

mediately, it began calling the familiar *chick-a-dee-dee-dee* very excitedly and soon flew away.

The second experience occurred when a Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea arborea*) was feeding on the shelf. A Chickadee landed on the edge of the shelf, six inches from the Tree Sparrow; immediately the latter showed the usual antipathy to another bird on the feeding tray by a defiant attitude with open wings and bill. The Chickadee started to go, when apparently it was caught by extreme nervous excitement. The legs trembled, the body was jerked from side to side and the head was thrust backward and forward while the bird seemed rooted to the spot. This condition lasted about ten seconds; then, the bird regained poise and fairly tumbled off the shelf in its haste to get away. It appeared normal a few moments later. With the start of the performance, the Tree Sparrow resumed feeding and paid no further attention. I shall be interested if other observers have had similar experiences.—GORDON BOIT WELLMAN, *Wellesley, Mass.*

**A Robin's nest containing eight eggs.**—On April 26, 1938, at my brother's home in Media, Pennsylvania, I found eight eggs in a Robin's nest. Neither my brother nor his wife had noticed any unusual behavior among Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) about the lawn. I suspected, however, that two females had laid these eggs, inasmuch as in the only other recorded case of eight eggs in a Robin's nest, two females had incubated them side by side (Forbush, E. H., 'Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States,' 3: 413, 1929). I therefore examined the eggs very carefully. First I found it possible to separate them into two groups of four each by a general inspection of their contours. One 'set' had sharper ends than the other. My sister-in-law then noticed that the set with sharp ends was uniformly a few shades lighter in color than the set with blunt ends. On measuring the two sets, I found further evidence for their double origin:

Light set, sharp ends

30 x 21 mm.  
30.5 x 22  
31 x 21.5  
31 x 21.5

Dark set, blunt ends

29.5 x 22 mm.  
29.5 x 22  
29 x 22  
29 x 23

I watched this nest carefully on subsequent visits to Media: *May 3*, eight eggs still present; *May 7*, one egg just hatched; *May 8*, one young Robin, one piped egg, six un-piped eggs; *May 10*, two young Robins thriving, six un-piped eggs; *May 11*, no change; *May 16*, oldest fledgling almost ready to fly. It has pushed out the other fledgling, which is dead on the ground; three eggs have also been pushed out. Only one of these eggs is to be found; it contains an embryo about ready to hatch and not noticeably decomposed. *May 19*, fledgling has flown; three remaining eggs sterile.

My conclusions from these facts are that an unmated female laid her eggs, none of which hatched, at about the same time that the mated female did, but that this unusual happening resulted in irregular oviposition and incubation on the part of the mated female, so that her eggs hatched, actually or potentially, at irregular intervals. That the superfluous female was unmated is suggested further by the fact that at no time did a third Robin object to my presence at the nest.—C. BROOKE WORTH, *Dept. of Zoölogy, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.*

**Starlings summer in Arkansas.**—Three Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were observed sitting on the crosspiece of a light-wire post, along the road, six miles west of Fayetteville, on June 15 and 16, 1938. Identification was made at close range with

an eight-power Zeiss binocular.—T. L. QUAY, *University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas.*

**Red Crossbill breeding in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.**—

On April 10, 1938, I observed an adult female Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra* subsp.) feeding a juvenal in a grove of short-leaved pines near my home, close to the Little Pigeon River, in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The familiar notes of this species had attracted me to the scene where I caught sight of an adult male and female bird along with two heavily-streaked birds which I did not at once recognize. However, they were in view but a very short time before one of the strange-looking individuals suddenly began quivering its wings, whereupon the olive-green female placed food in its mouth. I now realized that these two unfamiliar birds were young Red Crossbills and the fact regarding the uncrossed mandibles of the juvenals, mentioned by Mr. Ludlow Griscom in his 'A monographic study of the Red Crossbill' (Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 41: no. 5, 1937), then occurred to me.

The young birds were capable of fair flight but one in particular I kept in view for some time. Edging closer and closer to the adult female who was feeding upon seeds of the pine, the juvenal would cause the older bird to desert her perch three or four successive times before she yielded and repeated the feeding episode. Altogether I witnessed this on three occasions before all the birds were lost to view. During this time the adult male and the second young bird were nearby, for I occasionally heard the notes of the adult. The notes made by the young birds were not as "ringing" in quality as those of the adults, and while begging for, or insisting upon, food, the juvenals uttered cries much like those made by very young domestic chickens.

Again on the following day I witnessed an adult female Red Crossbill feeding a young bird. This took place less than a mile from the locality where the previous observation had been made. I was directed to the spot by Mr. Joseph Manley, Assistant Forester, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, who had informed me of some strange-looking birds, somewhat resembling female and immature Purple Finches, which had recently been feeding on the ground near his home. The feeding episode was observed twice by Mr. Manley and me before the crossbills disappeared. On this occasion we noted to good advantage the very short tail of the young bird. Since the nearby mountains were carpeted with a recent heavy snowfall, Mr. Manley suggested that this may have been a factor in forcing these birds down from the spruce-fir zone. (The species frequently visits areas far below the Canadian zone at other times of the year, however.)

Several days later, on April 19, I again observed a young Red Crossbill. This time the place was some miles distant in the very heart of the Great Smokies—at Indian Gap (elevation 5200 feet), near the Tennessee-North Carolina state line. The bird was accompanied by an adult crossbill and was seen at close range—its sides heavily streaked, the tail very short, the mandibles not crossed, and the notes which it uttered decidedly unlike those in the repertory of the Purple Finch—a species with which it might be confused. This bird and the other juvenals which I have seen, were darker than the young bird pictured by Audubon.

Mr. Griscom, who is authority for the statement that there is no authentic breeding record south of Pennsylvania, and who presumes that a resident breeding population may well inhabit this area, has urged me to publish these observations.—ARTHUR STUPKA, *Park Naturalist, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.*

**Polygamy in the Western Lark Sparrow.**—In 1936, I found and photographed a nest of the Western Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus strigatus*), at Regina,