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THE FLICKER  
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VOLUME III, NUMBER 1                  Minneapolis, Minnesota                  1931  
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The Flicker, the official organ of the Minnesota Bird Club is issued four times yearly. It contains bird notes of interest to Minnesota bird-students. Subscription price is one dollar yearly, payable to the treasurer, Alden Risser, 1012 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota.

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At a meeting of the Minnesota Bird Club held at the University Museum on Thursday evening, April 2nd, the officers were elected as follows for the ensuing year:

Donald Fischer, Shakopee - - - - President

Alden Risser, St. Paul - - - - - Secretary-Treasurer

Gustav Swanson, Minneapolis - - Editor

Current bird news were discussed after which Donald Fischer gave a short talk. This season seems to be <sup>a</sup> somewhat backward one as far as birds are concerned. Nothing startling has been noted as yet by anyone present, perhaps the most interesting notes being reports of three Great Horned Owl nests, two of which contained three young each, and the report of a flock of sixteen Whistling Swans being seen near Madison, Minnesota on March 27, 1931.

THE WINTER BIRDS OF THE HASTINGS REGION

Jerome Stoult

The region around Hastings, Minnesota contains all types of country in which birds are found. The town itself is in the Mississippi River Valley. All up and down the bottomland along the river are marshy lakes and sloughs. The Vermillion River, a small stream, flows into the bottomlands below Hastings and extends on down the bottoms several miles before it empties into the Mississippi.

The bottomlands are covered with alternate patches and strips of open country and woodland. The open country is either in lakes, sloughs, and hayfields, or in low land where rushes and sedges are the only vegetation. The woodland, is made up of such trees as ash, soft maple, cottonwood, willow, elm, hackberry, and basswood. Usually the ground cover is made up mostly of weeds, commonly of nettles. This bottomland, especially the marsh types, is the winter haven of many Ring-necked Pheasants, and Short-eared Owls. In the woods and along the streams can be found Great Horned Owls and Barred Owls, Bob-white, several kinds of woodpeckers, blackbirds, goldfinches, Tree Sparrows, juncoes, Cardinals, Northern Shrikes as well as the commoner Chickadees, Nuthatches, and Blue Jays, and the somewhat rarer Tufted Titmouse.

Just south and also north of the bottoms, where the valley sides occur are the wooded areas which include such trees as red and white oaks, elm, basswood, birch, hickory, black cherry, butternut, black walnut, and burr oak. Back from the Mississippi valley is the rolling prairie land dotted here and there by wood lots and wooded ravines. On this cultivated land are found the Prairie Chickens, Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, Longspurs, and Redpolls. In the more heavily wooded regions Great Horned Owls are often found.

The Mississippi is open all winter in various places, the size of the openings varying with the temperature. For instance, this past winter the river has been entirely open all winter while last year there were times when there were only a few small openings. American Mergansers and Goldeneyes are common throughout the winter and it never is too cold to drive them southward. The other waterfowl which remain over the winter depend more upon the severity of the weather and may or may not be present.

My records for this region date back to 1921 but for purposes of this paper only those since 1925 have been used to eliminate any of which I am not entirely certain. All of the birds listed were seen between December 1st and February 29th, inclusive. The annotated list follows:

1. Holboell's Grebe: Rare. One male stayed in the Mississippi River the winter of 1929-30, Seen November 25th and December 8, 1929
2. American Merganser: Common in winter along the Mississippi
3. Hooded Merganser: Accidental. A wounded bird was found in a small creek December 15, 1928; January 13th, 20th, February 3, 1929.
4. Mallard: Fairly common in winter, usually singly or in small flocks.
5. Black Duck: Fairly common but less numerous than Mallard.
6. Lesser Scaup: Uncommon in winter. One January 31, 1931.
7. Ring-necked Duck: Fairly common but not numerous.
8. Bufflehead: Rare in winter. One January 31, 1931
9. Goldeneye: Common. Very numerous (200 - 500 at one time).
10. Whistling Swan: Rare. One January 31st and February 1, 1931.
11. Bob-white: Common permanent resident. Covies of 15-30 are occasionally found.
12. Ruffed Grouse: Permanent resident. Scattered individuals. Only moderately common.
13. Prairie Chicken: Permanent resident. Quite common in flocks of twenty - forty.
14. Ring-necked Pheasant: Permanent resident.
15. Mourning Dove: Rare winter visitant or permanent resident. One January 2nd and 3rd, 1929.
16. Goshawk: Occasional winter visitant. February 26th, 1928 and February 12, 1931.
17. Red-tailed Hawk: Rare in winter. December 1st, 1928.
18. Sparrow Hawk: Rare. One February 19th, 1930.
19. Bald Eagle: Fairly common winter visitant. Usually one or a pair. 1929 - 1930 and 1930 - 1931 all winter.
20. Short-eared Owl: Stayed over this last, mild winter. December 20th and 26th, 1930 and February 8th and 12th, 1931.
21. Barred Owl. Common permanent resident.
22. Saw-whet Owl: Occasional. December 20th, 1930.
23. Screech Owl: Common permanent resident.

24. Great Horned Owl: Common permanent resident.
25. Kingfisher: Rare in winter. A female stayed the winter of 1925 - 1926 and one in 1926 - 1927.
26. Hairy Woodpecker: Common permanent resident.
27. Downy Woodpecker: Common permanent resident.
28. Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker: Occasional. January 12, 1930.
29. Pileated Woodpecker: Common permanent resident.
30. Flicker: Rare in winter. January 13, 1929.
31. Red-headed Woodpecker: Rare. One the winter of 1926 - 1927.
32. Red-bellied Woodpecker: Common permanent resident.
33. Hoyt's Horned Lark: Rare winter visitant. Saw six on February 12, 1930.
34. Prairie Horned Lark: Occasional winter visitant.
35. Blue Jay: Common permanent resident.
36. Crow: Common in winter. One to several in severe winters. More in milder winters.
37. Red-winged Blackbird: Quite common. One flock of 341 the winter of 1930 - 1931.
38. Rusty Blackbird: Occasional; saw 75 on December 20, 1930.
39. Brewer's Blackbird: Rare in winter. One January 12, 1930.
40. Evening Grosbeak: Occasional winter visitant. Two January 18th, 1930.
41. Redpoll: Winter visitant.
42. Snow Bunting: Winter visitant.
43. Goldfinch: Common permanent resident.
44. Lapland Longspur: Winter visitant. Commoner toward spring.
45. White-throated Sparrow: Rare winter visitant. One 1-2,3-1929.
46. Tree Sparrow: Common in small groups.
47. Song Sparrow: Rare. One Jauary 21, 1928.

