

A curious deformity of a pigeon's bill.—While walking through the National Zoological Park, in Washington, D. C., I observed a common pigeon that appeared to possess a deformed head. The bird was walking on the lawn, and as I approached it made a feeble attempt to fly. Since I was unable to determine the nature of the deformity, I decided to trap the bird, which would enable me to examine the specimen in the hand. By securing a length of twine I fashioned a slip knot and baited it with corn. In this manner the bird was snared.

Upon examination I found that the pigeon was not malformed, but the upper mandible had been bent backward and forced downward into the hollow of the lower mandible. The tip of the beak bulged out a bit on the lower side of the jaw; thus the mandibles of the pigeon were locked, and the bird was unable to feed. This resulted in a deplorable condition.

The bills of the Columbidae are soft and pliable and readily lend themselves to bending. The pigeon may have collided with an obstacle, causing the locked condition described.—MALCOLM DAVIS, *The National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C.*

A late nest of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird.—The late Frank Chapman, in his book on birds, speaks of an occasional humming bird's nest in Florida but not until the month of May. Early in April, Mr. John T. Semple told me of his watching a Ruby-throated Hummingbird building a nest in a live oak on his place, here in Coconut Grove. The nest is approximately thirty feet from the ground. I took some moving pictures of this nest, the first picture being about April 19, when I noticed that the mother bird, which had been sitting on the nest, flew off and came back and started feeding a young one whose bill extended above the rim of the nest. I kept returning to take moving pictures until we had a heavy rain; something over two inches fell on Friday night of May 17. I had been going there every day in the hope of seeing the young birds fly from the nest as they were quite large and seemed to spend most of their time along the rim of the nest as if too crowded down below. When I arrived at Mr. Semple's on Saturday, the 18th, I found that the nest had been washed away by the heavy downpour and there was no trace on the ground of either the nest or the young. While I was sitting there talking over the matter with Mr. and Mrs. Twomey (of the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh) the mother bird returned to the tree, and it was a pitiful sight to see the little bird fly up to the branch and feel with her bill the marks of where the nest had been. I was at Mr. Semple's today (March 27) and his superintendent says that the bird has not been seen since that day.—A. S. HOUGHTON, *Coconut Grove, Florida.*

The structural basis of the voice of the Flammulated Owl.—The principal call or hoot of the Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*) is strikingly low in pitch in view of the small size of the bird. Marshall (Condor, 41: 71, 1939) has determined the pitch as A to B above middle C in males. This is five or six half tones lower than the trills of the much larger western Screech Owls (*Otus asio*), which center around E¹ and F¹.

In an earlier study of the vocal apparatus of owls (Miller, Condor, 36: 204-213, 1934) it was shown that the cross-section of the air passages corresponds in general with body size. The larger the species the larger is the syringeal segment of the air passages and the longer the vibratile membranes in the walls of the syrinx which produce the tone. The longer membranes of the larger species of course vibrate more slowly and yield lower-pitched notes. These general correlations are subject to several modifying influences: (1) The enlarged syrinx, and its membranes, varies from 203 to 238 per cent of the diameter of the unmodified bronchus in males of the