

morowski noted an individual of this species which flew in and perched on a small live oak on the check-bank of Summerhouse Pond. Until recently this species was totally unknown in South Carolina. Mr. Chamberlain states it was first recorded on December 16, 1913 (Auk, 31: 248, 1914), and not noted again until November 1, 1937, when a bird was seen on Bull's Island (Auk, 55: 536, 1938). Since then there have been reports in 1938, 1939, and 1941.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*).—On October 12, Eisenmann and Komorowski observed a bird preening on the same live oak where the Arkansas Kingbird was seen next day. The tree was about twelve feet high and adjacent to extensive growth of foxtail grass. Though the bird was in immature plumage, it was immediately recognized as a Lark Sparrow from its characteristic head pattern and from the tail, which was graduated and black except for the brown central feathers and which had the white tips extending up the sides of the outer feathers. A check of available literature that night indicated that the species was unrecorded in South Carolina. The next day, while we were watching the Arkansas Kingbird, the Lark Sparrow flew to the same tree and we were able to verify our observation. Again on October 14 and 15, the bird was seen in the same live oak, flying in for a few minutes of preening. We were able to point out the bird to Mr. Hills. Although the Lark Sparrow has not been previously noted in South Carolina (Chamberlain, Seasonal List of South Carolina Birds, 1936), its occurrence is not surprising since it is of casual occurrence in many parts of the Atlantic seaboard and has been taken in North Carolina and Florida (A. O. U. Check-List, fourth ed.: 341, 1931).—JOHN L. BULL, JR., *New Rochelle, N. Y.*; EUGENE EISENMANN, *New York, N. Y.*; AND GEORGE KOMOROWSKI, *New York, N. Y.*

Red-breasted Merganser devoured by angler fish.—Twenty-six hours after its capture, five miles east-southeast of Watch Hill, Rhode Island, on November 21, 1943, a 47-pound angler or goosefish (*Lophius piscatorius*) was dissected in the laboratory of the Bingham Oceanographic Foundation in the Peabody Museum of Natural History. Amongst a mass of fishes found in its stomach was an adult Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*). The only evidence of digestive action was a slight disintegration of the eyelids. The feet were in perfect condition, and the bird was made up as an excellent skin.

One may assume that the fish was caught very soon after it swallowed the merganser. Nevertheless, even in a dead fish, digestion might have been expected to disintegrate the epidermis of legs and feet during the 26-hour period. Undoubtedly the copious mucus which matted the feathers together thereby provided additional protection to the general surface of the skin.

Unless entrapped during the descent or ascent of the net, the fish was caught while on the bottom in 19 meters of water, at which depth the 80-foot otter trawl was dragged for two hours. The fresh condition of the bird suggests that the angler was captured toward the end of the period. Still it is possible that the fish, known to swim at times close to the surface, may have taken the bird there and immediately sounded, to be itself entrapped. Another possibility is conceivable—namely, that the fish had been caught at the bottom, but snapped up the merganser when the trawl engulfed the latter nearer the surface at the end of the haul.

Bigelow and Welsh (Bull., U. S. Bu. Fish., 40, Pt. 1: 527, 1925) record from the stomachs of these anglers the following birds: loons, grebes, cormorants, widgeons, scaups, scoters, mergansers, Herring Gulls, Razor-billed Auks, and guillemots. A

goose they surmise to be a bit beyond the capacity of the gourmand. Perhaps some ornithologist can provide a record to justify the use of the term 'goosefish.'

Hardly attributable to pressure during its incarceration within this soft-bodied fish is an accentuated recurvature of the merganser's beak.—STANLEY C. BALL, *Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.*

Some instances of bird tragedies.—Two unusual instances of tragedies to birds have come to my attention during the present year (1943). Early in April, one of our students reported the discovery of a dead Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) along the shores formed by the Sardis Dam Reservoir in North Mississippi. The bill of the heron was protruding through a good-sized fish. Apparently it had run its bill through the fish and, covering the external nares, had failed to extricate itself before it suffocated.

The second instance was related by a Mr. Dulaney of Tunica, Mississippi, who was fishing on Beaver Dam Lake near Tunica. About a hundred yards out in the lake he saw a duck, later identified as the Ruddy Duck (*Erismatura jamaicensis*), being pulled under the water from time to time. Paddling over to the spot, he snared the duck in a net and found one of its legs eaten almost off, presumably by a turtle. Due to the muddy water of the oxbow lake he was unable to be sure what had held the duck's leg. He made a special effort to try to pen the duck and heal its leg but it died a few days later. F. M. HULL, *University of Mississippi.*

Lawrence's Warbler in Maryland.—The fall migration of warblers through Maryland in 1942 was more advanced than usual. From the 19th of August until November, wave after wave of warblers was noted chiefly along hedgerows, through bottomland, and in upland forest areas in Prince George's County. Members of the *Vermivora* group were observed chiefly during the first week in September. On the fourth day of that month a Lawrence's warbler (*Vermivora lawrencei*) accompanied by several Blue-winged and Magnolia Warblers, Redstarts, Chickadees, and Titmice, was observed in thickets along an old farm field road near Bowie, Maryland.—BROOKE MEANLEY, 208 Oakdale Road, Baltimore, Maryland.

'Courtship feeding' by the House Finch.—The House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) was not included in David Lack's list of birds practicing 'courtship feeding' (*Auk*, 57: 169-178, 1940). So far as we know, W. H. Bergtold's study of the House Finch (*Auk*, 30, 40-73, 1913) at Denver, Colorado, contains the first reference to such feeding in this species. He reported that when the female is incubating "She is then often fed by the male, the feeding being precisely similar to the feeding of a young bird, even to the fluttering of the wings, etc."

Our own observations here in Tucson, Arizona, corroborate this. During the spring of 1942, several nests were built in our back lot. We saw the males frequently bring food to the incubating females. In fact, at one nest, the male began to feed his mate about the time the first egg was laid. Sometimes the female would leave the nest and fly toward the male, as he approached, alighting in a bush a few feet away. There was always a rapid fluttering of the wings and an excited twittering or chirping by the female—a typical juvenile begging attitude—as the male fed her by regurgitation. In every case it seemed evident that the female wanted the food. She returned to the nest immediately after being fed. At one nest, which was fully exposed to the hot April sun, the female continued brooding the young longer than usual. The male consequently brought most of the food to the young. On these trips he sometimes also fed the female.