

landing on the opposite side of the trunk from me. He crawled around the trunk in plain view and stopped when only a foot from my head. For about five seconds he gazed at me (and I at him). He evidently did not like my looks, for he flew into the upper branches of the same tree, renewing his diligent search as unconcerned as before.

"A Brown Thrasher has wintered with us. This is rather unusual—in fact, my first winter record. I was looking through Bird-Lore's census to see if any Thrashers had been observed in our latitude and was surprised to find only one (Monticello, Illinois). I was amazed not to find any in the southern states until Georgia was reached, where two observers each saw one. In Alabama two observers saw four, and in Florida one observer saw one. Now the Brown Thrasher is one of our commonest birds. Where do they winter? Probably in the dense underbrush in unfrequented districts. Or do they leave the United States? My Thrasher friend now wears a band. He was captured in less than an hour after the trap was set, on December 1, 1923. By the way, Thrashers and also Fox Sparrows are fond of soda crackers. Cat-birds also relish them. I generally take a cracker with me in the morning on my way to the train and crumble it for Mr. Thrasher at a certain spot. He may be nowhere in sight at the time, but before I know it he comes hopping through the underbrush and feeds while I stand in full view, a dozen feet away. It is amusing to watch him hammer a large piece into smaller bits, as a Nuthatch or Titmouse pecks away at a tempting morsel placed in a crevice in a tree trunk."

February 6, 1924

STARLINGS ABUNDANT AT NASHVILLE, TENN.

The western and southward spread of the Starling (*sturnus vulgaris*) has been watched with interest and the following note, from the frontier of its invasion, should be of interest. In one of our large cemeteries, in Nashville, there are several acres of magnolia trees and coniferous evergreens to which each winter immense numbers of the blackbird family congregate at nightfall for roosting purposes. It had been several years since I had closely observed these roosting birds when, last December, it occurred to me that a trip would probably show some Starlings present. On the evening of December 8th I stationed myself in the grove and began to observe the incoming birds. It was almost immediately apparent that the looked for birds were present in considerable numbers among the great throng of Grackles and Cowbirds. As I became accustomed to the physical structure and flight of the Starlings I was in a few minutes able to pick them out from the others at a glance even though at that hour colors were not perceptible.

After a number of piecemeal counts, based on past experience, I estimated the population of the roost that night as 300,000 Grackles, 150,000 Robins, 100,000 Cowbirds and 60,000 Starlings. The Robins, for the most part, used evergreens on the outskirts of the main roost, many of them using low bushy conifers, 5 to 10 feet high. The flight of the Starling, about the roosts, is strikingly like that of the Purple Martin,

while, at rest, its short tail, long bill and, if the light is sufficient, its' silvery plumage, make it easy to single out. Wishing specimens for my collection I secured a permit and, in company with Dr. Geo. R. Mayfield, returned a few evenings later. My first four shots brought down four Starlings after which I secured half a dozen Grackles to determine if any were the Purple variety. As expected, they ail proved to be Bronzed Grackles (*Q. g. aeneus*). The birds remained in large numbers until the middle of January, when, fearing damage to the trees, the cemetery superintendent had them "shot out" for several evenings whereupon they left and have not returned. The Robins were not bombarded but took the hint and left also.

Starlings were first recorded at Nashville on December 9, 1921, by Mr. Harry Monk who, observing another Grackle roost, identified the species and estimated 300 present. On December 17th he estimated 500 and on December 23rd 1000. The following day one of the birds was found dead under the roost and was presented to A. C. Webb who in turn gave it to me. A year later Mr. Monk observed Starlings at this roost all through January, the last seen was February 18th when two were noted.

The only published record I have found for Tennessee appears in Bird Lore, Vol. 24, p. 94, in which Mr. Bruce P. Tyler records it on December 12th, 1921, near Bluff City, in the eastern part of the state. The Starling has been reported several times from Montgomery, Ala., and as far south as Baton Rouge, La.

It is likely that a more than casual inspection of the various black-bird roosts throughout the south, will show them a regular and common winter resident throughout this area.

ALBERT F. GANIER.

Nashville, Tenn., March 1, 1924.

MEADOWLARKS

(*Sturnella magna*)

WITH OBSERVATIONS ON SEVERAL OTHER SPECIES

On the morning of October 18, 1923, not having had an opportunity for several days, to make observations, I took a walk of several miles along the tracks of the C. R. I. & P. Ry. to see what progress had been made in the fall migration.

The Railway Company had neglected to mow their right of way. This is an advantage to our winter birds as it affords them more food in the form of seeds and more cover in which to hide. There are also a number of insects that hibernate among these weeds and others which deposit their eggs here to await the coming of spring, when the warm sun hatches them out. All these furnish most welcome tid-bits for the birds.

As I walked along I observed the Slate Colored Junco in considerable numbers; also some Tree Sparrows. The latter had just come from the north and were not yet present in full force. I also observed a few Song Sparrows and a fairly good number of the sprightly and very busy little Black Capped Chick-a-dees. A number of Downy Woodpeckers