

near Ruthven, Iowa, July 16, 1939, I found a dead Coot of between six and seven weeks of age suspended by the neck on a piece of reed grass (*Phragmites communis*). The lower one-third of the Coot's body was in the water. Just above and back of the bird was a large platform nest about 24 to 30 inches above the water, built by piling stalks on the base of a smashed clump of reed grass. The bird, using this as a roosting platform, had undoubtedly in jumping off the nest become snared in the loop of reed grass.

Another unusual cause of death among Coots was observed several times during the course of waterfowl investigations in Iowa marshes. On two occasions during the summer of 1939, and once during 1940, I came across Coots hanging from a barbed wire fence which crossed the marshland in Clay County known as Barringer's Slough. Upon closer examination I found that two of these birds had apparently hit the barbs on the wire, which were pointing upward at about 45 degree angles. The barbs tore into the skin of the lower neck, and the birds had swung once completely around the wire, and were thus fastened very securely to it. The other bird had not gone completely around the wire but had caught on a horizontal barb and had fallen over the wire to the side opposite the barb. How long the birds struggled before death overtook them is not known.

On another occasion, several Coots from a flock of about 25 or 30 flying low over the marsh were seen to strike the fence, but none was caught on the barbs. How many birds struck the fence for each one caught is problematical. It is conceivable that injury and death to birds from striking these wires might in a season reach numbers sufficiently large to make justification of the barbed wire across this waterfowl habitat highly questionable.—JESSOP B. LOW, *Illinois State Natural History Survey, Natural Resources Building, Urbana, Illinois*.

Greater Yellow-legs as a Fish-eater.—Most shore birds generally feed upon insects and other invertebrate life. The Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) is quite adaptable, however, and occasionally an individual is found feeding upon a type of food that may be considered far removed from its normal diet.

On September 3, 1942, at Lac aux Morts (Lake Alice), Ramsey County, North Dakota, I observed a Greater Yellow-legs standing in about 2 inches of water and feeding upon fish. During the short period of 15 minutes that this bird was under observation, it consumed eight small minnows. The bird caught the fish at right angles to its bill, then skillfully turned the fish so that the head was swallowed first.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago, Illinois*.

Purple Sandpipers at Richmond Beach, Ohio.—About 30 miles east of Cleveland the Grand River empties into Lake Erie at Fairport Harbor. The town of Fairport is on the east, the village of Richmond on the west. A large turning-basin for ore boats has been dredged out at the mouth of the river, and in order to protect this basin from the prevailing currents, which would soon fill it up with sand, a huge stone pier has been built out into Lake Erie for several hundred feet. Since the lake's outlet is to the east of the pier a long sand beach, known as Richmond Beach, has gradually formed to the west. The pier itself is made of large blocks of stone laid without mortar joints, and has many large cracks and crevices. The sides slope downwards to about water level, where the base extends outward on each side for about four feet forming flat stone strips which are covered with algae. On these four-foot strips and on Richmond Beach itself, other observers and I have made a number of records of the Purple Sandpiper (*Arquatella maritima*) since 1937—which are, I believe, the only modern records for this bird in Ohio. They are as follows: one sandpiper seen on December 27, 1937, and one on January 2, 1938 (James Akers); four seen on November 13, 1938 (Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Skaggs, Isabelle Hellwig, and Ralph O'Reilly); two, November 19, 1938 (Mr. and