

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.