

long bill, and the hint of white on the lower back. Of course it was smaller. In its manner of flight and in the possession of a white rump it looked a little like a White-rumped Sandpiper.

It flew far down the coast, leaving me in a most unpleasant frame of mind, but eventually returned, and flew close over my head, and I killed it. Unluckily, almost the whole charge of shot smashed into it, and it was sadly mangled, but quite recognizable. The skin was preserved after much nerve-racking work, and identified as the Curlew Sandpiper by Mr. W. Miller, Mr. Griscom, and Mr. Chapin, of the American Museum of Natural History. Since the days of Giraud but two specimens of this species have been taken on Long Island, the last in 1891, I believe.—WM. TOD HELMUTH, 3RD, *New York City*.

**Curlew Sandpiper on Fishers Island, N. Y.**—On December 19, 1923, I was on Fishers Island, N. Y., with Messrs. L. C. Sanford, Justus von Lengerke and Harry Ferguson and shot what I supposed to be a very late lingering White-rumped Sandpiper. On getting it home and comparing it, I found it did not tally with my skins at all nor with descriptions, the long legs and long decurved bill especially attracting my attention.

On further investigation it proves to be a Curlew Sandpiper (*Erolia ferruginea*) in typical winter plumage. It seems such a rare occurrence in the east as to merit record in 'The Auk.'—LOUIS A. FUERTES, *Ithaca, N. Y.*

**Peculiar Behavior of the Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*).**—The normal behavior of an animal is well defined within certain limits, i. e., an animal's activities are curtailed to a considerable extent as a result of the specialization of the structures involved. There are, however, instances where animals perform acts which involve a specialized structure and which seem to be contrary to its normal function. For example, the legs and feet of shore birds are adapted for wading but it is also possible for some of the group,—the Solitary Sandpiper, the Yellow-legs, etc.,—to perch.

On June 25, 1923, at Orient Bay, Lake Nipigon, Ontario, the writer observed a Spotted Sandpiper perching on a telegraph wire. The fact that the species was perching was not surprising but the size of the perch made the observation of interest. The bird was not in an erect position, being squatted, which probably made the feat less difficult. In this case the act was entirely voluntary and not an instance of unusual conduct due to the pressure of an emergency.

Activities for which an organism is not particularly adapted may be undertaken especially when the survival instincts are stressed.

On July 31, 1923, at the same locality as mentioned above, I forced a young, flightless Spotted Sandpiper to swim. After trying to dodge and run past me it was finally cornered on a gravel bar where it was forced to

swim or be caught. Rather reluctantly it took to the water, swimming well for twenty yards. Here it scrambled ashore and resorted to the more usual mode of protection by squatting motionless among the debris along the shore. Swimming, it seems, was an act prompted by self preservation and was accomplished although the species is not equipped with webbed or lobed feet.

It appears that as long as an act is physically possible it may be attempted. Instances of actions at wide variance to an animal's usual activities are of interest especially if the reason for the unusual act appears evident. It can only be conjectured whether such behavior is due to a re-occurrence of a primitive instinct or whether the individual has "experimental" tendencies. There is also a possibility that certain acts which appear unusual are merely infrequently observed.—L. L. SNYDER, *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto.*

**A Death Trap to the American Barn Owl (*Tyto pratincola*).—**

Within 200 yards of my house is a piece of land known as "Porcher's Island Field" on which I have taken a great many albinistic Sharp-tailed Sparrows as well as a Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) on November 24, 1893, a Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) on May 13, 1910, also all forms of eastern Sparrows that frequent the salt marshes, as well as Marsh Wrens. In October, 1919, I found in the field a dead American Barn Owl and wondered how it happened to be killed. The next year, in November, I found the remains of another Barn Owl on the top of a dead pine tree (snag) within 75 yards of the spot where I discovered the first one, and the following October (1921) I found the remains of another bird at high water mark that had been picked clean and done as if by the hand of man. Upon examining all the feathers carefully I identified a feather that belonged to a Great Horned Owl showing conclusively that all these Owls must have been killed by a Great Horned Owl. In December, 1923, Mr. Edward von S. Dingle (who now lives near me) found the remains of a Barn Owl in this field and in close proximity to the places where all the other Owls had been killed. Here is a case of an Owl preying upon another Owl of inferior size and less ferocity.—ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*

**The Type Locality of *Alcedo cristata* Linné.**—In a recent number of the 'Bulletin' of the British Ornithologists' Club,<sup>1</sup> Col. Meinertzhagen has described *Corythornis cristata johannae* from Anjouan Island, Comoro Islands. Unfortunately Anjouan Island (or Johanna, as it used to be called) happens to be the type locality of *Corythornis cristata cristata* (Linné),<sup>2</sup> as selected by Oskar Neumann<sup>3</sup> several years ago, and therefore Col. Meinertzhagen's name must fall as a direct synonym of *Alcedo cristata* Linn.

<sup>1</sup> 44, 24 Jan. 1924, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> (*Alcedo*) *cristata* Linné Syst. Nat. 1, ed. 12, 1766, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> Orn. Monatsb. 23, 1915, p. 157.