

mately five miles northwest of Monte Vista. An adult female was collected at the Russell Lakes on August 13, 1950. The skin is in the Wildlife Unit's collections.

Melanerpes erythrocephalus. Red-headed Woodpecker. One female was observed eight miles west of Del Norte, Rio Grande County, on October 10, 1951. Niedrach and Rockwell (*op. cit.*: 103) noted that this species was extending its range westward in the Denver area.

Pyrocephalus rubinus. Vermilion Flycatcher. A female was collected at Pearsall's Trout Hatchery on Spring Creek, eight miles south of Monte Vista, Rio Grande County, May 16, 1950. This species has apparently never before been reported in Colorado. Gale Monson's account of seeing a Vermilion Flycatcher near San Antonio, New Mexico, is the northernmost record known for the Rio Grande Valley (Condor, 48, 1946:238-241).

Seiurus noveboracensis. Northern Water-thrush. An adult was taken on May 16, 1950, at Pearsall's Trout Hatchery. Two birds of this species were noted in the same area the following week. Niedrach and Rockwell (*op. cit.*: 142) considered this species a rare migrant in the Denver area and knew of only four Colorado specimens.

Piranga rubra. Summer Tanager. B. D. Baker noted an immature male approximately four miles east of La Garita, Saguache County, which the writer collected on May 15, 1950. According to records in the Denver Museum of Natural History, this is probably the third Colorado specimen of this species.—RONALD A. RYDER, *San Francisco, California, February 3, 1952.*

Confused Enemy Recognition.—Regarding the phenomenon of enemy recognition by birds (Cross, Auk, 67, 1950:512; Davis, Auk, 67, 1950:518; Rand, Auk, 68, 1951:524-525), certain field observations suggest to me that a bird's reaction may be directed not only against a recognized enemy but against any form which resembles an enemy.

On May 26, 1951, Yellow-headed Blackbirds (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) nesting in an extensive cattail marsh southeast of Fort Collins, Colorado, commenced an excited harangue when a high-flying B-29 airplane passed over the marsh. A week later these same birds in a three-hour period harangued a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*), American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) which crossed above the marsh.

Although none of the objects which excited the blackbirds can typically be considered in an enemy status in this locality, there is a decided resemblance between each of the objects and various hawks, especially the Marsh Hawk, which harass the blackbirds. Since it is not uncommon for ornithologists momentarily to mistake some of the aforementioned objects for birds of prey, it is not surprising that the blackbirds appear to err likewise, particularly when under the stress of defending a nest.—RICHARD G. BEIDLEMAN, *Zoology Department, Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College, Fort Collins, Colorado, March 31, 1952.*

The European Starling in Central British Columbia.—For three years prior to 1948 I saw occasional birds I was sure were European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in the vicinity of Williams Lake, British Columbia. However, it was not until April 30, 1948, that a specimen was taken at 150-Mile House in this area. A few weeks later, near the same place, a female starling was seen carrying grasshoppers into an abandoned woodpecker's nest cavity about 30 feet from the ground. It is not known whether the young were raised successfully. Since then I have taken an adult female at Williams Lake on November 26, 1948, another specimen at Williams Lake on April 26, 1951, and a third at Kleena Kleene, 200 miles west of Williams Lake, on October 21, 1951.

A second breeding record was noted in the summer of 1951 when a pair of starlings nested near the Williams Lake stockyards. These constitute the first establishment of the species in British Columbia.—L. JOBIN, *Williams Lake, British Columbia, April 15, 1952.*

Golden Eagle versus Red Fox: Predation or Play?—In a paper on mammals of the Brooks Range, Alaska, Rausch (*Arctic*, 4, 1951:147-195) records two instances of attacks made on red foxes by Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Dixon (*Jour. Mamm.*, 14, 1933:257) recorded attacks by an adult eagle on a red and a cross fox in Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska. Adolph Murie (*The Wolves of Mount McKinley, National Park Service Fauna Series*, 5, 1944:217-218) records several instances of eagles swooping on foxes.

