we find it in numbers again. There must be some explanation, but those thus far considered do not seem very satisfactory. The migrations of Snowy Owls have been correlated with the occurrences of sun spots but this theory or absence is not acceptable to most. The presence/of food or the severity of the winter does not explain it. What does?

THE QUAIL IN MINNESOTA

Gustav Swanson

Frequently we find in the periodicals or in the daily press references to the introduction of Bob-white or quail (Colinus virginianus) into Minnesota, and it seems to be quite generally known that the bird is not native to the state, but that it has been brought in by interested sportsmen.

However, when a search is made for actual records of birds introduced, these references are for the most part found to be conspicuous for their lack of definiteness and real value. A search through the literature has revealed but few such records, and though more than the following must exist we have been unable to find them.

The first record of the introduction of quail into Minnesota, as far as is known, is in Col. John H. Steven's "Personal Recollections of Minnesota and its People" published in 1890. We quote the following from page 49 of this book:

"Game was plenty in those early days in Minnesota....Prairie Chickens were abundant, but there were few quails. Mr. Steele tried the experiment of introducing quails into the country. He had a large number of them brought up the river in the fall. They were taken out to Morgan's Bluff, some two miles from the Fort, and given their liberty. At the same time he deposited wheat, oats, and corn in the immediate vicinity, so that they would not suffer for want of food. The birds seemed to go through the first winter in good condition, but in the spring of the second year there were none left; they all perished during the extreme cold winter months."

This record gives no date, nor does it tell how many birds were introduced, but it is of interest for its historic value. We can only conjecture as to the date of the attempt, but we can place one boundary. It must have been after 1837, for it was in this year that Franklin Steele came to Fort Snelling. Dr. John C. Phillips suggests that it was about 1840 that the birds were introduced. A search through Franklin Steele's papers in the Minnesota State Historical Society collection of manuscripts reveals no reference to the quails.

Our next record is from the December 1924 number of Fins, Feathers, and Fur, where Dr. F. S. James of Winona, under the caption of "Bob White and the Sportsman", writes as follows:

"About twenty-eight years ago a number of sportsmen of Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, bought about 200 pairs of Alabama quail; these were liberated along the Cottonwood River at different points and a number were liberated in abandoned tree claims in the surrounding country."

He goes on to tell that the next winter was a very severe one and that most of the quail perished. Later in the same paper Dr. James writes the following:

"In the years 1921 and 1922 our club (the Winona branch of the Minnesota Game Protective League) imported 15 dozen Mexican quails at \$3.00 per pair. These birds were liberated on one of our refuges and at selected points where they would mix with native birds...we believe the results were worth the effort."

For various reasons the quail does not thrive in Minnesota. The foremost of these is that it cannot stand the severity and high snows of some Minnesota winters. When there are a few mild winters the birds increase remarkably only to be killed off during the first exception-

ally severe season.

Some have suggested that inbreeding in a covey (for quail travel but short distances during their life time) is responsible for weakening and cutting down the vitality of the birds.

Another reason that has been offered is that the introduction of southern birds into the north has been disastrous. When quail have been introduced into the northern states they have usually been southern birds, as in the case of the Mexican quail introduced at Winona, and Dr. Phillips is of the opinion that these southern birds are not hardy enough to withstand the northern climate. He says that when the weaker southern birds survived the first winter they interbred with the harder northern birds and weakened them so that all would perish in the first severe winter.

In closing we give the published references which we have found, and we would suggest that if any readers are aware of others we should be glad to hear of them:

circa 1840 - a large number introduced by Franklin Steele at Fort Snelling.

circa 1896 - 200 pairs introduced by Sleepy Eye sportsmen along the Cottonwood River.

1921 & 1922- 15 dozen introduced by Winona sportsmen near Winona.

My thanks are due Dr. T. S. Roberts for information and aid in gathering these references.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

A BREATH OF THE NORTH

Stanley Stein

On November 3rd we were spending the afternoon in search of Short-eared Owls along the Minnesota River. After searching in vain for some time we decided to leave the owls and drove to a tamarack swamp located along highway #5, about twelve miles from Shakopee.

On entering the swamp we noticed that several trees were stripped of their scaly outer bark to a height of about six feet. None of us could offer any explanation. After tramping for an hour, as Leander Fischer and I were returning along the pavement we heard Don Fischer - somewhere in the swamp - calling to us that he had found a new bird for us.

