

of specimens taken during the spring migration. These records cover the period from about 1882 until 1911.

On May 19, 1948, on the campus of the University of Maryland, some seven miles from the District of Columbia, the writer procured a male. The bird was singing some four feet from the ground in heavy underbrush and appeared quite tame. In fact, it was more approachable than any other species in the vicinity. Most of the understory in this area was composed of spicebush, *Benzoïn aestivale*, and honeysuckle, *Lonicera* sp., with a macro-flora consisting mainly of sweet gum, red maple and red oak, *Quercus borealis* and *Quercus falcata*.

In the fall, the Connecticut Warbler is regularly seen at Laurel by Bruce Overington, and at Bowie by Robert Stewart and Chandler Robbins. A number are picked up at the base of the Washington Monument. One such specimen was found at the monument on September 30, 1947, by the writer.

One of the latest fall records listed in Miss Cooke's paper is a specimen secured in the region of the District of Columbia by William Palmer, October 24, 1889. Specimens obtained this late or later are certainly exceptions and probably due in some cases to unseasonable weather. It was this sort of unseasonable weather that prevailed in this area during the fall of 1948. November 6, with a temperature of 78° F., was the hottest day for this date in 77 years. The next day, November 7, still an unusually warm day, a male Connecticut Warbler was taken in a heavy growth of blueberries, *Vaccinium* sp., which composed the understory in a forest of scrub pine, *Pinus virginiana*, and oak, *Quercus* sp. This bird was followed at close range for a few minutes and seemed to prefer to remain near the ground in the blueberry bushes, flying up into the lower branches of the oaks when flushed, only to return to the bushes again when left alone.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.*

**Correct Orthography for the Vernacular Name of *Oporornis tolmiei*.**—For many years the common name of the well known western warbler *Oporornis tolmiei* has been incorrectly shown in our A. O. U. Check-list, and likewise, therefore, in our many works on ornithology.

John K. Townsend sent specimens of this bird, taken on his expedition to the Columbia River, to John James Audubon, who at first confused them with the eastern Mourning Warbler and figured them under that name. Townsend later demonstrated the differences to Audubon and supposed that the latter would call the western bird *Sylvia tolmiei*, this being the name that the discoverer proposed. Audubon, however, in volume 5, page 75, of his 'Ornithological Biography,' published in June, 1839, gave it the name "MACGILLIVRAYS WARBLER, *Sylvia Macgillivrayi*," remarking "thinking that I cannot do better than dedicate this pretty little bird to my excellent friend WILLIAM MACGILLIVRAY, Esq., I feel much pleasure in introducing it to the ornithological world, under a name which I trust will endure as long as the species itself." When subsequent writers changed Audubon's capital letters to ordinary type evidently there were no Scotsmen among them since the vernacular name was written "Macgillivray's Warbler," and in this form was introduced into the A. O. U. Check-list in the first edition in 1886. Audubon's hope for perpetuity has been only partly realized, since it was found subsequently that Townsend had published *Sylvia tolmiei* in the 'Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia,' volume 8, page 159, on April 16, 1839, thus antedating Audubon. Thus in the Third Edition of the Check-list in 1910 the scientific name became *Oporornis tolmiei*, though the common name remained unchanged.

The name of the well-known Scottish ornithologist, friend and assistant to Audu-

bon, was William MacGillivray, spelled with a capital G as here printed. Since the name was given in this form in the Twenty-third Supplement to the A. O. U. Checklist in the Auk for July, 1948, page 442, several friends have written me asking about this change in spelling so that it has seemed desirable to publish this note. Those who wish to look further into the matter may consult the interesting 'Life of William MacGillivray' by his namesake William MacGillivray, published in London in 1910. A plate facing page 68 in this work reproduces a hand-written letter from "W. MacGillivray" to Audubon introducing Mr. Bell, under date of 19th June 1834. This signature, in the writer's own hand, is clear, so that there is no uncertainty as to the method of spelling of the name.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington 25, D. C.*

**An English Sparrow Roost.**—While in a hospital at Marshalltown, Iowa, October 7 to 27, 1948, I had opportunity to make observations on a roost of English Sparrows, *Passer domesticus*, in Boston ivy on the walls. No matter how bright the day, the birds began to assemble in the vines at about 4:00 p. m. and by 4:10 every day their varied chatter attracted attention. The first thought that struck me was that the struggle for existence, at least as regards the search for food, could not be very severe or the birds would not give up an hour or more of potential feeding time for the sake of the social, and presumably not so vital, attractions of the roost.

While roosts of crows, swallows, starlings, and blackbirds are formed by birds already in flocks, this assemblage was of a different type. By twos or threes, but more often as singles, the sparrows came and joined in the apparently conversational chorus, meanwhile shifting about for desirable situations. The hubbub continued until dusk, at about 5:30 on clear, or earlier on cloudy, days. In the morning the chattering came quite regularly at 6:10 a. m., and all of the birds dispersed in about half an hour. A point of interest was that, through these three weeks, absolute time, not relative degree of daylight, seemed to rule, as the beginning of both assembling and dispersing was within a 10-minute range, regardless of whether the weather was cloudy or clear. The intensity of light at the "roost-breaking" was only a fraction of that prevailing during the "roost-formation"; hence it could not have been the decisive factor in stimulating both of these activities.

There was no mass movement either to or from the roost, so this gathering did not seem to be a flock phenomenon but rather a result of coincidence in the movements of numerous individuals seeking to satisfy similar wants.—W. L. McATEE, *Chicago, Illinois.*

**Three Unusual Records from Louisiana and Mississippi.**—On December 28, 1948, while driving on a country road about three miles east of Slaughter, East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, I stopped my car and used the familiar "squeak" to bring up any birds in the vicinity. About three minutes after stopping, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, alighted on a blackberry briar about 15 feet away. I collected it; it proved to be a female. I am unable to find any reference to a previous winter record of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, except a sight record reported by George H. Lowery, Jr. (Aud. Field Notes, 48th Christmas Bird Count, 1948: 100). This would, therefore, appear to be the first confirmed winter record of this species in the United States.

Howell in 'Birds of Alabama' (Alabama Dept. Game and Fisheries, 1928: 218) with reference to the Boat-tailed Grackle, *Cassidix mexicanus major*, says: "The boat-tailed grackle is a fairly common resident on the coast, but so far as known does not range into the interior." Oberholser, as well, in 'Bird Life of Louisiana' (Louisiana