

There are no extensive marshes in this part of the Ozarks, but the streams are subject to floods and frequently change their courses, leaving temporary and local overflow marshes in one of which a nest-site may have been found.

Word of this unusual occurrence was not received until November, when it was impossible for the writer to make the 225-mile trip to investigate it. Consequently no search for the abandoned nest was undertaken, and under the circumstances it is entirely unlikely that the birds will return next year. Meanwhile the known facts constitute a valuable record, and one can only be thankful that these birds escaped the perennial warfare of state fish hatchery employees against fish-eating birds.—RUDOLF BENNETT, *Professor of Zoology, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.*

**The English Sparrow and Highway Mortality.**—On an automobile journey from Albany, New York, to Iowa City, Iowa, and return, August 28-31 and September 7-10, 1937, a round-trip distance of 2117 miles, the writers again tabulated the vertebrate casualties on the highways due to passing motor cars. The data here presented pertain only to our observations on highway mortality with reference to birds in general and the English Sparrow in particular.

On the entire trip we identified a total of 613 English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) carcasses on the highways, an average of .289 casualties per mile for this species. For each state or province in which we traveled the recorded number of English Sparrow casualties ranged as follows: Iowa, 55 for 117 miles; Michigan, 110 for 309 miles; Illinois, 125 for 359 miles; Ontario, 170 for 521 miles; Indiana, 57 for 205 miles; New York, 96 for 606 miles.

In addition to the 613 English Sparrows, we recorded the freshly killed carcasses of 22 native birds representing 13 species, 76 domestic fowls, 1 Ring-necked Pheasant, 1 domestic pigeon, and 277 undetermined birds. It is our opinion that a large proportion of the latter were really English Sparrows. For each state or province in which we traveled the number of avian casualties ranged as follows: Iowa, 79; Indiana, 80; New York, 148; Michigan, 154; Illinois, 216; Ontario, 312.

The total number of avian highway casualties recorded was then, 989, an average of .467 per mile. For the five states and the single Canadian province the average avian casualty rate per mile was: Iowa, .675; Illinois, .601; Ontario, .598; Michigan, .498; Indiana, .390; New York, .244.

Several reasonable conclusions may be drawn from these earlier observations presented by the senior writer (WILSON BULLETIN, XLVIII, 1936, 276-283) on this subject.

1. In spite of the apparently excessive highway mortality rate among English Sparrows, at least in the territory covered by our records, their actual number of casualties here recorded exceeds by more than five times those cited by us for this bird on any previous trip through practically the same region. Our figures show an average of one dead sparrow for each 3.4 miles traveled on this trip.

2. So far as the section of the country traversed on this journey as well as on our previously recorded ones is concerned, our counts of highway casualties indicate that the greatest density of English Sparrow population lies in the agricultural sections of the Mid-west and southern Ontario. Of the five states and the single Canadian province mentioned in the present account, New York State ranks last in English Sparrow population on the basis of highway mortality counts.

3. Our observations lead us to believe that the heaviest highway toll among English Sparrows is taken not from the individuals feeding on or near the roads

but from the young and more or less inexperienced birds that fly *across* the thoroughfares. Becoming bewildered by the heavy two-way traffic, they often decelerate their flight speed to avoid a car approaching from one direction and are struck by a car speeding in the opposite direction.

4. The greater number of cars now on the highways together with the increased speed at which they are driven is responsible for an ever-ascending rate of avian mortality. The figures cited herein are much higher than we have obtained previously for this particular route or for any other extended motor trip. Our figures show an average of one dead bird for each 2.1 miles traveled on this trip.

5. It is obvious that the highway mortality rate among birds as well as other animals varies seasonally, indeed, probably from day to day. The large number of avian casualties here recorded no doubt was due, in some measure at least, to the heavy traffic associated with the Labor Day (September 6) holiday activities.—DAYTON STONER, *New York State Museum, Albany, N. Y.*, and LILLIAN C. STONER, *Albany, N. Y.*

**Records of the Woodcock in Iowa.**—On November 18, 1937, I found a pair of American Woodcocks on Glover's Creek, near West Union, in Fayette County. And on November 19, 1937, several Woodcocks were noted on the Cramer farm near the Volga River seven miles southwest of Elkader, in Clayton County. Mr. Cramer told me on that date that he had counted as high as twenty Woodcocks along this spring branch near his house.—W. W. AITKEN, *Iowa Conservation Commission, Des Moines, Iowa.*

**Interrupted Egg-laying of a Marsh Hawk.**—On May 12, 1929, in Jerusalem, Lucas County, Ohio, I found a typical nest of a Marsh Hawk (*Circus hudsonicus*) containing four eggs. I marked the spot and on returning on June 29 found two young almost able to fly skulking in the grass at the side of the nest. These I banded. In the nest were two eggs, and supposing them to be added, I idly broke one with a stick. Much to my surprise it contained a large embryo indicating that it would have hatched within a few days. The other egg I left untouched but was unable to return again to the nest.—LOUIS W. CAMPBELL, *Toledo, Ohio.*

**Four Ohio Records of Golden Eagle.**—The rarity of the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) in this section is of enough interest to record the following occurrences. Two were caught in Highland County in December, 1934, one in November, 1937, and one in Adams County in November, 1937. The first, with a wing spread of more than seven feet, was captured on the Herbert Shaffer farm near Lynchburg by Albert Chaney. It was caught by the toes in a trap set for a hawk and six inches away in another trap was a Marsh Hawk (*Circus hudsonius*). The second bird, caught by Bob West on his farm, had an injured leg and a wing spread of eight feet. The third eagle was caught by Bert Campbell along the side of the road on Blue Creek in the southern part of Adams County. Its wing spread was six feet and six inches. The fourth was captured by Mrs. Maude Matthews at Butler Springs. She surprised it in a chicken raid and wounded it with a shotgun. Its wing spread was seventy-six inches. It is illegal to kill the Golden Eagle in Ohio and the four birds were turned over to the proper authorities.—KATIE M. ROADS, *Hillsboro, Ohio.*