Of course we made a "bee-line" to the place. We met Don at the spot where we had seen the barked trees. The new bird proved to be a female Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker. It was diligently seeking food. The bird's actions seemed very odd to us. Instead of drilling into the tree or searching in the crevices of the bark for food as our other woodpeckers do, it would strike the tree with a side-wise blow until a flake of the bark would come off. Then it leisurely ate whatever food had been exposed. The bird would start at the bottom of the tree and work up to a height of six or eight feet.

The bird was quite tame, allowing us to approach within three feet before it flew. We were glad to have made the acquaintance of a new bird, especially one which had a different method of gathering food, and I felt fully repaid for the afternoon's work.

Shakopee, Minnesota

BIRD NOTES OF THE SEASON

There is nothing of special interest to mention concerning the common resident birds, since they are all represented in apparently normal numbers this Fall.

Quite a number of the late Fall birds have been staying somewhat later than usual, and it remains to be seen whether or not they will spend the winter with us. For instance, a Kingfisher was observed along the Minnesota River on November 16th, not a very unusual date for that bird, but it is interesting to note that after the river had frozen over several days later, the bird was seen flying toward the Mississippi which was still open, and it was later seen feeding there (Nov. 24th). An immature Red-tailed Hawk was seen on the 16th also. Rusty Blackbirds were still common on that date, and one was seen also on November 24th. Two other late birds seen on the 24th were a snipe and a Bronzed Grackle, and two grackles were seen by Gustav Swanson on November 29th. Gordon Ekholm reports a Robin on November 11th up at Mille Lacs Lake. Another remained at Fort Snelling at least as late as November 24. Gustav Swanson and the writer found almost forty Red-headed Woodpeckers near White Bear Lake on November 11th and one was seen there on the 17th.

Goldfinches and Brown Creepers have been as common, or more so, than usual this Fall although the latter were fairly scarce earlier but strange to say, both Tree Sparrows and juncos have been unusually uncommon.

A number of winter visitants promise abundance this year. Redpolls especially have been abundant since November 9th. Canada Jays have been reported from at least a half-dozen localities in southern Minnesota. On November 16th Gustav Swanson and the writer saw at least four Rough-legged Hawks, and Gordon Ekholm and the writer saw one on the 24th. Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers have been seen at Shakopee and Fort Snelling (at the Fort on November 16th). Northern Shrikes, Pine Grosbeaks, Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs have been reported but the last two seem to be uncommon so far.

Water birds have been well up to par on the whole, though two species have been notably scarce; Horned Grebes and Herring Gulls. I have but one record for the latter, November 17th. Sterling Brackett reports over two hundred Hooded Mergansers on one lake near Excelsior on November 17th. A Pied-billed Grebe and such ducks as Mallards, Ring-necks, Goldeneyes, and Buffleheads were to be seen on the open portions of the Minnesota River on November 24th. Ring-billed Gulls were seen on the river in Minneapolis as late as November 28th. Gordon Ekholm reports that Double-crested Cormorants were found on Mille Lacs by the thousands and that a few remained there as late as November 11th.

--- Alden Risser, St. Paul, Minn.

SNOWY OWL

Mr. James Nelson of Stephen, Minnesota, in the northwestern part of the state, reports taking a Snowy Owl on November 11th, which, he adds, is earlier than it is usually found there.

SNOW GOOSE

It is evident that a remarkable migration of Snow Geese occurred in the Mississippi valley the first part of the week of October 27, 1929.

At least three persons in the Twin Cities noted geese the night of the 27th. Alden Risser heard several flocks and saw one in St. Paul. Mrs. W. W. Davis heard birds flying overhead in Minneapolis, and the writer saw two small flocks totaling perhaps fifty individuals and heard others, also in Minneapolis. Those seen by the writer were flying very low, not over 150 feet up, so low that each individual bird could be plainly seen though the night was rather dark.

At noon on the next day, Monday, the 28th, Miss Mabel Densmore saw an enormous flock of many hundred flying north over Red Wing, about 60 miles south of the Twin Cities. The Red Wing daily press the same day reported that early in the morning a flock of 1500 Snow Geese had been resting on Lake Popin. This was in all likelihood the same flock that attracted attention when flying over Red Wing at noon.

We find in "The Bulletin" of the Iowa Ornithologist's Union for October - December 1929, that Snow Geese were heard on the night of October 28th and that some were seen the next morning feeding in a pasture near Ogden, Iowa.

In the same bulletin it is reported that a large flight of geese, most probably Snow Geese, was noted at Ames and other cities in central Iowa on the night of October 29th-30th.