48. Junco: Common in winter unless weather is too severe.
49. Cardinal: Common permanent resident.
50. Bohemian Waxwing: Rare winter visitant. Flock of 100 plus the winter of 1926 - 1927.
51. Cedar Waxwing: Rare in winter. Flock of 25 on December 22, 1926.
52. Northern Shrike: Winter visitant. Quite common.
53. Brown Creeper: Found only in mild winters.
54. White-breasted Nuthatch: Common permanent resident.
55. Tufted Titmouse: Occasional winter visitant. February 22, 1927 and January 23, 1929.
56. Black-capped Chickadee: Common in winter.
57. Robin: Half-hardy. Common in mild winters when food is not too scarce. Flocks of 5 - 30 and single birds.

--- Hastings, Minnesota

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#### OWL NOTES

During the past winter a Great Horned Owl and a Snowy Owl were kept in captivity in the same cage for several weeks at the University of Minnesota. The two birds were so nearly the same size that it was thought that each could defend itself against the other should there be any inclinations toward warfare. It was therefore quite a surprise to us when we visited the owl cage one morning to find that where there had been two owls the evening before there was now only one and parts of the other. The Great Horned Owl had turned cannibal and had killed and partially eaten the Snowy Owl. It had been noted previously to this that the Great Horned Owl usually ate most of the food with which the birds were supplied, and this fact may have caused a weakening of the Snowy Owl to a point where the other bird could handily overcome and kill it.

--- Gustav Swanson  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

A DAY'S ADVENTURE

Sterling Brackett

Today my lot fell to plowing. I was delighted because the plowing was to be done in the ten acre plum orchard, the margins of which seemed an oasis to the birds on these brilliant, warm June days. The fence along the east side of the orchard, that separated it from an alfalfa field, was the favorite perch of many a male, field dwelling bird whose mate was somewhere among the beautiful purple alfalfa, snuggled over a nest full of precious eggs or busily feeding her homely, featherless young. To the north and west of the orchard was an extensive woods that hid many secrets from the casual passerby. No wonder I was delighted to have received this seemingly unpleasant task for my day's work.

As the plowing and the day progressed, it became warmer and warmer necessitating more and longer rests for both the horses and myself. During one of the rests, while I was sitting on the beam of the plow and listening to the notes of the few birds who had not as yet been discouraged by the brilliance and heat of the sun, my attention was suddenly called towards the woods by that fascinating, uncanny feeling a bird lover has when something unusual is about to happen. The first fleeting glance saw two large birds just disappearing into the trees. A few moments later they appeared again. This time they were flying in large ascending circles which carried them rapidly higher and higher. One's mind usually works rapidly under such conditions, but it was not until three or four more circles had carried them ever higher that I realized it was a pair of adult Bald Eagles that had thus attracted my attention from the fields towards the woods.

The sun reflected from the white feathers of their heads and tails with such intensity that they shone like flashes of a diamond or polished steel. Up and up they went, so high that to have looked away for but a moment would have meant losing sight of them altogether.

In the blue of the sky they disappeared as two white specks. But their image with all its background and infinite pleasure shall never cease to exist in my mind.

--- Excelsior, Minnesota

BIRD NOTES FROM FRONTENAC, ON LAKE PEPIN, FOR 1930

Alden Risser

Of the several trips to Frontenac by the writer during 1930, the following were made with other observers: May 17th - 18th, Mr. Gustav Swanson; August 17th - 18th, Mrs. W. J. Breckenridge; December 26th, Messrs. Charles Evans, Gustav Swanson, and Donald Fisher.

A number of nests were found during the May and June trips, and have been recorded in Mr. E. D. Swedenborg's article on the 1930 nesting season, so they are not repeated here.

Mallard: The sight of thousands of Mallards and other surface-feeding ducks arising from a slough together in the fall may have been a common experience of earlier days, but in 1930 it is not an ordinary occurrence. Such was the case on October 12th in the bay on the south side of long point. Fortunately, this was in the game refuge.

Wood Duck: Two seen flying through the woods, May 18th.

Lesser Scaup: Fourteen seen at the head of Lake Pepin on December 26th.

Turkey Vulture: Seen on May 30th and August 18th.

Red-tailed Hawk: Three adults together, December 26th.

Red-shouldered Hawk: A hawk of this rather unusual species was heard distinctly and seen in the distance on August 17th and 18th. Again on October 12th, one was heard and seen several times at much closer range. It was being chased quite consistently by a flock of Crows. Red-shouldered Hawks have been seen at Frontenac before.

Ruffed Grouse: On June 21st.

Duck Hawk: The seeing of a Duck Hawk on August 18th was the most enjoyable experience at Frontenac. The hawk was eating something on the shore a considerable distance away, so far that we could not see any color, but we did feel quite sure that we could see the black "moustache" marks on the sides of the throat with a 16-power binocular. At this range, the bird flew across the lake as soon as any approach toward it was made in the open. Of course when it flew, the typical falcon flight erased any doubt as to its identity.

Ruffed Grouse: On June 21st I encountered a pair of grouse with their brood of young, which were fully a third grown, and well able to fly. It was interesting to observe the intense anxiety and apparent fearlessness of the parents over their young, which seemed as capable of taking care of themselves as the old birds. The same evening I heard the male drumming. On August 18th, a young bird, now fully grown of course, leisurely walked across

the road in front of us.

Semipalmated Plover: Common.

Ruddy Turnstone: Seven of these beautiful birds were observed on May 30th. They were in the midst of a flock of sandpipers, and I noticed the white of their heads moving along the shore long before I was conscious of the presence of any other birds. They were quite fearless.

