

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Dates that are not Data.**—Possibly no idiosyncrasy of the collector causes more trouble than the habit of abbreviating dates on labels, for instance 1. 2. 07, or better still, 1 | 2 | 07. Does this mean January 2nd, 1907? In some cases it does; but it may mean February 1st, 1907, and the only way for the unfortunate ornithologist to guess the meaning is to have skins from the same collector having the day higher than twelve, thus 13. 2. 07. Even this is not certainty; for the collector sometimes changes his formula and it requires an expert in plumage cycles to decide which is which.

There are variations to this that once understood are not so confusing; 1. II. 07 means February 1st, 1907, but how about 19. 1-11. 00? This is happily confined to Russian collectors as far as I know and I think should read November 1st, 1900, but whether old style or new style is not for me to say.

Moral: Write the month plainly in letters of ink that fade not, forgetting not the day and year of reckoning.—J. H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Ontario.*

**Destruction of Imperial Woodpeckers.**—Recently there came to my knowledge facts relative to a deplorable slaughter of the Imperial Woodpecker (*Campephilus imperialis*), not so very far south of our border.

Two prospectors (one of whom imparted the information given herewith) were working over a region in west central Chihuahua, some fifty miles west of Terrazas (pueblo), a mountainous and heavily forested country, much frequented by the bird in subject. One of the men had heard somewhere of the rarity of the species, and that it bore a commercial value, but, erroneously, his conception was that the bill was the portion in demand, and not the prepared skin. Working on this idea he shot some seventeen of the magnificent creatures in the course of a few months, and cut off the bills, figuring them at \$25.00 each, until, on reaching civilization again, he was chagrined to find his material utterly worthless.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH, *Benson, Arizona.*



**A Curious Bird Tragedy.**—A male specimen of the Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) which had met death in an unusual manner came into my possession some time ago. It was found by my brother beneath a California live oak after a spell of rainy weather. As the accompanying illustration shows, a portion of an acorn shell was wedged upon the tip of the upper mandible, in such a way that it pressed firmly against the crown. Upon skinning the specimen, severe skull injuries were found, caused by the bird in its endeavor to remove the acorn.

The bird probably forced the acorn upon its bill while digging for insects among the leaves. It was in good condition, proving that death came before starvation could emaciate its body.—CHARLES H. RICHARDSON, JR., *Pasadena, California.*

VARIED THRUSH KILLED BY ACORN WEDGED UPON THE BILL

**A Vermillion Flycatcher in Los Angeles County, California.**—I desire to record the taking

of a Vermillion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubineus mexicanus*), male, at El Monte, California, February 8, 1908. It was taken in the willow-bottom about a mile from that town. The bird was not shy and acted about the same as any other bird of this family.—HOWARD W. WRIGHT, *Pasadena, California.*