

years (Davis, Auk, 54: 43-49, 1937) but more recently at intervals of four, five, and six years (Davis, Auk, 66: 293, 1949). The present note summarizes data for the past 10 years. As in the previous two papers, the Christmas censuses

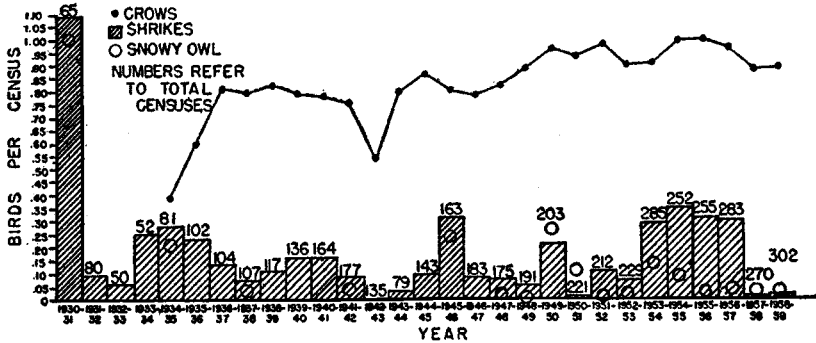


Figure 1. The number of Common Crows, Northern Shrikes and Snowy Owls recorded per Christmas census.

from Audubon Magazine were used for an area bounded by: Quebec, Ontario, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Maryland. The abundance of Snowy Owls (*Nyctea scandiaca*) was determined, and the numbers of Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) are given as a reference. Figure 1 shows the number of shrikes and crows seen per census. An 0 indicates the years when owls appeared up to 1947, but after that date how many were seen per census.

The shrikes and owls appeared in 1950 in great numbers, and both species appeared four years later in 1954. But the shrikes continued to appear through 1957, although the owls decreased. Thus some correlation between the emigrations of the two species occurs, but the shrikes for some reason continued to appear in the three winters from 1955 to 1957. The six intervals between peaks of numbers of owls averaged 3.8 years, while the five intervals for shrikes averaged 4.4 years. Note that owls did not appear either in 1957-1958 or in 1958-1959. It is clear from these data that the two species are not completely dependent upon the same food supply or other cause of emigration.—DAVID E. DAVIS, *Department of Zoology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania.*

A Courtship Display of Scott's Oriole.—Investigations of ecology of vertebrates conducted for Texas A. and M. College on the Texas Game and Fish Commission's Black Gap Wildlife Area from 24 March to 2 April 1958 afforded me an opportunity to observe behavior of Scott's Orioles (*Icterus parisorum*) as they were settling on their breeding grounds. The Black Gap area lies at the eastern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert about 53 miles southeast of Marathon, Brewster County. Singing males were detected first on the morning of 27 March two miles south of the headquarters. Several were seen at widely scattered points on 28 March, including a greenish-yellow male on a census plot at 2,200 feet elevation, two miles east of the headquarters. On that same plot on 1 April I witnessed a male with bright, lemon-yellow plumage vigorously pursuing the first female I had seen that season. The pursuit was terminated when the female perched in the top of a *Yucca torreyi* some nine feet above the sandy floor of a

narrow streamcourse. From a steep slope I watched the male drop to the level creekbed below me and walk away from the female in an exaggerated manner that reminded me of Tinbergen's (1939, Trans. Linnaean Soc. New York, 5, fig. 17) sketch of the display of the Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) male before the newly arrived female. After his single promenade the male flew southward, and then back to the north of the creekbed, singing as though visiting the outposts of his territory. After the male's departure the female flew downstream and inspected some yucca blossoms. Subsequent activity of a pair of orioles (not certainly these individuals) was centered some 200 yards to the north of this site.—
KERTH L. DIXON, *Department of Zoology, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.*

A Record of *Pipilo erythrophthalmus arcticus* in North Carolina.—An additional specimen of the Rufous-sided (Spotted) Towhee, now in the North Carolina State Museum in Raleigh, North Carolina, may further modify the distributional status of this species as now recorded in the A.O.U. Check-list (1957), and amplified by P. A. Buckley's report of New York specimens.

The bird, a male, first visited my Fayetteville feeder on 10 February 1957, and was seen many times each day until I trapped it on 14 February. I called on Mr. Henry Rankin for assistance in properly identifying the bird before banding and releasing it, but it did not survive overnight captivity. The bird was taken to the State Museum for skinning and sent to the United States National Museum for species identification. The following report was sent to Harry T. Davis, Director, North Carolina State Museum.

"Dr. Aldrich examined the towhee specimen and identified it as *Pipilo erythrophthalmus arcticus*, although showing a tendency toward intergradation with *erythrophthalmus*; the back is darker than that of *arcticus* and so approaches that of *erythrophthalmus*. The amount of white in the tail is variable in all races, but in your specimen it approaches that of *erythrophthalmus* more closely than *arcticus*. It has the spotting of the back and wings of the western races, and therefore in general appearance is more like them than the non-spotted eastern races. . . ."
—DORIS C. HAUSER, 309 *Sylvan Road, Fayetteville, North Carolina.*

Song Sparrow Feeds on Dandelion by Unusual Method.—On 19 April 1959, I watched a previously color-banded male Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) foraging along the garden at my home in Norfolk, Virginia. He approached a dandelion plant having three stems, all of which possessed heads with some seeds. Stretching up very high on his legs, he pecked a seed from the lowest head and repeated the action. Then he looked up at the seed head of the highest stem, which he could not have reached without jumping. The sparrow immediately hopped to the base of the plant and placed one foot on the stem about three-quarters of an inch from the ground. The stem was originally at an angle of about 50° from the vertical, and the bird placed his foot on the "top" side of the stem, an action that pushed the stem farther toward the ground in the same direction it had been bent. He then hopped on the stem, which bent to the ground under his weight, and inched his way up the stalk with "side-steps." When reaching the head at the end of the stalk, he ate five or six seeds, then hopped off the stem where he had stood throughout the feeding, and hopped back to the base of the plant. This time he stepped on the stem of the remaining seed head, but suddenly flew off before bending the stem all the way to the ground.

There are many accounts of emberizines jumping to or hovering by food out of reach, and pulling down seed heads with the bill, but I know of none involving a