

YASBIL
OVAL TO VIBU
BOON

tionally or in an accidental way pecked the pheasant chicks and had discovered that the tender heads were as tasty as maggots.

There were a number of Brewer Blackbirds about the farm, but as near as I could judge the habit was not common in the flock but only in individual blackbirds. The keeper shot several and killing of the pheasants stopped for that season. It is evident, however, from these and Mr. Anthony's observations, that there is a taint of murder in this yellow-eyed black race.—WILLIAM L. FINLEY, *Jennings Lodge, Oregon, June 6, 1923.*

The 'Following' Habit in Hawks and Owls.—Do certain hawks and owls habitually 'follow' moving objects that pass through their hunting grounds? If so, what is the meaning of the habit and who else has observed it? What species practice it? I have become interested in this subject since learning of the two following instances.

1. A Prairie Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia hypogaea*) made a daily practice of 'pursuing' a bird dog when the dog was turned loose for exercise near the golf links of the Albuquerque Country Club. These links are on open mesa country thinly sprinkled with low plants like snakeweed. When the dog first appeared on the owl's range, he would chase the owl for a short distance. When this was over, the owl would chase him for distances up to 150 yards, flying about five feet behind and above him as the dog hunted. This performance occurred almost daily during May, 1923, between 5:30 and 7:30 A. M. It always appeared to be the same bird, no other being known to inhabit the neighborhood.

2. Several years ago a quail hunter asked me why hawks follow an automobile. I told him I had never seen them do so. He then told me that in a certain locality there was a small hawk which persistently followed his automobile whenever he passed through the locality. He thought the hawk was "waiting for him to cripple a quail."

It seems probable that these instances indicate a habit of following moving objects for such 'game' as they may stir up by reason of their movement.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 31, 1923.*

A Comment on the Alleged Occurrence of *Mesophoyx intermedia* in North America.—In the Canadian Field-Naturalist for April, 1923, xxxvii, pp. 64-65, Mr. Francis Kermodé details the history of the mounted specimen of the Plumed Egret, *Mesophoyx intermedia*, in the collection of the Provincial Museum at Victoria, British Columbia, and seeks to establish the authenticity of this specimen as a natural straggler to that province. Before accepting this extraordinary addition to the North American list it will be as well that all the facts bearing on the case are presented, and I regret that Mr. Kermodé has not submitted these himself.

There is no question that the bird is *Mesophoyx intermedia*, an egret of wide distribution in eastern Asia; I believe that it was originally substituted to represent one of the American egrets, and my reasons are as follows: Mr. Kermodé's personal acquaintance with the specimen in question dates from September, 1890, and he submits the evidence of a photograph taken about that time which proves beyond doubt that this identical specimen was in the museum at that time.

In May, 1891, shortly after this photograph was taken by Mr. A. H. Maynard, I made my first visit to Victoria and to the newly established museum. At that time several taxidermist shops in the city had a number of Japanese mounted birds displayed; among these I can vouch for specimens of *Mesophoyx intermedia* in full nuptial plumage. On inquiry I found that these had been procured from a commission house doing business in the city (F. Davidge and Company). A visit to this establishment showed me a large collection of native-made Japanese skins representing a good proportion of the birds of that country, each species wrapped up in bales of ten or a dozen. Among them were several bundles of these Japanese egrets, mostly with full nuptial plumes. At least two of these bundles had been broken up for customers who had purchased the best specimens. Mr. Albert Maynard informed me that these very much compressed skins relaxed readily and could be made up into mounted form without much trouble.