

killed by a passing motorist, brings to my mind the observation of two of these birds which I believe had been struck and killed by a passing automobile. I found the two Vultures lying beside the paved road near the top of a little knoll about two miles east of Warrenton, Va., on October 27, 1934. One bird was on one side of the road and the other was opposite; between them lay the carcass of a rabbit. It is my belief that these birds, intent on devouring the rabbit, had been struck by a speeding auto which came up over the knoll so suddenly and unexpectedly that they could not escape.—CHAS. J. SPIKER, *Branchport, N. Y.*

**The Rough-legged Hawk in the North Carolina Mountains.**—In Pearson and Brimleys' *Birds of North Carolina*, *Buteo lagopus sanctijohannis* is included as follows: "Recorded by Cairns as occasionally seen in winter and spring in Buncombe County. Besides this, our only record is from Blowing Rock, Watauga County, near which place one was seen on September 10, 1908 . . . by Z. P. Metcalf."

On August 14, 1935, the writers saw, and watched for nearly two hours, two of these birds on Flat-top Mountain, at Blowing Rock. They were first noted in a wide meadow, some half mile from the summit of the mountain which reaches an altitude of 4550 ft. From that point on to the observation tower at the summit, the birds were in sight from time to time, and once one of them passed over a break in the trees at no more than fifty feet above us. From the tower, views of both birds were obtained from above and below and all sides. They were hunting a long ridge, which is topped by the summit of Flat-top.

Every characteristic of the species was noted except the flapping while hovering. Both of them hovered many times, but because of the uprush of air above the peak, did so on motionless wings. The plummet like drops perpendicularly from the point of hovering were frequently indulged in. Both birds kept up an almost constant high-pitched "kree-e-e-e" call. So close did they approach the tower that several times the beak was seen to open when the call was uttered. The white patch at the base of the tail was much lighter in one of the birds than in the other, and in both, the blackish belly band was broken with streaks of whitish. No finer views could have been obtained. The birds remained for the whole of our stay at the top, and we saw them going down. Dr. Murray saw one of them two days later in the same spot.

August 14 is an exceptionally early date, nearly a month prior to the Metcalf record mentioned above, the locality being the same. The writers have worked the Blowing Rock region in summer for many years past, but this is their first observation of the species though Sprunt is familiar with it in other localities.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Charleston, S. C.*; JAMES J. MURRAY, D.D., *Lexington, Va.*

**The Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), in Indiana.**—A Prairie Falcon was captured in Sullivan County, Indiana, about thirty miles south of Terre Haute, January 9, 1932, by a student of State Teacher's College. It was brought alive to Prof. William P. Allyn of the Zoology department of Indiana State Teachers' College in that city. He kept it about a month when it died, after a treatment of sodium fluoride for lice. He gave it to Mr. Sidney R. Esten, then of the Indiana State Department of conservation, Indianapolis. Mr. Esten made a skin of it and preserved the specimen. I know of no other record of this species for Indiana. At Prof. Allyn's request I am making this record.—AMOS W. BUTLER.

**Eggs of *Megapodius pritchardi* from Ninafou Island, Tongan Group.**—The recent acquisition by the California Academy of Sciences of three eggs of *Megapodius pritchardi* from Ninafou Island (more popularly known as Tin Can Island), Tonga

Islands, seems to be worthy of record, in view of the rarity of these eggs in collections, especially those of North American institutions.

The eggs were presented to this museum by Capt. Frank A. Johnson, master of the SS. *Mariposa*, a vessel which in the course of its voyage between San Francisco and Sydney lies off to Ninafou Island to pick up mail. On the occasion of her call in July, 1935, a friend on the island sent out to Captain Johnson, as an interesting novelty, three eggs of *Megapodius pritchardi*. The eggs had evidently been newly collected, for they were still in good condition when they reached the museum on August 28. When they were blown they showed only a slight trace of incubation. In color the three differ considerably. One is pale pinkish cinnamon,<sup>1</sup> another is light vinaceous-cinnamon, and the third light onion-skin pink. They measure (in millimeters) as follows: 75.5 x 45.0; 76.25 x 43.0; 74.5 x 45.5.—M. E. McLELLAN DAVIDSON, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California.*

**Sex and Resistance of Bob-whites and Ring-necked Pheasants to Starvation.**—In the course of wild life studies the past few years, we have met with a certain amount of opinion to the effect that some gallinaceous species are subject to differential sex mortality during periods of winter crisis. Insofar as winter food shortage may mean serious emergency for the Bob-white (*Colinus v. virginianus*) and Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus torquatus*) populations in north-central states environment, the following data on these two species may be of some interest.

We have dying weights of fifty-one starved Bob-whites, mainly Wisconsin birds but some from Iowa and Missouri. These birds died during winter weather that was comparatively mild as a whole (1930-33) and were either birds picked up as intact carcasses in the wild, or were captives that succumbed in connection with experiments. Of the 51 birds, 27 were cocks and died at an average of 113 gr.; 24 were hens dying at an average of 113.7 gr.

In a series of drastic but not necessarily lethal experiments (intended primarily to test the nutritive qualities of questionable winter foods), no significant difference in ability of one sex or the other to maintain weight was observed. Eleven important experimental lots contained Bob-whites of both sexes (28 cocks and 17 hens), and practically all exceptionally high loss rates shown by the individual records are more convincingly explained on grounds other than sex.

Full weight Wisconsin specimens taken from early winter to mid-winter, 1930-'32, averaged 197.9 gr. for 35 cocks and 192.2 gr. for 21 hens, but it is highly probably that a larger series of birds would reveal scarcely any weight differences between sexes. H. L. Stoddard (*The Bob-white Quail*, 1931, p. 74), for example, gives 165.11 gr. as the average weight for 475 winter cocks in the Thomasville-Tallahassee (Georgia-Florida) region and 164.87 gr. as the average for 413 hens.

We have insufficient data on Pheasants starving in the wild to draw many conclusions, but the data from a number of food experiments conducted in cooperation with the Iowa Fish and Game Commission during the winter of 1932-33 may be of significance.

The Pheasants used in the experiments were of game-farm origin and were lighter in weight than birds collected from the wild. Eighteen fully-fleshed game-farm cocks averaged 1132 gr. and 46 hens averaged 877 gr., compared with an average of 1266 gr. for 68 wild cocks and 934 gr. for 13 wild hens.

During the experiments, 9 cocks died of starvation at an average of 594.3 gr. or at 52.5% of their original full weight. Similarly, 27 hens died at an average of 482 gr.

<sup>1</sup> The capitalized names of colors are those of Ridgway's *Color Standards*, 1912.