

**Doped Robins.**—Professor Andrew C. Lawson, of the Department of Geology of the University of California, recently aroused my interest by telling me of some “doped” or “inebriated” robins he had learned about when visiting a relative in Montana. Professor Lawson had brought with him samples of the fruits of a bush which the birds were feeding from. These samples he turned over to me, and Professor N. L. Gardner of the Department of Botany of the University identified them as the berries of the *Lonicera tatarica*, or “Tartarian Honeysuckle”, an Asiatic plant widely cultivated in the eastern United States.

At my request Professor Lawson elicited further facts, as follows, which I quote from a letter dated October 12, 1925, from Mr. W. L. Lawson of Billings, Montana.

“We have a 75 foot hedge of common pale pink blossomed honeysuckle, which grows luxuriantly here, and each summer there is a heavy crop of a red, very juicy fruit on the bushes. This fruit has the general appearance of a large red currant, but it is extremely bitter in taste. It makes a beautiful red jelly, but no amount of dilution with other fruit juices eliminates the bitterness sufficiently to make the jelly palatable for human food. This was determined here by Mrs. Lawson by actual experiment on several pints of the honeysuckle fruit.

“When picking the fruit for this experiment my attention was attracted to the robins, dozens of which were in the bushes and on the ground beneath. They were so tame and stupid that I could not help noticing them. . . . If one got within say two feet of two or three of them on the ground they would move just far enough to maintain about that distance. On repeated occasions I saw four and five of the robins lying on the ground in the dirt with wings awry—very much as chickens lie in the dry soil to dust themselves. This was such a curious sight that I called Mrs. Lawson to witness it and she will confirm all I have said. This has been such a common thing with us the past five years that we no longer pay any attention to the robins; but we regret that the stupid condition of the birds makes them unusually easy prey for our cat, who seems to know that she can get one every time she wants it.

“The hedge is between my lot and my neighbors, who also are familiar with the ‘doped’ robins. This summer their new chauffeur, not knowing that I had observed the condition of the robins, told me of finding robins ‘drunk’ and that one afternoon he had picked up three from the bushes and held them in his hand.

“There is no doubt that there is some alkaloid in this fruit that markedly affects the ordinary keenness of the robin and makes it a stupid bird with little ability to protect itself or keep out of danger.”

Here is another case of an entirely new condition, an alien plant figures in this instance, confronting a native animal to the latter’s hazard. Those persons desiring to plant on their premises berry-bearing shrubbery with a view to providing food for birds with the tastes that robins exhibit would do well to enquire pretty carefully as to the real nature of the kinds of plants under consideration.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, December 24, 1925.*

**A Note on the Feeding Habits of Gulls.**—While fishing at Hermosa Beach on December 21 and 22, 1925, I was much interested in watching a number of immature Glaucous-winged Gulls (*Larus glaucescens*) and a few California Gulls (*Larus californicus*) feeding on goose-neck barnacles. They would alight on the water near the pier, and then paddle from one piling to another, pecking at the masses of barnacles and mussels which were attached to them. Through my binoculars I watched these birds seize the barnacles in their bills, and then swim backward, jerking repeatedly until they would break or pull them off. If the barnacles were small enough the birds would quickly swallow them, and those which were too large they would carry off to the beach where they could pick them to pieces. I commented upon the actions of these gulls to a couple of friends who had fished there for a number of years, and they said that they had never seen them do it before this winter.

I have concluded from this observation that for some reason unknown to me the gulls have experienced this winter less successful foraging than usual.—JOSEPH H. WALES, *Pasadena, California, January 16, 1926.*

**Gulls Feeding on Star-fish.**—Mr. Wales’ comments, given above, upon the feeding habits of certain gulls, remind me of similar observations recently made by myself while travelling between San Francisco and Berkeley. Along the Key Route mole,