--- Gustav Swanson, Minneapolis, Minnesota

ARCTIC THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

On November 24th, Leander Fischer observed a female Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker eating suet at a feeder in the back yard of his home.

We quote the following amusing story from the Maryland Conservationist, summer issue, 1929:

"T. Gilbert Pearson, L.L.D., when a boy in his southern home showed great interest in outdoor life, especially in birds. Boy-like, he had considerable curiosity in climbing trees, investigating bird's nests, stealing eggs, as boys will, and other devilmentry, which is known only to boyhood. Dr. Pearson tells an interesting story of his boyhood life in climbing a tree to rob a bird's nest, which was some distance from the body of the tree on a limb. He found some beautiful eggs in the nest and not being able to hold them in his hand while climbing, he decided he would place them in his mouth. After the third egg had been placed the limb gave away, dropping the boy to the ground; he swallowed the eggs, which were not fresh by any means, and states that he has never cared for eggs since, in any manner."

SOME NOTES ON THE SPRUCE GROUSE

The Spruce Grouse or Canada Spruce Partridge can be numbered among the "has-beens" as far as the Minnesota or the rest of the United States bird life is concerned. Once it was abundant in the Canadian zone of the north central and eastern states. Bendire writes that the Indians followed packs of thousands of these birds and that whole villages was sustained by them. It is now absent from much of its former range and is only an uncommon resident in the wilder areas of the country from Maine to Minnesota, although it is still quite common in a few localities. In the extensive forests that cover most of the pre-Cambrian Shield of Canada, it is a common resident, but it is not met with in large flocks.

I was able to note some of the habits of this interesting grouse during the summer of 1929 while I was working for a mining company 75 miles northwest of The Pas, Manitoba. My first encounter was on the first of July, when I came upon a mother hen with a brood of very young chicks. The little ones immediately hid themselves in true grouse fashion, but the mother stood and watched me as if thoroughly absorbed in her curiosity. She allowed me to take seven snapshots of her at a distance of six feet. I got a surprise when I picked up one of the chicks. The old hen puffed up, drew in her head and charged at me, beating my legs with her wings.

On the eleventh of August, I found a hen with four young ones who were as big as their mother. The sun was setting; I thought I would follow the family as long as I could see them. I kept within a yard or two of the mother. The youngsters fed and frolicked, apparently in the same manner as if I had been absent. The mother would feed intermittently, but usually she eyed me. It was a big thrill to trail these wild creatures, as one would follow some domestic fowl.

The birds appeared to eat anything of a green color and busily snatched off the leaves of many ground plants. They seemed to be very fond of the leaves of a plant that grew very profusely in the dry muskegs. Now and then one of the youngsters would find a huge toadstool. This was always the occasion for a family reunion. The excited, "oink, oink, oink," of the finder would bring all the rest to the prize. There they would gather around the giant mushroom and peck away. At these round table gatherings the mother would stand guard.

Once an owl flew by. It was gone in a flash, but every bird froze in position and remained rigid for some time. At this point I stepped right up to the mother and bent down until my face was two feet from her. She looked at me in a stupid way with her head back and to the side, blinking her eye at intervals. After a bit she calmly stepped away and with low clucks called the young ones together.

When it got dusk the hen led the way through the woods to the side of a low Jack Pine ridge; the others followed one after another. I tagged along behind the last bird. After several rods the hen stopped; then it "whirred" up into a pine. At regular intervals of several each, the others "whirred" up to roost. Each took a separate tree. The Jack Pines were a young stand, nearly all the same size, about fifteen to twenty feet in height. The birds perched near the tops and began to eat all the pine needles within reach. These lunches before sleeping probably accounted for the dead appearance of the trees in this spot. The scanty foliage of their roosting place was quite a contrast to the dense thickets in which the Ruffed Grouse roosts.

I observed Spruce Grouse oftener in the more open pine groves than in the spruce thickets and muskegs which it is supposed to prefer. The males were always alone by themselves and never with the brood. In the spring the male is said to drum while climbing up a leaning tree trunk or by jumping up a few feet in the air and fluttering to the ground.

The Spruce Grouse serves the same purpose in the scheme of things as does the Porcupine. They both are meals which the lost, wandering hunter, prospector, or timber cruiser can garner with a stick. Under no circumstances should either be classed as game or as pests to be exterminated. Yet both of them are usually wantonly destroyed by the very persons who would benefit by their abundance. Because the bird confides in man, it is called a "Fool Hen".

