

familiar with the Starling in England. Mr. Greaves later informed Major Dear that he had seen three Starlings at his residence at Murillo on April 6, 1931.

From Mr. T. W. Love, of Fort William, Major Dear learned that a Starling had been picked up dead in one of the city parks of Fort William on or about February 1, 1931, and that it had been mounted and was preserved at the Heath Street School, Fort William. On May 14, 1931, Major Dear examined this specimen and verified its identification as *Sturnus vulgaris*.

Port Arthur and Fort William are in latitude 48° 27' N., Trois Pistoles is in latitude 48° 8' N., and Metis is in latitude 48° 38' N.

As a summer resident the Starling is now abundant at Ottawa, Ontario, and common at Quebec, Quebec. It winters in both of these cities in reduced numbers.—HARRISON F. LEWIS, *National Parks, Ottawa, Canada*.

**Western Meadowlark at Battle Creek, Michigan.**—On May 28, 1931 I visited the farm of A. H. Gorsline east of Battle Creek, where during the past few years, the Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) has been found. I was hoping to find that this bird had returned. As I stopped the car beside the alfalfa field a clear bell-like voice attracted my attention. The voice resembled that of the Baltimore Oriole but was louder and more bell like, resembling also the song of the Wood Thrush. The bird proved to be a Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella n. neglecta*).

The following day Mrs. Alfred Steinel, who spent most of her early life in the middle west and knew the bird in that location, visited the field and identified it at once. We visited the location again on June 2 and found the male bird singing in the same field. However, shortly after this the alfalfa was cut and the Meadowlark disappeared.—LAWRENCE H. WALKINSHAW, *Battle Creek, Mich.*

**Orchard Oriole in the Adirondacks.**—The writer observed, on July 8, 1927, an Orchard Oriole feeding a young bird at the Owaisa Club, Wilmington, N. Y. Since this locality—only a short distance from Whiteface Mountain—is near, or at, the northern extremity of the range of the bird as recorded in Eaton's Birds of New York, the instance is probably worth reporting.—WILLIAM VOGT, *Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y.*

**Icterus pustulatus, a New Bird to the A. O. U. Check-List.**—On May 1, 1931, a male Scarlet-headed Oriole (*Icterus pustulatus*), in first year plumage, was collected at Murray Dam, near La Mesa, San Diego County, California, by Frank F. Gander, a member of the staff of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

The capture of this specimen constitutes the first record within the United States boundary and adds another semi-tropical wanderer to the A. O. U. 'Check-List.' The normal range of the species is western and southern Mexico, north as far as Tecoripa, Sonora (van Rossem, *Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist.*, Vol. VI, No. 19, p. 389, 1931).

Questioning the collector regarding the capture of this unusual migrant, the writer was informed that the bird was uttering notes not unlike those of *Icterus bullocki bullocki*, which it was believed to be, and that its position in the sycamore tree and manner of perching were typical of that Oriole.

The writer is indebted to H. S. Swarth, of the California Academy of Sciences, for positive identification. The specimen is now No. 14521, collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California.*

**Nesting of a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds on a Hilltop.**—Red-winged Blackbirds usually nest in bushes or reeds near water, very often over it in swamps. A nest of this bird at a distance of "fully half a mile from open water," and in a wild cherry tree twenty-one feet from the ground, is a curious exception recorded by I. E. Hess (*Osprey*, 1897, vol. 7, p. 13). H. Nehring (*Bull. Nuttall Ornithological Club*, 1882, vol. 7, p. 166) recorded a nest "in a blackberry bush on the edge of a thicket; there was no swamp within a mile." In May, 1931, a nest of the Red-winged Blackbird was built near my house at Ipswich in a raspberry bush on a dry glacial hilltop, sixty feet above the level of the salt marsh, some two hundred yards away.

My feeding station at the house had been visited by a male Red-winged Blackbird from the first of May, and, by the 14th, two males frequented it, usually picking up seeds that had been dropped from the table, but later alighting to feed on the table itself. Soon after this the female appeared, the nest was built, but, in the stormy weather, only one egg hatched and the young successfully reared. Several other pairs nested as usual in bushes close to the salt marsh.

It is a natural inference that the abundance of food at the feeding station induced the birds to nest in this unusual place, the male, which alone had fed there, choosing the nesting territory. A similar instance is reported by H. B. Bailey (*Bulletin Nuttall Ornithological Club*, 1876, vol. 1, p. 25) where a pair at Cobb's Island, Va., "raised a brood in a grapevine arbor near the house and picked up crumbs from the piazza."—CHARLES W. TOWNSEND, *Ipswich, Mass.*

**On the Color of the Iris and other characteristics of the Boat-tailed Grackle.**—I have read Mr. Sprunt's most pertinent article on *Megaquiscalus* in 'The Auk' for July 1931 and also Major Brooks' article in 'The Auk' for October 1928. I am wondering if the latter's remarks, wherein he compares the two forms of these Grackles with the idea they should be considered full species, have been based on observations taken at similar seasons of the year. That is to say were *M. m. major* and *M. m. macrourus* in mating condition when observed? During the midwinter season and usually until late February the old males of *M. m. major* are frequently, not always, in flocks of greatly varying size separate from the flocks of females and immature males as my notes show.