

## GENERAL NOTES

**Cooper's Hawk Takes Crippled Coot.**—On January 15, 1942, I was traveling through the Atchafalaya River Swamp in south-central Louisiana with Conservation Agents Levert Bird and Charles Olana. The purpose of the trip was to collect a few birds that occur in the interior of the southern swamps for the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at the Pennsylvania State College.

While we were crossing Lake Natchez in Iberville Parish, a flock of Coots (*Fulica americana*) flew past the boat, and I attempted to collect two of them. The first fell dead in the water not far away, and the second began to topple and fall, badly crippled. When the Coot was thirty or forty feet from the water and about fifty yards from the edge of the lake, a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*) dashed from its perch in the cypress-tupelo swamp on the lake shore, seized the crippled Coot, and returned to the woods with its prey.

All this happened so quickly that we could not realize for a few seconds what had taken place. By that time, all that could be seen of the potential museum skin was an occasional feather floating down to the surface of the lake.—RUSSELL T. NORRIS, *Preston Laboratory, Box 847, Butler, Pennsylvania.*

**Purple Sandpiper in Indiana.**—At about 9 A.M. on December 13, 1941, while unsuccessfully hunting ducks on Lake Wawasee, near Syracuse, Indiana, I saw a Purple Sandpiper (*Arquatella maritima*). No glasses were available, but I observed the bird at my leisure at a distance of about 20 feet. The characteristics observed at the time include: a dark sandpiper with body about as large as a Killdeer, but with shorter tail; bill of moderate length, straight or very slightly decurved; light eye-ring; dark breast and flanks, but light belly; and a definite slate-blue cast to the feathers of the back. In flight, the dark central tail-feathers contrasting with lighter ones on the sides, the dark rump, and the light bar across the wings, were noticed. A sharp drop in temperature during the preceding night had covered most of the shoreward parts of the lake with ice, and frozen the adjacent beaches. But east from Vawter's Park to the point, on the south shore of the lake, there were several hundred feet of open water near shore, and it was on the adjacent beach that the bird was feeding. Though a new bird to me, there seems no doubt of the identification, which I checked a few hours later with Peterson's "Field Guide." It may be observed that almost any sandpiper, at that time of year, would be a noteworthy find. According to Mr. Palmer D. Skaar of Indianapolis, this is the first record of the Purple Sandpiper for Indiana.—W. E. RICKER, *Department of Zoology, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.*

**Flickers Dusting.**—I have seen Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) of both sexes take dust baths in the beds of flower gardens in suburban Baltimore. A female, already so engaged when first noticed, leaned forward on her breast with ruffled plumage and squirmed from side to side during the few moments more that her dusting lasted. A male squatted in a depression about a foot across and, with plumage expanded, dragged himself about on his belly, clearly by the use of his feet. Several times he dipped forward and dusted his breast, and he also rubbed both cheeks in the shallow dust. His bath lasted some seconds. The dates were, respectively, May 19, 1941, and August 1, 1942.—HERVEY BRACKBILL, *3201 Carlisle Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.*

**Slow Recovery of Ohio Phoebes from the 1940 Storm.**—During the early part of 1940 severe storms struck the southeastern states from Texas to Florida. At that time much was written concerning the loss of life of several species of birds but little was reported about the Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*).

In the Toledo area it became apparent in the following spring that Phoebes were greatly reduced in numbers. Whereas in 1939 as many as 20 individuals were seen on a four-hour trip during migration time, in 1940 the maximum was one. This condition continued throughout the breeding season; in fact, I saw but three Phoebes during the entire year.

Having heard much of the rapid recovery made by birds after disasters, I watched this species closely. During 1941 and 1942, however, the increase was very slight, as the following tabulation indicates (the trips were made during the period when the species was present in the Toledo area):

Year	Phoebes seen	Trips made	Phoebes per field trip
1934	115	64	1.8
1935	114	63	1.8
1936	90	60	1.5
1937	87	59	1.5
1938	55	46	1.2
1939	57	48	1.2
1940	3	26	0.1
1941	7	30	0.2
1942	7	34	0.2

The gradual reduction in birds per trip from 1934 to 1939 is probably due to the fact that I became progressively more interested in water birds, and more trips were made to marshes and mud-flats in those years.

Breeding birds were reduced correspondingly. Normally an observer could expect to list a few nesting Phoebes on every field trip into suitable territory. My records show a maximum of six in the course of an afternoon's hike. During 1940 and 1941 I did not encounter a single breeding Phoebe. Inquiries made of other local observers resulted in the following compilation of supposedly nesting Phoebes in Lucas County: 1940 (6); 1941 (7); 1942 (7).

If this condition is widespread, this species must have suffered far greater storm losses than early reports indicated.—LOUIS W. CAMPBELL, 4531 Walker Avenue, Toledo, Ohio.

**A Technique for Confining Nestling Crows in Food-Habit Studies.**—The Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos*) and its relations to other animals and to agriculture constitute an important part of a farm-game research program in progress at the Rose Lake Wildlife Experiment Station in Clinton County, Michigan. To obtain specimens of the food brought to nestling Crows by the adults, the following technique was evolved.

A number of the Crow nests on the Experiment Station area were found in the spring, and four nests with young were selected for the study. When the nestlings were three to four weeks old they were removed from their nests and confined in cages made from nail kegs. The solid top and bottom of each keg were removed, and the keg sawn in two, crosswise, to make two cages. Each cage was covered on the top with 2-inch mesh chicken wire, and on the bottom with one-inch mesh fox netting. The larger mesh top permitted the confined birds to stick their heads through the openings, to be fed by the adults. The smaller mesh bottom seemed to afford the nestlings a comfortable perch, but did not hinder the food items and droppings from falling through to the ground. Each cage was wired to the base of a tree near the nest at a convenient height. I found that one of the cages less than three feet high was vulnerable to depredation. The birds in this cage were killed and pulled partly through the mesh bottom of the cage