Hudsonian Curlew: Four were seen on the end of the long point on May 30th. This species has never been taken from Minnesota, but was recorded from Heron Lake by Thoman Miller in May 1884. There are other less reliable reports from western Minnesota in the early days, when there was more opportunity for confusion with the Eskimo Curlew, which is now practically, if not, extinct. (See, The Water Birds of Minnesota: Past and Present, by Thomas S. Roberts). This curlew of the Atlantic coast has, however, been taken in migration in Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska and Michigan.

Spotted Sandpiper: One was caught by hand by dazing it at night with the diffuse light from a small flashlight (August 17th).

Baird's Sandpiper: Two or three seen and closely studied, August 17th and 18th. The following field mark should be of interest and considerable use. It was pointed out to me by Mr. Breckenridge, who had previously studied the species in detail in the field. Aside from the scaly appearance of the upperparts, the Baird's Sandpiper, unlike the Semipalmated, the only species with which it should be confused, and unlike the Least, carries its wings raised above, and conspicuously extending beyond the end of the tail.

Red-backed Sandpiper: Seen on May 18th and May 30th.

Sanderling: Seen on May 30th and August 17th and 18th. On the evening of August 17th, this was the only sandpiper, except the Spotted, which we found sleeping on the sand.

Caspian Tern: A small flock left the long point, May 17th.

Common Tern: Innumerable hordes of these graceful birds were unceasingly flying up the river on the evening of May 17th. A flock of about twenty was resting on the point on June 21st, apparently not breeding. Perhaps they were Forster's Terns, which are said to have been seen here.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Not as common as last year.

Cliff Swallow: Not as common as last year.

Robin: A Robin's nest, holding four eggs, on May 18th. was revisited on June 21st, when it again held four eggs. Unless all the eggs were infertile, the bird must have used one nest for two broods.

Oven-bird: Common in June.

Red-winged Blackbird: A lone female seen on December 26th.

Cardinal: Not as common as last year.

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At the meeting of the Minnesota Bird Club held at the University Museum on Thursday evening, April 30th, the bird migration of the present season was discussed after which Charles Evans spoke for a short time. The members present then discussed their respective methods of keeping bird records, to the pleasure and profit of all. The particular method of preserving bird notes is often puzzling to the bird student and such a discussion of the methods in use proved instructive to each one who took part.

It was decided to hold a bird census on the 17th of May, on which date all members were urged to be in the field so that results could be compared at the next meeting.

The consensus of opinion at this meeting was still that the present season is a very disappointing one both in the number of individuals and in the number of species seen.

UNUSUAL NESTING SITES

Alden Risser

It not infrequently happens that a bird chooses a nesting site which is peculiarly foreign to its species. Such an occurrence is especially common among birds that nest in cavities. Below are some of the nests whose unusual position interested me most.

AMERICAN BITTER: I once found an American Bittern's nest in a cluster of leather-leaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*) which was located in the middle of a small boggy area not more than 100 feet in diameter. There was no water in the place, which, however, might be called swampy or moist with some stretch of the imagination. The nearest water was nearly a mile away.

MOURNING DOVE: A dove was found incubating its two eggs in an old, weather-beaten Robin's nest last year, but I do not believe this is particularly unusual.

TREE SWALLOW: Several years ago I found a nest of this species built a short distance below the top of a hollow, square wooden tube enclosing a slanting cable that supported a telegraph pole.

CHICKADEE: I found a chickadee's nest last year in an old decayed stump standing in over two feet of water, and reaching only a little over a foot above the water.

ROBIN: One day as I was walking along a railroad track I noticed a Robin sitting in an awkward position half way up the bank where it had been cut away for the tracks. I approached the bird, but it remained motionless. This fact, together with the queer appearance due to the steepness of the bank, led me to suspect that the bird was sick, but as I was almost on top of her, she flew away and began scolding, and I found she had been brooding her young in the nest placed right on the ground, in an exposed, unprotected position.

BLUEBIRD: Found a nest in an unused mail box once.

HOUSE WREN: The House Wren probably chooses as great a variety of nesting sites as any bird. The first wren's nest I ever saw was situated between the wall of a cottage and one of the shutters which was permanently hooked back against the wall, leaving a space of only about three inches for the necessarily laterally flattened nest. Another more interesting wren's nest was located in a ball of twine

which was hanging on a nail in an open, unused storehouse. The ball was filled, and one end closed with sticks.

CATBIRD: A nest of this species over 20 feet above the ground in a tree was shown to me by Mr. Joseph Eheim of Hutchinson, Minnesota, in his back yard.

BROWN THRASHER: I have noticed quite a variety in the height at which the thrasher builds, ranging from 15 feet above the ground to one on the ground. Although I have often heard of thrashers nesting on the ground, I was surprised to find this one in grass several feet from a bush, rather than in a thicket as I would have expected.

BRONZED GRACKLE: Mr. Swanson showed me a grackle's nest placed on top of a post less than a foot below a platform on a drawbridge.

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TWO NOTES ON THE LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN: On March 22nd Charles Evans and I found a wren of this species singing and behaving normally near the Cedar Avenue bridge, south of Minneapolis in some high reeds through which ran a creek. Two days later the locality was revisited, and the bird was found less than fifteen yards from the spot at which it was first seen. Although it was cold and rainy, the bird was singing again. The earliest previous record of this species in Minnesota is April 16th, and the average time of arrival is the first week of May.

One often reads that the Long-billed Marsh Wren is never to be found outside of true marshes. I was surprised the other day (May 3rd) to see one hopping actively about among a pile of large rocks and then under a wooden platform, both on a dry lawn much after the manner of a House Wren. There was, however, a marsh only a few hundred feet away.

--- Alden Risser.

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The Minnesota Bird Club requests its members to keep records of the nests they find during this season, and to send them to Alden Risser, 1012 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, during the last week in September. The records should be arranged in the order of the old A.O.U. Check-list, and should contain the number of nests of each species and the dates and contents of the first and last nests of each species.

BIRD SOUNDS AT NIGHT

Gustav Swanson

While spending the summer in Itaska County we were able to see and hear many birds which we had observed only as migrants before. The place at which we were located was quite favorably located for the bird student. The lake on the shores of which we were living afforded a home for the loons which were the commonest aquatic birds, and a heavily wooded area on the other side became the dwelling place for the many other species.

