

The specimen was sent to Professor Joseph Bequaert at the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy for identification. In view of Professor Bequaert's determination of the parasite as the species *O. vicina* (Walker) and the fact that many records of *O. confluenta* have been published for passerine, strigiform, and falconiform birds, it seems advisable to make known his conclusion. In correspondence he advises that the species *O. confluenta*, as defined by Say, is restricted to wading birds and that the species occurring on passerines, falcons, and strigids should be designated as *O. vicina* (Walker) since it appears to be distinct from the species so far known to occur on the wading birds.—L. M. BARTLETT, *Massachusetts State College, Amherst, Massachusetts*.

**Waterfowl grounded at the Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge, Texas.**—That waterfowl may share with the airplane difficulty in taking off from a wet field was the observation of the writer during the winter of 1945–1946 when he watched wintering ducks attempt to arise from muddy fields at the Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge, Texas. Following the mid-January snowstorms, the clay soils of dry lake bottoms where the ducks gathered daily to rest became surprisingly viscous, adhering tenaciously to their feet and legs with the result that when many attempted to fly they were so weighted down with the sticky mud that they could not rise and fell easy prey to predacious birds. Struggling created puddles about the birds and in many instances added to the accumulation on wings, breasts and legs to such an extent that death undoubtedly resulted from exhaustion. Representative examples were the Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*), one of which had acquired 14 ounces of mud on its feet and legs, and a Pintail (*Anas acuta tzitsihoo*), from which one pound 11 ounces of the gumbo were removed. Before prairie winds altered the condition by drying the wet surfaces again, an estimated 500 ducks were lost.—EDWARD J. O'NEILL, *Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge, Muleshoe, Texas*.

**Purple Martins killed on a highway.**—Much has been written concerning the mortality of Tree Swallows by cars along the highway. The following account concerns a similar type of destruction of another member of the swallow family. On September 10, 1940, while driving down to Bull's Island, S. C., with Dr. Edward Fleisher and Mr. Irwin Alperin, we passed over a low bridge spanning Albemarle Sound, N. C. We noticed hundreds of dead birds all along the bridge, but due to its narrowness, did not stop the car until we reached the other side. Upon returning on foot, we identified them all as Purple Martins. There were no live birds present, nor were there any dead birds along the road, except those present on the bridge. Our only deduction that seemed plausible in explaining this mortality was that the martins had chosen the bridge railings to roost at night, and flew into blinding headlights of cars as they traversed the sound.—DR. M. A. JACOBSON, *New York, N. Y.*

**Hooded Merganser and a watersnake.**—On August 21, 1941, while birding along the shore of a small lake at Glen Spey, N. Y., about fifteen miles from Port Jervis, a considerable commotion about three hundred yards distant, on the otherwise very placid lake surface, attracted my attention. Wishing to investigate at a closer range, after an unsuccessful view with my binoculars, I leaped into a near-by boat and rowed out to the site, and came in time to fish out a female Hooded Merganser with a common watersnake entwined about its neck. I had forcibly to remove the snake, which when finally loosened, slithered its three and one-half feet back into the lake. The merganser appeared in labored breathing, and made but feeble attempts to escape my hold with its bill.