

A mouse eaten by a Wood Duck.—A gizzard of a Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) sent to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service by Mrs. Albert F. Haspeslagh, of Galion, Ohio, in the fall of 1943, contained the partly digested remains of a white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus* sp.). The mouse, whose tail protruded from the gizzard, had apparently been swallowed whole. It made up about two-thirds of the gizzard's contents. The remaining third consisted of fragments from normal components of a Wood Duck's diet—pieces of hickory-nut shell (*Carya* sp.) and several grape seeds. The duck had been shot in late October, 1943, in Crawford County, Ohio.—A. L. NELSON, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bowie, Maryland.*

The sex ratio in Wilson's Snipe.—The importance of a knowledge of the sex ratios of birds is well shown in the excellent summary recently published by Mayr (*Amer. Nat.*, 73, 1939:156-179), but ornithologists do not often have the opportunity to determine the sex of large numbers of birds, and even when such figures are secured their validity is often impaired by the operation of such factors as differential migration or unconscious selection by the observer. Museums contain large numbers of specimens of known sex, but the report of Pelseneer (*Mem. Acad. Roy. Belg.*, 8, 1926:3-258) showed the danger of depending too indiscriminately on museum series and threw the whole method into disrepute. The specimens in any good-sized museum collection of Henslow's Sparrow and the Clay-colored Sparrow furnish extreme examples of misleading series. They consist largely of males because the persistent singing of the males provides collectors with the only easy way of finding specimens.

On the other hand, it seems to me that the collector's sample might be a fair one in the case of certain species in which the plumage and the reaction to human intrusion are alike in the two sexes, and the number of specimens in museums is large enough to be statistically significant. For instance, David E. Davis (*Auk*, 57, 1940:179-218) found 401 males to 328 females in the museum specimens of the Smooth-billed Ani—a sex ratio which was corroborated by his own field data. The danger of depending on any but very large samples is well illustrated by the report of Imler and McMurry (*Wils. Bull.*, 51, 1939:244) on the sex ratio of ten 100-bird lots of Crows killed by bomb explosions in a winter roost in Oklahoma. The ratio among the 1,000 birds was 52.6 per cent males to 47.4 per cent females, but among the ten 100-bird lots the per cent of males varied from 41 to 65.

The sex ratio in shorebirds is of particular interest because of the remarkable diversity of breeding habits which we are beginning to find among the different species studied. In the case of the Painted Snipe, *Rostratula benghalensis* (Rostratulidae), Stuart Baker (*Fauna Brit. India, Birds*, 6, 1929:47) reports that males greatly outnumber the females and that the females display and fight for the males.

Little seems to be known about the breeding habits of the once common game bird, Wilson's Snipe (*Capella delicata*). Even the incubation habits are somewhat uncertain. Bent (*U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. No. 142*, 1927:86) states that both sexes incubate but specifically cites only Philipp (*Canad.-Field Nat.*, 39, 1925:76), who says that three incubating birds collected were all males. Jourdain (in Witherby *et al.*, *Handbook Brit. Birds*, 4, 1940:200) says that in the closely related Common Snipe (*Capella g. gallinago*) of Great Britain only the female incubates.

The present survey summarizes the specimens of Wilson's Snipe in 23 public and private collections: Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia; American Museum of Natural History; California Academy of Sciences; Carnegie Museum; Chicago Academy of Science; Chicago Natural History Museum (including the Conover Collection); Cleveland Museum of Natural History; Colorado Museum