Surrounded as we were by the most favorable of bird habitats it was inevitable that during the singing season we should hear a continual symphony of bird song - a beautiful harmony of melodies from such gifted artists as the Connecticut Warbler, Purple Finch, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, and numerous others of lesser ability. It was especially interesting to arise with sun and hear the chorus when in full swing, for later in the day many of the members drop out as if from sheer exhaustion.

Appreciative as we were of the music which we were privileged to hear during the light of day we believe, now as then, that the most intriguing time to hear birds is at night. Admittedly the music of the daytime is vastly more beautiful, but to us that of night is far more interesting. The English Nightingale has earned its enviable reputation only because it sings at night when most other birds are silent --- Coward says that although the nightingale sings equally well in the light its song is then unnoticed in the wealth of song from other birds. The situation is much the same with us. Birds to which we would not give a second thought in the daytime sing songs at night which strangely draw our attention.

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Some few of the songs heard were unexpected that their point of attraction undoubtedly lay in the element of surprise rather than in any intrinsic beauty of the song itself. Such were those of the chebec, Ovenbird, and Wood Pewee. It is difficult to imagine how astonishing it was to hear murky silence suddenly broken by the very sleepy song of an erratic Ovenbird, which, who can say, had awakened from a fitful dream, or, if we stretch the anthropomorphism still farther, was talking it its sleep.

The songs of these birds as heard at night are usually only fragmentary and their tempo and the general feeling are not what they would be in the daytime. Sometimes the general air of the songs or calls was such that we could imagine them merely weak protestations against a severe case of insomnia.

Very different in character was the demoniacal scream of the Great Horned Owl. This note was seldom heard, but it always made an impression when it was heard. The hooting, however, of the Great Horned Owl and the Barred Owl, were common sounds of the night, and these utterances, together with the weird laughter of the loons, were paramount in giving the feeling that nature in all her glory was really very near at hand.

The tiny Saw-whet Owl was a disturber of the peace on more than one occasion. A family of these odd birds was reared in the neighborhood of our camp, and on several evenings the whole family group gathered in the trees immediately surrounding the camp and began their characteristic calling, which really has a marked resemblance to the sound of the filing of a saw. These birds were persistent in their endeavors -- when they began calling at about nine o' clock in the evening they could be expected to keep it up steadily until at least three o' clock the next morning.

Often the Chimney Swifts could be heard twittering at an hour when all good Chimney Swifts should have been sound asleep, but we usually found that the moon was full or nearly so on the evenings when they were awing. Nighthawks were usually out on these nights also, and their "peent" added one more species to our list of night sounds.

Perhaps the most commonly heard bird at night was the loon. We have so come to associate the sound of this bird with the wilds that we almost feel a breath of the north when we hear the bird here in the cities. Our lake was particularly favored with loons - we couldn't even estimate the number of pairs which reared their young there, but we feel sure that the number is larger than for the average lake of that size. Often we would go sailing after dark when the wind was just right, and the sail-boat proved an ideal craft for close approach to the wary loons. The total absence of the sound of oars or paddles seemed to be its advantages. At any rate we often approached to within a few yards of the unsuspecting loon before she suddenly noticed the ghostly sail almost upon her, and as she dived she uttered a defiant scream the last notes of which seemed to come from below the surface of the lake.

HAWK AND OWL NOTES

During the past few weeks it has been my privilege to examine a series of hawks and owls taken by the game wardens in various parts of the state. The birds examined are chiefly birds which are more or less valuable economically, and it seems shameful that all raptorial birds should be shot indiscriminately, but the sportsman, and consequently the men who administrate game affairs in our state as well, are almost unanimous in their defamiation of all classes of predacious birds and mammals, so it becomes the duty of the game wardens to shoot as many of these animals as they can. By utilizing the specimens that they have so kindly sent to me I have been able to accumulate a nice series of the parasites of these birds, together with a few scattered notes on their life histories.

The stomach contents are always interesting, and in almost all of the birds which I have examined they have been chiefly small mammals, and in a few cases (Sparrow Hawks) insects. Two birds, however, added an element of interest. A Broad-winged Hawk was found to contain in its esophagus a nearly perfect specimen of red-bellied snake about 10 inches long. This particular snake had evidently just been taken, for effects of digestion had not yet begun, and it was in such good condition that I saved it for a specimen. The same hawk had in its stomach another snake of this same species, but the second individual was well on the way to complete digestion. A Red-tailed Hawk furnished the second example of reptile eating among birds. The stomach of one Red-tailed Hawk was found to contain three small turtles, *Chrysemys belli*, the painted terrapin. That snake-eating is common among Broad-winged Hawks is well known, but I had never heard of turtles in the bill-of-fare of Red-tailed Hawks.

A nesting date was furnished by the warden who send in a Long-eared Owl. The nest, he said, contained three eggs, and the bird itself when I examined it had one ready to be laid. This owl was taken May 7, 1931 at Fertile, Minnesota. A Marsh Hawk taken May 10th, 1931 near Little Falls was found to contain one egg ready to be laid and several others well along in the process of being formed. The complete egg is now in an incubator, and only time will tell whether or not hawks eggs can be hatched artificially.

--- Gustav Swanson  
Minneapolis

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The Flicker is the quarterly organ of the Minnesota Bird Club. The subscription price is one dollar yearly, which may be paid in advance to the secretary - treasurer, Marius Morse, Robbinsdale, Minnesota. President: Donald Fischer; Editor: Gustav Swanson.

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The long awaited Checklist of North American Birds has now appeared with its multitude of changes which will be very confusing to the American bird student at first.

Aside from the changes in scientific names of many of the birds the greatest innovation is perhaps the change in the order of the birds. The new order of the latest edition of the checklist has been followed in the list of nesting birds which will be found on the following pages. From this many of the changes can be found. This new classification will be adopted by the forthcoming work on Minnesota birds by Dr. Roberts, and by all new books on American birds, and we will do well to learn the new system as soon as possible.

Perhaps the greatest surprise to the average bird student will be to find that the House Sparrow or English Sparrow is not a sparrow at all, that it does not belong in the same family with the other sparrows, and that it is only distantly related to them.

