

Once the band number had been assured I released the bird and took inventory of the feathers she had lost. They comprised five long primaries from her left wing, three of the longest primaries from her right wing, and two tail feathers. Three small body feathers were also found.

Has this shedding of feathers been observed by other banders who have trapped this species, or did I capture a specimen at the moment of her most active molting? Was the 'throwing' of her feathers the result of a violent nervous shock caused by her capture? I shall appreciate very much learning from anyone who has handled nighthawks whether such shedding is a normal occurrence.—G. HAPGOOD PARKS, *Hartford, Connecticut.*

**Green-tailed Towhee at Northampton, Massachusetts** (Plate 9).—On December 31, 1946, a very strange bird appeared at the feeder of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Risley, near the southern edge of Northampton, Massachusetts. It consorted with Juncos, but its tail was longer and without white, its body-size larger, and its throat white. For several days they puzzled over it, noting further its chestnut cap, the dark line at each side of the throat, and the yellow-green lining of its tail, and hearing it mew, somewhat like a Catbird. Unable to find anything to match it in the bird-books they possessed, Mrs. Risley finally telephoned to me on January 3, and as she mentioned the above points, one after the other, my imagination synthesized them into a picture of a Green-tailed Towhee (*Chlorura chlorura*), a species which I had never seen alive but only in colored portraits that fortunately stuck in my memory. With keen excitement, therefore, I donned overshoes and tramped through slush and drizzle a mile or more to the Risley home; and after a short wait I saw the bird come to the feed scattered below the kitchen window. Visibility was very poor and the bird's colors appeared very dull, but the notes I made were later compared with the description in Ridgway's 'Birds of North and Middle America,' which made the provisional identification positive and seemed to indicate that the bird was an adult female. It later turned out to be a first-year male, for by mid-March it was occasionally singing.

This was a first-ever record for New England! The only other in the Northeast that I can find was in New Jersey, near Overpeck Creek, December 23, 1939, to January 30, 1940, a significantly comparable season. With the Risleys' consent, I telegraphed or wrote to a number of friends, and word of the unprecedented visitor spread far and wide. About a hundred people signed the guest-book that the Risleys opened for them, and many other observers stayed outside the cottage or hunted up the bird in neighboring thickets. It liked a big forsythia where a manure-heap raised the temperature, and rhododendrons, and piles of brush whereof several remained in the vicinity until spring. Constantly I expected it to vanish, but the winter was less severe than usual, and week after week it was reported to me. For fear of scaring it away, the Risleys would not permit trapping and banding, but it was possible for Mrs. Mary S. Shaub to make several close-up photographs of it—proof to future investigators that it really did occur! (See Plate 9.) From January 22 on, its favorite companion was a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), and as it matured its behavior towards this female White-throat became more and more devoted. In April it came but little to the feed but could be found near by, always with the White-throat. On April 15, Mrs. Risley had her last look at it, closely following the White-throat and apparently courting it. We supposed that the White-throat went north that evening with the Green-tail in pursuit, but on April 26 a group from Pittsfield found it moping by itself in the forsythia! What happened next, nobody knows.

One guesses that this youngster on its first migration mistook east for south, and wound up in New England instead of México. The mistake may have no scientific significance, but it provided many New England birders with a happy thrill.—SAMUEL A. ELIOT, JR., *Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.*

**Sutton's Warbler at Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County, Virginia** (Plate 9).—On August 23, 1947, at about 10:00 a. m., Mr. George Sigel and the writer, both of the Washington, D. C., Audubon Society, were birding in a mixed oak-gum-tulip woods on the north side of the Belvoir peninsula, about one air mile south of Mt. Vernon, on the Potomac River. We were watching a flock of mixed warblers moving through the low trees along a woods path. Among the flock of Parula, Black and White, Chestnut-sided, Hooded, and Yellow-throated Warblers was one adult male Golden-winged Warbler in a small gum tree which we were observing at a distance of about 30 feet. Another warbler, which I at first took to be a Parula, flew into the tree with the Golden-winged Warbler. I casually examined it through my 8× glasses and immediately noticed that although the bird's plumage was that of a Parula from the neck down, this bird possessed a white stripe over each eye in addition to a semi-circular white eye ring about the lower half of the eye and, most noticeable of all, had an elongated patch of black running from below the eye to the ear-coverts. There were three or four short black streaks on the sides of the breast, just below the black facial markings, and a light lemon yellow wash on the throat and upper breast.

The warbler was actively engaged in catching insects and quickly disappeared into a near-by oak where it was lost from sight for several minutes. The flock moved slowly through the trees along the path to a point where there was a tiny clearing to the right of the path. It was here I again found the unusual 'Parula Warbler' eating a caterpillar while perched on an oak branch only eight feet above the path and 15 feet from us. For the next ten minutes we both had excellent views of this warbler in many poses and in good light at a distance of 20 to 40 feet as it fed through the outer branches of a tulip tree.

I made a sketch on the spot of its head markings (*see* accompanying sketch) and compared the bird with the colored plate in Peterson's latest field guide, a copy of which we had with us. Our bird differed from Peterson's figure in that the upper part of the head was slate gray rather than black. Our bird looked like a female Parula with a white stripe over each eye, a large elongated black area on the cheeks, several spots of black on the sides of the chest, and the yellow below confined to the chin, throat, and upper breast, fitting perfectly the description and figure by Sutton of the type female Sutton's Warbler in the May-June, 1945, issue of Audubon Magazine.—JACKSON M. ABBOTT, *The Engineer School, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.*

**An albino Chipping Sparrow.**—On June 25, 1947, Mr. Herman F. Lame, of the Westchester Apartments, Washington, D. C., phoned me that he had picked up a small white sparrow on the spacious lawns of the apartment house. Many verbal descriptions of birds seen are unsatisfactory, and this one was not the exception. Nevertheless, my curiosity was aroused and I went to the home of Mr. Lame expecting to see some escaped cage bird. The bird, which he had placed in his roof garden, was one of the Fringillidae, and appeared to be totally albinistic. As we stood watching, a Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) flew down and fed the young bird, thereby establishing the species. Later I had an opportunity to take the bird in the hand and saw, on close examination, that it was an undoubted Chipping Sparrow, and totally albinistic.—MALCOLM DAVIS, *National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C.*