-- Don Fischer

MORE BIRD NOTES ON THE SEASON

The following notes were received from Mr. E. D. Swedenborg:
Last dates unless otherwise stated:

- October 16 - White-throated Sparrow, Orange-crowned Warbler and Ovenbird.
- " 22 - Lincoln Sparrow
- " 21 - Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- " 24 - Vesper Sparrow; first Snow Bunting
- " 26 - Song and Swamp Sparrows; first Lapland Longspur.
- " 27 - Wood Duck, Brewer Blackbird, Myrtle Warbler, Bluebird
- "
- November 1 - Purple Finch, Fox Sparrow
- " 3 - Flicker
- " 7 - Last Lapland Longspur
- " 9 - First Redpoll
- " 10 - Shoveler and Killdeer; first Northern Shrike
- " 13 - Red-winged Blackbird
- " 16 - Horned Lark
- " 17 - Red-headed Woodpecker and Robin
- " 18 - Loon
- " 21 - First Pine Grosbeak
- " 23 - Wilson Snipe and Rusty Blackbird

Individuals of several species are still lingering and during the past week (week ending November 30th) I've seen the following species: Ring-billed Gull, Scaup, Coots (two of them on the ice at Harriet on November 29th), Pileated Woodpecker, Redpolls, Pine Grosbeak, Goldfinch, Tree Sparrow, Junco, Brown Creeper, and the Golden-crowned Kinglet.

--- E. D. Swedenborg

Because of the fact that the Flicker came into existence this year, and that the first number was issued later than it would have been had the paper been already established, there will be only five numbers in this volume, Volume I, and the next number will be Volume II, Number 1. However, in the future there will be six issues per year.

BARN OWLS

A short time ago a friend and I were pleasantly surprised to find the roosting-place of a number of Barn Owls, a comparatively rare bird in this section. While walking across the bridge over the Minnesota River at Shakopee, we heard a peculiar call coming from among the trees bordering the further end of the bridge. As neither of us had ever heard the call before, our interest was aroused. As we approached one of the trees, a shadowy form glided from it and alighted in a nearby tree. It seemed to us that the bird was either a hawk or an owl, but because of the poor light condition, it was impossible to identify it. One of us kept the bird in sight, while the other went home to get a spotlight.

As the bird did not seem to mind the light, we were enabled to approach close enough to distinguish the facial disk which at once identified it as an owl. The heart-like shape of the combined disks suggested a Barn Owl. The light color and the extremely large wings verified our first opinion as to its identity. The cry that first attracted our attention to the birds was often repeated. We noted its similarity to that of a Nighthawk. We read later that ornithologists have been similarly impressed. After a short time the call was answered from a nearby tree and another Barn Owl appeared on the scene. The owls, when together, gave a hissing call resembling the sound made by escaping steam. Finally the owls became frightened and left.

The following evening the owls were in the same locality, but instead of only two, four were seen. The birds seemed to show a decided preference for a certain large Cottonwood. A search beneath it revealed a few pellets.

The next day a more thorough search was made. The tree was found to have several large hollows in it while several more pellets were found beneath it. Indications showed that the owls had occupied the tree for some time, but because of the retiring habits of the species, they had not been noticed.

--- Leander Fischer

A few pellets collected from the roosting place of the above mentioned Barn Owls during October and November were sent to the Bureau of Biological Survey for analysis and the following is the result received from Mr. W. L. McAtee, in charge of food habits research:

<u>NAME:</u>	<u>NO. OF INDIVIDUALS</u>
<u>Rana</u> - Frog -----	1
<u>Agelaius phoenicius</u> - Red-winged Blackbird -----	4
<u>Microtus pennsylvanicus</u> - Meadow Mouse -----	27
<u>Peromyscus maniculatus borealis</u> - Deer Mouse ----	1
<u>Zapus h. hudsonius</u> - Jumping Mouse -----	1
<u>Sorex c. cinereus</u> - Masked Shrew -----	2
<u>Blarina brevicauda</u> - Short-tailed Shrew -----	1

It will be noted that without exception, unless one considers the frog a beneficial form, these animals are either neutral or harmful in their food habits, and for the most part they are harmful in their food habits, and for the most part they are harmful, thus giving the Barn Owls a very good record indeed from an economic standpoint. This has been the case wherever the Barn Owl stomachs or pellets have been examined. All agree that the bird is a very beneficial one and that it should be protected.

--- Gustav Swanson