THE 1931 NESTING SEASON

Gustav Swanson

The following list of nests must be presented with apologies, for the number of species is considerably smaller than that in last year's list. This is explained by the circumstance that the majority of members who have furnished these data in former years were out of the state during the past summer and thus the list this year represents the field data of a smaller number of workers than hitherto. Contributors of data for the list are: Donald and Leander Fischer, Stanley and Ernest Stein, and Ralph Woolsey, from Shakopee; Alden Risser from St Paul; Marius Morse from Robbinsdale Jerome H. Stoudt from Hastings; Mrs. C. E. Peterson from Madison. The list includes 89 species. Unless otherwise stated the localities should be understood as being the Minneapolis - St. Paul - Shakopee area. The name of Mr. E. D. Swedenborg was inadvertently omitted.

Loon: An adult with two young observed by Mr. Swedenborg June 7th at Silver Lake. Young were noted on Lake Andrusia, August 5th by the Shakopee observers.

Pied-billed Grebe: A nest with five eggs found June 14th by Ralph Woolsey and Leander Fischer.

Great Blue Heron: Adults building a nest June 10th (Swedenborg). One young nearly full grown in tamarack swamp north of St. Paul, July 3rd (several observers)

Green Heron: One nest with four eggs on June 9th (Woolsey).

Black-crowned Night Heron: A colony of these birds in a tamarack swamp north of St. Paul contained about 75 nests. This colony was visited by several visitors. Risser on May 27th found a nest with 3 eggs, three nests with 4 eggs each, and one nest with 3 small young. On June 18th there were nests in all stages from those with one egg to those with fully grown nestlings.

Least Bittern: One nest on June 20th with one egg. (Risser and Donald Fischer).

Mallard: A nest with nine eggs on June 24th. (D. Fischer).

Blue-winged Teal: Nest with 11 eggs on June 3rd. These hatched on June 20th. (Risser)

Red-tailed Hawk: One nest with two young May 16th (Stanley Stein); another with young May 17th (R. Woolsey); the earliest nest reported was one with 2 eggs on April 26th (Risser).

Marsh Hawk: A nest with 5 eggs on May 17th (Swedenborg). Another nest with 6 eggs ready to hatch on June 11th (Woolsey).

Sparrow Hawk: Young seen out of nesting hole on July 4th (Stanley Stein).

Ruffed Grouse: A nest with 13 eggs on May 25th, and a brood of newly hatched young on the same date. Both reported by Jerome Stoudt from north of Stillwater.

Bobwhite: A nest with 8 eggs on July 22nd (Stanley Stein).

Ring-necked Pheasants: A nest with 8 eggs on May 18th (Risser and Swedenborg) and another with 17 eggs on May 27th (Marius Morse).

Florida Gallinule: A nest with 6 eggs on June 14th by Stanley Stein (adult birds not seen); another with two eggs on June 20th (Risser and Donald Fischer).

Coot: Four nests with from one to five eggs on June 14th (S. Stein, Ralph Woolsey, Donald and Leander Fischer).

Killdeer: Five nests were reported by as many observers, between the dates of April 19th and June 21st. The contents were three or four eggs in each case.

Spotted Sandpiper: Four eggs May 27th (Risser) and four eggs June 2nd (Ralph Woolsey).

Black Tern: Two eggs June 7th (Swedenborg), three eggs June 3rd (Risser), and six nests with one to three eggs on June 14th by Woolsey, Stanley Stein and Leander Fischer).

Mourning Dove: Earliest nest by Mrs. C. E. Peterson had two eggs April 21st which hatched on April 30th. This nest at Madison, Minnesota. The latest nest reported had 2 eggs on August 18th (Risser). On One nest found July 13th by S. Stein was built on the ground.

Black-billed Cuckoo: A nest with one egg on June 6th and another with 4 eggs on June 7th (Swedenborg).

Screech Owl: One nest at Madison contained young birds on April 23rd (Mrs. C. E. Peterson)

Great Horned Owl: Two young still in the nest on March 29th (Stanley Stein) and another nest with two young on May 3rd (Stanley Stein and Ralph Woolsey).

Burrowing Owl: One nest contained five eggs near the entrance on June 25th. On July 14th a group of 11 birds, adults and young, was seen near another nest (Mrs. C. E. Peterson, Madison).

Nighthawk: A nest with two eggs found by Mrs. C. E. Peterson at Madison on July 5th.

Chimney Swift: Three colonies at Shakopee, but the nest contents never investigated.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: An unfinished nest found on May 31st (Risser) and a female seen incubating on a nest near Robbinsdale on June 22nd (Marius Morse).

Belted Kingfisher: One nest on May 30th; contents not investigated (S. Stein). A nest with 5 young on June 24th.

Northern Flicker: A nest on May 17th was not investigated (R. Woolsey); another found on June 10th contained 3 young; a third nest, found by Mrs. C. E. Peterson at Madison, contained six young on June 19th.

Rod-headed Woodpecker: A bird observed excavating on May 23rd (Swedenborg).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: A nest with large young found June 20th by Risser and S. Fischer; another with four young was found July 1st by D. Fischer and R. Woolsey.

Hairy Woodpecker: A nest with large young on May 17th (Evans and Risser). The young left the nest at Hyland Lake, June 7th.

Downy Woodpecker: A nest found by Stanley Stein on May 3rd was not investigated. Another nest contained young on June 10th (Ralph Woolsey).

Kingbird: Alden Risser found a nest with 3 eggs on May 23rd; another nest of three eggs was found at Madison by Mrs. Peterson.

Arkansas Kingbird: The only nests of this species reported were found by Mrs. Peterson at Madison. Two nests, July 2nd, contents not investigated.

Crested Flycatcher: A nest completed on June 4th had 5 eggs June 9th; at another nest young were being fed on June 3rd (Risser).

Phoebe: Three nests with five eggs each were reported on the following dates: April 30th, May 4th, and June 11th. A nest with five young about two-thirds grown was found May 31st, and another with four eggs was reported May 2nd.

Alder Flycatcher: A nest with three fresh eggs reported by Alden Risser on June 15th.

