

GENERAL NOTES

Conducted by M. H. Swenk

Nesting of the Florida Red-winged Blackbird.—The height of the nesting season of the Florida Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus*) in this locality (Bradenton) seems to be between the dates of April 15 and 25, as I have found the most nests containing eggs between the above given dates. The birds nest in small bushes, close to water, at heights ranging from two to six feet above ground; generally in communities. Their nest is a woven structure of grasses and rushes and is partially suspended from the rim. In all the nests examined by me I have never found any containing over three eggs, while several contained only two eggs. They vary considerably in size and markings.—C. K. LLOYD, *Bradenton, Fla.*

The Lark Bunting in Iowa.—On Sunday, June 5, 1927, Mrs. Darling and I were driving north in the Little Sioux Valley on the main graveled highway between Oto and Anthon. About three miles south of Anthon we turned east and crossed the railway track and within a few rods of the crossing came upon a Lark Bunting sitting on a fence post beside the road. Mrs. Darling saw the bird first. I stopped the car as soon as possible and found that we had a clear front view of the bird, showing its black body and heavy gray bill. When I stepped out of the car the bird flew to a fence post a few rods away where it showed clearly its white wing markings. I followed it and obtained a good close-up view until it flew again and alighted on the ground, where I had still another good view of it. I have seen numerous Lark Buntings in South Dakota, but never saw one before in Iowa.—A. B. DARLING, *Sioux City, Iowa.*

The Great Blue Heron in Tuscarawas County, Ohio.—On June 13, 1921, we found two pairs of the Great Blue Heron nesting in Tuscarawas County. A storm a few days previously had broken a limb on which one nest was anchored, and we found three dead young herons and the nest eighty feet below. The tree was a large White Oak that had been killed by lightning several years previously, and stood near the top of a ridge. By climbing a tree about one hundred feet from the nest tree, we were able to get a focus on the nest and one of the old birds. The four young had settled down in the nest and did not show on the print. These two pairs are no doubt the remnant of a large colony that nested about three miles north of the location of these nests, in the Stillwater Valley. Their nesting site was destroyed by lumbering about twenty years ago, and they then moved over to the Laurel Valley where their nesting site was again destroyed twelve years later. On another visit, on May 5, 1922, we noted five old birds in the vicinity, and they had built another nest on a lower limb. We visited the tree again in April, 1923, and found that a storm had blown the tree down and no birds were to be seen in the neighborhood.—CHARLES R. WALLACE, *Delaware, Ohio.*

Loon Banded in Pennsylvania Killed in Ontario.—On May 12, 1926, Mr. J. S. Reinert of Lansdale, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, forwarded to this office a live and healthy Loon (*Gavia immer immer*). After photographing, sketching, and banding this bird, we liberated it on May 15, at Wildwood Lake, Harrisburg. It swam to deep water, dived several times, and later in the evening flew to the nearby Susquehanna River.

In a letter from Mr. George E. Donkin of Toronto, dated August 1, 1927, we received interesting information concerning this Loon. Mr. Donkin writes: "On Sunday, July 31, while walking on the beach at Brighton, Ontario, I found a Loon with a leg band of your Commission, No. 9684. The bird had evidently just arrived or was sleeping and had been killed by a skunk, as the approach and attack were all clearly indicated in the sand. Likely after a long flight it was exhausted. I am taking the liberty of keeping the clip as a novelty."

Thus had this Loon wandered for fifteen months after its liberation in Pennsylvania. It had likely visited the Gulf of Mexico during this period.—GEORGE MIKSCH SUTTON, *Game Commission, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Ruffed Grouse Captured by a Screech Owl.—It is not often that the Screech Owl (*Otus asio asio*) attempts to capture prey larger than itself. An instance of the killing of a Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus umbellus*) by this small owl has been brought to my attention recently, however. At about midnight on December 20, 1924, Mr. George Ryder, of LeRoy, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, captured a Screech Owl in a steel trap which he had set earlier in the evening on the body of a grouse which he had just found freshly killed, and from which he had frightened what he recognized as a small owl of some kind. Examination of the snow about the body of the grouse showed that no quadruped had caught the bird. Furthermore, the Screech Owl's stomach, which was examined at the writer's office, contained much of the head and neck of the grouse, as well as several sumac seeds, portions of rose-hips, and tiny twigs with buds attached, which must have been swallowed with the gizzard of the grouse. The owl was caught by both feet only a few minutes after the setting of the trap, so it is fair to assume that the eating had been done prior to the setting of the trap, probably just after the owl had killed its prey. There is a bare possibility that the grouse had killed itself by flying into a tree. It is not likely that this could have been the case, however, unless the grouse was frantically trying to escape capture. Uneaten portions of the body of the grouse, which were also carefully examined, indicated such health of body tissue that the bird could hardly have died of disease.—GEORGE MIKSCH SUTTON, *Game Commission, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Birds Enjoy Bathing During the Winter Months.—Last winter I made the discovery that the Blue Jays enjoy their bath during the cold weather as much as during the warm days of summer. Instead of storing my bird-bath, I left it out all winter, keeping it filled with fresh water twice daily. The jays, as well as two blackbirds and dozens of sparrows, enjoyed the bath all winter, even on days when it was 8 or 10 degrees above zero. If the cake of ice was not removed from the bath by 11 A. M., the jays sat in a tree above the fountain, and called until I appeared with the tea-kettle to thaw the ice and refill the bath. They sat quietly, watching my movements; when I had finished and started toward the house, they flew down immediately to make their ablutions. One jay in particular, seemingly could never get enough of the water. I have seen him immerse sixteen times in rapid succession, before he would fly into the tree to preen himself. Often they would return in the afternoon. I always knew when to refill the bath, by their loud, raucous cries. Sometimes it was amusing to see them stand on the cake of ice or edge of the bowl, attempting to take a dip; if the water was only partly frozen they would hop in, but as quickly hop out, as much