On June 14, 1948, I witnessed an encounter between an immature Golden Eagle and a red fox. I was flying in a Piper Super-Cruiser plane near the mouth of the Colville River, on the arctic coast of Alaska. The pilot first saw the fox and took it to be a wolf. Shooting wolves from small planes, for bounty, is the favorite pastime of Alaskan bush pilots, so he swung the plane around and dove toward the fox. We flew about fifty yards to one side and fifty feet above the running fox, and suddenly an eagle, which we had not seen previously, stooped close to the fox. No blow was seen. As we pulled up and circled, the eagle stooped again and apparently struck, for the fox was knocked over backward into a shallow pond of melting snow water. It may be that the fox fell over backward, for he had arisen on his hind legs in an apparent attempt to snap at the eagle.

As we came around the third time, we saw the eagle sitting on the ground some distance away. The fox was coming at him on a dead run, and the eagle turned to face the fox. At the last possible moment the eagle took off directly over the fox's head. This seemed to end the encounter, as the eagle continued to soar and the fox kept on running.

I do not believe that this was attempted predation on the part of either eagle or fox. There were thousands of Black Brant (*Branta nigricans*), ducks of several species, including Old-squaw (*Clangula hyemalis*), eiders (*Somateria* sp.), Pintail (*Anas acuta*), and others in the vicinity. On land, Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*) were evident, and the holes of ground squirrels (*Citellus parryi*) were common in the sandy river banks. There was, in short, no lack of available food for either species.

Rausch (personal communication) believed the two cases mentioned by him (*op. cit.*: 171) were attempted predation. Dixon (*loc. cit.*) does not say whether or not he thought the instance he recorded was attempted predation, but the tone of his remarks conveys this impression. Seton (*Lives of Game Animals*, New York, 1, 1937:506, 539) says that foxes guard against eagles by staying in brush. Eagles take pups from the open near mouths of dens, but even this rarely, because the mother watches too closely. Very rarely is an old fox taken by an eagle, but one such occurrence at Estevan, Saskatchewan, is cited (W. M., *Forest and Stream*, Feb. 8, 1896:114). A. Murie (*op. cit.*: 217) says that eagles swoop at foxes just as they do at other mammals, including grizzlies. He also cites an instance of an eagle-wolf encounter: "About a dozen times the eagle swooped, barely avoiding the wolf which each time jumped into the air and snapped at it. The eagle turned upward at the right moment to avoid the leap, and apparently was enjoying the game." His examination of 632 eagle pellets disclosed no fox remains, and he believes that instances of fox capture by eagles are exceptional. The chief food of the eagle is the ground squirrel, a most abundant mammal. Eagles take very small numbers of caribou calves (p. 162) and mountain sheep lambs (p. 99), while the bulk of the food is largely composed of marmot, mice, ptarmigan, and small birds, in addition to ground squirrels (pp. 225-229).

Olaus Murie (*Condor*, 42, 1940:198-202) found blue fox remains only once out of 399 items in 28 nests of the Bald Eagle on the Aleutian Islands. This was a fox pup, and may well have been carrion. Even so, this represents only 0.3 per cent of the eagle food items. He concludes that Bald Eagles are not a serious menace to the blue fox population, as has been alleged.

In short, it appears that cases of actual predation by eagles on foxes must be extremely rare. It is possible that the cases cited above are actually attempted predation. The fact that the encounter I witnessed occurred within view of more easily obtainable food for each participant tends to disprove this, as do Adolph Murie's statements.

Another possibility is that these encounters are a sort of dominance expression between two large and vigorous species. However, it seems likely that these apparent attacks, or some large proportion of them, are entered into in a spirit of play by the eagle, and probably also by the fox.—RAYMOND J. HOCK, *Arctic Health Research Center, Anchorage, Alaska, March 29, 1952.*

An Early Specimen of the Eastern Fox Sparrow from Colorado.—In 1918 (*Auk*, 35:236), the writer reported what was then believed to be the first record of the eastern race of the Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca iliaca*) in Colorado. The specimen was collected in the Clear Creek valley, six miles west of Denver, on November 1, 1916, by Robert J. Niedrach. It is preserved in the Denver Museum of Natural History.

Recently, while studying Fox Sparrows in the United States National Museum, a Colorado specimen of this race was discovered that antedates the Clear Creek bird by more than 30 years. It was taken at Denver in December, 1884 (exact date not given; U.S.N.M. no. 125,312). The specimen was