Least Flycatcher: Stanley Stein found a nest which was completed but empty on June 21st and another which contained four young on June 29th.

Horned Lark: Alden Risser reports a nest with three eggs on March 20 (On Risser's personal copy he corrected it to 30th).

Tree Swallow: A small colony of several nests noted at Shakopee, but contents not investigated (Woolsey). A nest with three fresh eggs on June 9th (Risser).

Bank Swallow: Many colonies reported by all observers. An adult noted excavating by Mr. Swedenborg on May 29th.

Rough-winged Swallow: A nest with three eggs on May 30th (Stanley Stein); three nests reported on June 24th, contents unknown.

Barn Swallow: Nest with 2 eggs on May 29th (Swedenborg); nest with small young on June 20th; three nests with 1 - 3 eggs on June 21st (Woolsey).

Cliff Swallow: A small colony of about six occupied nests as usual at Penn Avenue and 62nd. Nests occupied but contents not investigated on May 29th (Swedenborg); young on July 3rd (Several observers).

Purple Martin: Many colonies reported by most observers. On June 4th nests contained from 1 - 4 eggs (R. Woolsey).

Blue Jay: Mr. Swedenborg reports a nest with 4 eggs May 3rd.

Crow: Five nests with four or five eggs each reported between the dates of April 11th and May 23rd.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Nest with one egg on April 26th (Risser); another nest with one egg (S. Stein) reported on May 3rd.

House Wren: Nest with three eggs on May 30th (Woolsey); another with 7 eggs on June 24th (M. Morse).

Long-billed Marsh Wren: One egg on June 11th (Woolsey); six nests on June 21st with 4 - 6 eggs; one nest July 7th with 6 eggs (Morse)

Catbird: One egg on May 23rd (Risser); a nest with 4 eggs July 4th (S. Stein); and several nests with eggs between those dates.

Brown Thrasher: First nest had one egg on May 14th; last nest had 5 eggs June 4th (Woolsey); two others reported.

Robin: Adult incubating on April 21st (Woolsey); nest with 3 eggs April 26th; a nest at Madison with 1 egg May 12th (Mrs. C.E. Peterson)

Wood Thrush: First nest found by Ralph Woolsey, on May 31st but contents unknown; a nest with three eggs and a cowbird eggs on June 20th (Risser and D. Fischer). Young in nest 30 feet from ground, near Montivideo, Minnesota (Mrs. Peterson), on June 28th.

Veery: A nest just completed on June 7th (R. Woolsey); another nest with cowbird egg and two veery eggs on June 14th (Risser).

Bluebird: Nests with eggs reported between April 25th & June 11.

Cedar Waxwing: Alden Risser reports a nest completed but still empty on June 14th.

Migrant Shrike: Ralph Woolsey reports a nest with one egg on April 27th and Mr. Swedenborg reports another with five eggs on May 2nd, and a third nest in which the fourth egg was laid on April 29th and the birds hatched on May 13th and 14th.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Marius Morse noted an adult of this species feeding a fully-fledged cowbird on June 22nd.

Red-eyed Vireo: Alden Risser reports two nests found on June 6th with 3 eggs, and two vireo eggs and two cowbird eggs respectively. A nest reported by Ralph Woolsey contained young on June 22nd.

Warbling Vireo: One nest, contents unknown, on June 11th and another, with four eggs, on June 24th; both found by R. Woolsey.

Yellow Warbler: Of thirteen nests reported the first was found by Mr. Swedenborg. It was being built on May 22nd, was finished May 28th, and the first egg was laid on May 31st. Ralph Woolsey reported eight nests with from one to five eggs on June 4th. The last nest reported was by Marius Morse. It had one young cowbird one cowbird egg, and two warbler eggs on July 2nd.

Ovenbird: Jerome Stoudt found a nest of this species near Trofte, Minnesota on July 9th, when it contained three eggs.

Maryland Yellowthroat: A nest with four eggs on June 14th (Stanley Stein), and another with one egg and two additional eggs of the cowbird, on June 15th (Alden Risser).

Redstart: Nest with two eggs found on May 31st (Alden Risser), and another by Stanley Stein, which contained two young June 21st.

House Sparrow: A nest with four eggs was reported by Mrs. C. E. Peterson at Madison on April 25th. Mr. Swedenborg noted the first young out of the nest on May 15th.

Bobolink: Mr. Swedenborg found a nest with two eggs on June 3rd.

Eastern Meadowlark: A nest, finished but empty, was found by Alden Risser on May 3rd. Another nest, reported by Marius Morse, contained six eggs on May 4th. A third nest contained six eggs on May 24th (Stanley Stein).

Western Meadowlark: Mrs. C. E. Peterson reports finding two nests at Madison on July 15th, which contained four and five eggs respectively.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: First nest reported contained three eggs on May 26th (Swedenborg). Several nests found on June 6th contained from one to five eggs (E. D. Swedenborg). The last nest reported contained one egg on June 14th (R. Woolsey).

Red-winged Blackbird: The first of 17 nests reported was found May 18th when it contained three eggs (Alden Risser); the last nest contained young on July 21st (Marius Morse). Some of the nests found by Marius Morse were in full-sized trees.

Baltimore Oriole: Two occupied nests were reported by Ralph Woolsey on June 4th.

Brewer's Blackbird: Two nests, both with five eggs, were found on May 17th by Mr. Swedenborg and Alden Risser, respectively.

Bronze Grackle: A nest with two eggs was found by Alden Risser on April 22nd. The last nest reported was by Marius Morse. It contained three young and three eggs on May 27th.

Cowbird: Eggs of the cowbird were found between June 6th and June 21st in nests of the following species: yellow throated vireo, red-eyed vireo, vireo, yellow warbler, Maryland yellowthroat, wood thrush, veery, swamp sparrow, indigo bunting, and dickcissel.

Cardinal: A nest found by Jerome Stoudt at Hastings contained three eggs on May 2nd.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A bird was observed building its nest on June 2nd at Madison, by Mrs. C. E. Peterson. A nest with three eggs was reported by Ralph Woolsey on June 10th.

Indigo Bunting: A nest found June 21st by Donald Fischer contained one cowbird egg only.

