

GENERAL NOTES

The Redhead as a breeding bird of Michigan and Ontario.—A downy young specimen of the Redhead (*Aythya americana*) that, according to the label, was "with 5 others on back of female" when collected at Walpole Island, Lake St. Clair, Lambton County, Ontario, about 1900, has been in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology (No. 32, 8, 29, 53) since its receipt in 1932 incorrectly identified as a Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*). The identification was made by the collector, W. G. A. Lambe, of Toronto, and I have twice recorded it as a Lesser Scaup. T. M. Shortt detected the error in 1941 in the course of studying the Museum's duck collection for the purpose of illustrating Francis H. Kortright's "The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America."



Female Redhead (*Aythya americana*) with newly-hatched young, Delta, Manitoba, 1946. From a painting by H. Albert Hochbaum.

Although there is no evidence that the Redhead breeds at present anywhere in Ontario, that it did so formerly at Lake St. Clair and, once, at Toronto, is shown by the following records:

- St. Clair Flats, 1877—Broods reported ("Rover," *For. & Str. and Rod & Gun*, 9, 1877:34).
- St. Clair Flats, 1877—Bred in large quantities ("Venator," *For. & Str. and Rod & Gun*, 9, 1877:73).
- St. Clair Flats, Michigan, 1879—Two nests (W. H. Collins, *Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club*, 5, 1880:61-62).
- St. Anne Island, Lake St. Clair, Lambton County, Ontario, May 27, 1882—Nest with 10 eggs; June 22, 1882—Nest with six eggs (John H. Morden, *Canad. Sportsman & Nat.*, 3, 1883:218-219). The second set of eggs is now in the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. Morden's article gives the locality as "Mitchell's Bay."

- St. Clair Flats—Nesting (J. H. Langille, *For. & Str.*, 22, 1884:384).
- St. Clair Flats—Nesting (J. H. Langille, "Our Birds in Their Haunts," 1884: 467-468).
- St. Clair Flats, 1886—Most common nesting duck (J. H. Langille, *Bull. Buffalo Soc. Nat. Sci.*, 5, 1886:34-35).
- Walpole Island, Lake St. Clair, Lambton County, Ontario, about 1900—Six downy young on back of female, seen by W. G. A. Lambe. One, collected, is in the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. (Recorded as five young Lesser Scaups by James L. Baillie, Jr., *Trans. Royal Canad. Inst.*, 21, 1936:16; and *Wils. Bull.*, 51, 1939:184.)
- Toronto Island, 1900—Brood of 12 seen, according to C. W. Nash's journals in the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. The note, under date of August 7, states: "I have just heard of a brood of Redhead 12 in number that were hatched in Jim Crow pond Toronto Island this year; they were seen by Mr. George Warin, Hector McDonald & several others."
- Dickinson Marshes, Lake St. Clair, Michigan, 1901—Pair reported nesting (Walter B. Barrows, "Michigan Bird Life," 1912:91).
- Near Krauss's Hotel, Wayne County, Michigan, 1908—Four pairs nested (J. Claire Wood, *Auk*, 27, 1910:38).

The Redhead's status as a breeding bird of Michigan rested on the above records of its former nesting around Lake St. Clair until 1941, when a record of eggs from Saginaw Bay was received at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology. —JAMES L. BAILLIE, JR., *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.*

Catbird "anting" with a leaf.—On August 20, 1945, at a few minutes after 6 a.m. (C.S.T.), I saw a male Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) "anting" with a small, narrow, silvery-green leaf, apparently from one of the many plants of the weed pussytoe (*Antennaria neodioica*) growing in the lawn a few yards away. The Catbird appeared to rub the leaf at the base of the tail; at the same time he turned the tail forward under the body, losing balance, and all but toppling over. He then hopped off a few inches, keeping the leaf in his beak, and repeated the rubbing. He had done this twice more when a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) flew down beside him; then, still holding the leaf, he flew into a hedge and out of sight. H. R. Ivor (1941. *Auk*, 58:416) reports a captive Catbird "anting" with ants. Of the 19 species that he observed "anting," all used ants except one, a Bronzed Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*), which "anted" with choke-cherries. W. L. McAtee (1938. *Auk*, 55:98-105), reviewing the literature of "anting," reports no case of the use of leaves. The pussytoe leaf is very woolly but not pungent or aromatic. Although the Catbird that I watched seemed to rub its tail, Ivor (1943. *Auk*, 60:53) found by close observation of his birds that in every instance they were trying to reach "the very tip of the primary which often was resting on the tail."—RUTH HARRIS THOMAS, *Route 3, North Little Rock, Arkansas.*

Bronzed Grackle "anting" with mothballs.—On the morning of April 5, 1946, five male Bronzed Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*) alighted in the back yard of my home in Cleveland, Ohio, and began scratching around in a flower bed that had been scattered with mothballs as a protection against dogs. Suddenly one Grackle was observed rubbing the underside of his spread wing and the part of the body under the wing with a mothball held in his bill. After several applications, he dropped the ball and preened his feathers. He then picked up the ball again and treated the other wing, as well as the belly, rubbing the mothball on the feathers as far back as he could reach with his head between his legs. He "anted" in this fashion approximately 20 times in about 15 minutes and then flew away. The Grackle followed no regular order in treating the various parts of his body but seemed to give them all about equal attention.—RAYMOND W. HILL, 3316 Kenmore Road, Shaker Heights, Cleveland, Ohio.