

arrival of some few species and an unusually late appearance for others—there was no reason for predicting what has happened in May. April was also nearly normal up to the last week. But beginning with the last week of April and continuing until almost the closing days of May there was almost continual cold weather, with frosts or near-frosts, and no period of warm weather of sufficient duration or of wide enough extent to permit the smaller birds to move in safety.

How widespread this condition was over the interior of the country remains to be learned. It extended at least into central Iowa.

The most distressing thing about the period of cold was the great destruction of Purple Martins and swallows during the first two weeks of May, and the death by starvation of large numbers of the other small insectivorous birds during the last two weeks. Practically all of the first wave of martins died of starvation in and about their nesting houses, here in Oberlin, and many of the second wave likewise starved. It may be that some few individuals retreated southward and returned when the weather moderated, but that was not determined. There were three distinct waves of martins: the first during the first week of April, the second about the first of May, and the last about May 20. Something of the same thing happened with the swallows.

There was no migration, in the proper sense, of warblers and other small birds until May 18, when for three days they came in numbers, then there was a return of cold and wet weather, which held them until the last day of May. How much longer some will stay remains to be learned.

LYNDS JONES.

#### TUFTED TITMOUSE AT IOWA CITY.

(*Baeolophus bicolor*.)

It is interesting to observe the apparent increase in numbers of this species in and near Iowa City and the fact seems worthy of mention at this time.

Anderson, in his "Birds of Iowa" (1907), indicates the Tufted Titmouse as "a rather rare resident in southern Iowa, seldom reaching the northern part of the state, although it has been occasionally taken in the extreme southern counties of Minnesota." The increase in the number of individuals locally, not only in town but in the surrounding country as well, has been quite marked in recent years and one can not go on a field without encountering at least three or four and hearing the loud, clear whistle of perhaps several others. They are quite tame and unsuspecting and I have approached to within a few feet of them on many occasions. The

species seems to be a permanent resident in this (Johnson) county. A number of persons living near the edge of town have reported its presence at feeding stations during the past winter.

DAYTON STONER.

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#### CITY NESTING OF NIGHTHAWK.

In the September Bulletin Mr. N. B. Townsend calls attention to a matter that may be worth discussion.

He theorizes that the adoption of flat roofs as a nesting ground by the nighthawk is a change that is favorable to the bird, and this attitude interests me considerably, because I had formed the contrary opinion from a consideration of the comparative abundance of nighthawks during the last thirty years.

At the beginning of that period the nighthawk was a common summer resident in this district, but since then it has decreased steadily as the bird took up its abode in the city; and it has always seemed to me that immigration was the only thing that kept up the city population, and now that the bird is very rare in the country, with the probability of no further movement citywards, the city residents are becoming much less numerous.

It may easily be, as Mr. Townsend says, that the nighthawk nesting on a roof is safe from all predatory creatures, but what of the young after the first flight? Repeatedly I have had young nighthawks brought to me, both living and dead, which had been picked up on the ground in the morning, doubtless after making their first flight during the previous night and coming down to spend the day on the ground in accordance with what might easily be supposed to be the hereditary custom. But what chance of survival is there for a young nighthawk on a city street or vacant lot? And it is because of the overwhelming dangers of the ground in the city that these birds have been so seriously depleted in numbers.

Yours truly,

W. E. SAUNDERS.

London, Ontario.

#### SPARROW HAWK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, Urbana, Ill.

On January 27, 1917, while taking an examination in the Stock Pavilion I was attracted by a shower of small feathers which were falling into the arena. I traced the stream of feathers to its source and there, on a steel girder, near the roof, sat a sparrow hawk steadily plucking an English sparrow.

The Stock Pavilion is a large building, with a tan-bark arena in