Dickcissel: Marius Morse reports two nests of this interesting species. The first contained four dickcissel eggs and one of the cowbird on July 13th and the other contained five eggs on July 31st.

Goldfinch: The first nest reported contained two eggs on July 13th. The last two nests contained four eggs on August 18th (Marius Morse) and three young about four days old on August 23rd was reported by Mr. Swedenborg.

Savannah Sparrow: A nest containing four eggs on June 3rd was reported by Mr. Swedenborg.

Vesper Sparrow: One nest with two young was found July 14th by Ralph Woolsey.

Lark Sparrow: Alden Risser found a nest containing three fresh eggs on May 26th.

Chipping Sparrow: Marius Morse reports a nest with two eggs on May 23rd, and Ralph Woolsey found another which contained one egg on June 10th.

Clay Colored Sparrow: One nest contained four eggs on May 29th; another had four eggs on June 7th (Ralph Woolsey and Leander Fischer).

Junco: The only nest of this Canadian Zone species was found by Jerome Stoudt near Tofte, Minnesota on July 9th, when the nest contained four young.

Field Sparrow: An adult was observed building on May 22nd (E. D. Swedenborg).

Swamp Sparrow: The first nest was reported contained three sparrow eggs and one cowbird egg on June 7th. (E. D. Swedenborg). The last nest contained two eggs on June 14th.

Song Sparrow: The earliest nest reported was found by Stanley Stein on May 4th, when it contained one egg. The last nest contained one egg on June 24th (D. Fischer).

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NOTES FROM CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. P. O. Fryklund of Roseau, Minnesota, reports the first Snowy Owl of the season on October 18th. He also reports that on October 20th a farmer near Warroad, on Lake of the Woods, shot a young Bald Eagle.

Mrs. C. E. Peterson reports Evening Grosbeaks at Madison on October 10th. Unknown parties shot two white pelicans at Lac qui Parle on or about October 13th, and Mrs. Peterson saw another pelican which had evidently been shot, floating on Lake Alice, October 28th.

The first American rough-legged hawk of the season was seen near Fertile, Minnesota by Martin K. Nelson.

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THE FLICKER

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The FLICKER is the quarterly organ of the Minnesota Bird Club. The annual subscription is one dollar, payable in advance to the Secretary, Marius Morse, 4031 - 40th Avenue North, Minneapolis. President - Donald Fischer, Shakopee, Minnesota. Editor - Gustav Swanson Swanson, 3305 - 47th Avenue South, Minneapolis.

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There is little doubt but that there will have been observed by the end of this winter a considerably larger number of birds than usual, perhaps than ever before in one Minnesota winter. The mildness of the season, at least up to the end of 1931, has been such that numbers of half-hardy birds have been easily able to find an abundance of food without leaving our state, and contrary to the expectation of many, a goodly number of the winter visitants from the north have favored us with their presence.

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In the next issue of The Flicker we would like to include a list of the birds seen by its readers in Minnesota during the holiday vacation period, from December 20th to January 3rd, inclusive. Such a list should be representative of the winter as a whole. In order that this compilation may be as complete as possible we urge that all Minnesota observers send in their lists of birds seen during this period to the editor, as soon as possible.

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During the past few months there has been a considerable influx of new members into the Club, which will be reflected in the future activities of this organization. We are looking forward to great things in 1932. During the past year The Flicker has suffered at times from lack of copy and its appearance has been somewhat erratic. However, we believe that Volume IV of The Flicker will begin a new era in the career of this humble journal. Watch for the first number of 1932, due on February 15th.

A BIRD SURPRISE

Marius Morse

It was my good luck to observe a large flock of somewhat irregular winter bird visitants on November 19th, 1931, while out hiking just north of the University Farm Campus. Being entirely unfamiliar with the territory, I did not know exactly what bird species I should expect to see. My acquaintance with these new birds, therefore, proved to be all the more fascinating.

I was hastily crossing a large field of short-cut grass when a flock of fifteen or twenty small birds suddenly flew up from my path. Whirling and zig-zagging over the field, they alighted only a short distance away. Now I slowed up my pace and turned to follow these curious birds. I had taken only a few steps when another flock, larger than the first, flushed directly ahead of me.

My first conclusion was that these birds were Horned Larks, but this was shortly disproved. As I continued toward the location at which the first flock had settled, I became aware of a subdued twittering, which seemed to come from a spot directly ahead.

I stopped and carefully scanned the ground, but not a sign of any bird did I see. Again I heard faint notes, and as I cautiously stepped forward, I strained my eyes for the bird or birds which I knew were very near. But still I was unable to locate my quarry.

I stopped long enough to convince myself that I was not dreaming. Then I resumed my search. Suddenly a small inconspicuous bird appeared close to my feet, and I gasped with amazement, for there not five feet away was a Lapland Longspur, standing motionless. Then another and another became visible, and soon I had located about ten birds. I moved slightly and one of them ran lightly over the frozen ground. Then a large flock flew up, followed by another a short distance ahead. I estimated the two flocks to contain about eighty individuals.

I doubt that I shall ever see a more perfect example of protective coloration than these pale-colored Lapland Longspurs against the dull buff color of the field grass sparsely bunched atop a clay soil.

--- Minneapolis, Minnesota

SUMMER ALONE

Sterling Brackett

It will be great! Summer is here, and summer is coming. But things won't be the same this year as in other years. My birding will necessarily be done alone, and I'll be working so hard that I won't find much time to spend in the field. But I will have an opportunity to test the theory that an appreciation of birds will always make one's life happier even though the only chance one has to see birds is while walking to and from work.

Months later — It is now late fall, and I have had time to think about the spring and summer and all that has occurred. Every minute of reflection seems to add to the joy of summer. And birding alone is not so bad after all; in fact, I get a bigger thrill out of the unusual birds to think that I, am the only one seeing them.

House painting and decorating kept me confined during the spring months. Even many of my Sundays were stolen from the out-of-doors and spent with smelling linseed oil and turpentine. But even those months were not entirely without event. I can show you the paint smear on the wall of one of the customer's houses which was caused by the inopportune whistle of the first oriole.

