

**An Old Record of a Chimney Swift Roost.**—An interesting description of a Chimney Swift roost in a hollow sycamore near Marietta, Ohio, is contained on page 180 of T. H. Harris' "Journal of a Tour into the Territory Northwest of the Allegheny Mountains; Made in the Spring of the Year 1803". Boston (1805). It reads as follows:

"In connexion with this I may mention a large collection of feathers, found within a hollow tree, which I examined with the Rev. Mr. Story, May 18, 1803. It is in the upper part of Waterford, about two miles distant from the Muskingum. A very large sycamore, which, through age, had decayed and fallen down, contained in its hollow trunk, five and a half feet in diameter and for nearly fifteen feet upwards, a mass of decayed feathers, with a small admixture of brownish dust and the exuvies of various insects. The feathers were so rotten that it was impossible to determine to what kind of birds they belonged. They were less than those of the pigeon; and the largest of them were like the pinion and tail feathers of the swallow.

"I examined carefully this astonishing collection, in the hope of finding the bones and bills, but could not distinguish any. \* \* \*

"One circumstance which makes me suppose these the plumage of one vast flock of birds which took up winter quarters in this tree, and perished there; and not the moultings of annual visitors, is, that the feathers at the top were as much decayed as those at the bottom. As the trunk had split in falling down, I was able to examine the whole mass and found it of uniform appearance throughout. We judged that there were enough to have filled two waggons."

The above antedates the publication of Audubon's somewhat similar account by about thirty years.—A. W. SCHORGER, *Madison, Wis.*

**Great Blue Heron Using Its Beak as a Spear.**—This behavior, mentioned by the writer in a note on the bird life of southern Iowa, (*WILSON BULLETIN*, March, 1936) has been questioned by William P. Hainsworth (*ibid.*, June, 1936). Once in the Green Bay region of Iowa, the writer observed a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) spearing a fish. Securing the fish he found a single hole through it, indicating that the mandibles were closed at the time of the strike. Again in the Ozark Mountains, he saw a bird of the same species spear a fish which was estimated to weigh one pound. While making a photographic study of herons at Reelfoot Lake in northwestern Tennessee, he once more observed such a spearing. He also made note of immature herons striking at the object of their anger with open and also with closed beak.

The writer has seen the American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) in the act of spearing food. The New Natural History states: "In the bittern's stomach may be found mollusks, crayfish, frogs, lizards, small snakes and fishes as well as insects. Such prey is captured with great address, by spearing, as the bird wades or walks stealthily along." Dr. Frank M. Chapman states (letter to present writer, August 27, 1936): "I have submitted your letter of August 23rd to the members of the ornithological staff of the American Museum of Natural History. It appears that there are on record two instances of a Great Blue Heron striking a dog in the eye in which only one hole was made and the bill apparently, therefore, was closed. In regard to the striking of fish the evidence advanced indicated that both methods of striking were used; possibly with larger fish the bill was closed and the fish was struck, but with smaller ones the bill