An occasional glimpse of a mother wood duck, and her young which were hatched in a hollow oak in the front yard of my uncle's place, helped to enliven some of the days of confinement. A rotted pier of the bridge on the road to my home sheltered three tree swallow offspring.

Numerous overnight scout hikes and a two weeks period at scout camp during the summer gave me the joy of sharing with younger fellows some of the everyday but interesting bird happenings.

As fall came on I started trucking apples. This gave me a chance to see, rather superficially to be sure, parts of Minnesota, notably the western part along the Dakota line from Pipestone north to Breckenridge. This was thrilling, even if I had no time to stop and hunt for birds except for a few hours once or twice. To me the most beautiful piece of rolling prairie is just south of Ortonville. It gives one the wish to stay for days and to enjoy its beauties while riding over the grassland astride a good horse.

My only view of Pipestone was as I sat on the top of a truck as we travelled westward over the hills toward Flandreau, South Dakota, and away from the shining outcrops of reddish quartzite.

The Indian boys in the Flandreau school were a nice lot. I sat watching them and wondering which of them might have grown up to be chief of the tribe. One of the little fellows whom I met had attended our state fair as a member of the Boy Scout Indian village, and he was still wearing the cap that indicated this

membership.

A number of trips were made to the vicinity of Big Stone and traverse lakes. It was at the south end of Lake Traverse, near the town of Brown's Valley, that the glacial Lake Agassiz drained into the River Warren that cut the valley in which the Minnesota River now flows. The beaches of this lake were very apparent in some places. One beach will extend back from the lake for several miles as a very level bit of prairie and then there will be an abrupt incline to the level of the next beach.

It was on Lake Traverse, while I was hunting ducks, that I saw three White Pelicans. They were flying with their usual justly famous grace as they passed over our blind and circled to fly back up the lake. The ducks were entirely too fast for me, so my bag was empty at the end of the day.

Just west of Big Stone Lake and close to Millbank, South Dakota my partner, who was driving while I slept, awoke me just in time to see an adult Golden Eagle arise from his perch on top of a haystack and sail off across the level prairie.

The last day of the Pheasant hunting season brought quite a surprise and added a new bird to my list. We had seen no Pheasants, so when a rabbit jumped up I couldn't resist shooting at it just to see if the gun still worked. It did, but not on the rabbit. A startled bird fluttered up from the ground and perched at the top of a corn stalk close by. After seeing the rabbit dash away unharmed I turned my attention to the bird. It seemed dazed and remained motionless for several minutes. My mouth involuntarily opened when I recognized it as a female American Crossbill.

The opportunity to see new birds, and parts of Minnesota strange to me, was very enjoyable, but the thing that was of sustaining interest throughout the season was our bird bath stone, and I spent a good deal of time watching its visitors. It is a piece of dark-colored granite boulder that was split in two and one half chiselled out to form a hollow. This half is in the wild flower garden and can be very conveniently watched from the dining room. A Song Sparrow made the biggest splashing; the Robins were the dirtiest; and more Wilson's Warblers would bathe at one time than any of the other birds. The Least Flycatcher took his bath by flitting back and forth through the water without even alighting. About 90 species of birds have been seen around the house and about half of that number have made use of the bath stone.

--- Excelsior, Minnesota

"Birds of Polk County Iowa" by Philip A. Dumont. October 1931. This attractive local list records in its 72 pages "289 species of birds known to have occurred within Polk County, Iowa, together with dates of migration."

The region under consideration is only about 125 miles south of Minnesota, so the list will be of considerable interest to local observers. There is an introduction of 12 pages which takes up the features of the area which are of interest ornithologically, and the history of bird-study, including an account of the publications, collections, and field work in the region. Following this is the annotated list, which has nomenclature and sequence of species in accordance with the 1931 edition of the A.O.U. Checklist.

Through a regrettable tyrographical error the singular of the word "species" has been misspelled in almost every case throughout the paper.

Every Minnesota observer will do well to obtain a copy of this carefully prepared list, especially since the area differs so little from much of Minnesota. It sells for 50 cents and may be ordered from: Des Moines Audubon Society, 1245 West 37th Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

"Forest Trees of Minnesota" by W. R. Mattoon and Parker Anderson. November 1930. This pocket manual of Minnesota trees is adequately illustrated with line drawings of the leaves and fruits of the trees taken up. The account of each species includes a description of the leaves, bark, fruit, size of the tree, and its economic uses. It should be useful to all amateur naturalists, and is especially recommended for Boy Scouts and school nature study classes. It may be obtained free of charge from Mailing Department, Extension Division, Department of Agriculture, University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota.

"Common Injurious Mammals of Minnesota" by Maynard S. Johnson. January 1930. This publication is a 67 page bulletin which takes hooved forms and the opossum, with especial reference to their importance of their food habits. Notes are made in most cases on the distribution and breeding habits of the species. At the present time it is the most complete up-to-date account of Minnesota mammals available, and everyone interested in Minnesota natural history should have it. It may be obtained free of charge from the University of Minnesota, Agricultural Experiment Station, St. Paul, Minnesota.

G.S.

NOTES ON HAWK FOOD

In a recent lot of hawk stomachs sent to the Biological Survey for examination there were some items that may be of interest.

The only Marsh Hawk sent contained one Lincoln's Sparrow.

The contents of eight red-tailed Hawk stomachs may be summarized as follows:

4 rabbits	- - - - -	35%
1 pocket gopher	- - - - -	12%
1 weasel	- - - - -	11%
1 meadow mouse	- - - - -	6%
1 deer mouse	- - - - -	7%
26 insects	- - - - -	9%
(mostly grasshoppers)		
1 chicken	- - - - -	6%
2 pheasants	- - - - -	14%

These birds were taken during the pheasant hunting season, and the possibility that the pheasant remains may represent birds found crippled or dead may be considered.

One Rough-legged Hawk stomach contained:

3 meadow mice	- - - - -	75%
1 deer mouse	- - - - -	15%
2 shrews	- - - - -	10%

One Rough-legged Hawk that was shot during the pheasant season, contained one pheasant only. We think it likely that this bird was taken dead or crippled, because the Rough-legged Hawk is known as one of our most useful hawks.

Gustav Swanson  
Minneapolis