

Swimming by wild Turkey poults.—In mid-afternoon, May 14, 1954, Martin, a game management agent of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and J. H. Parsons, district supervisor of State conservation officers, were on routine patrol in Jefferson County, Alabama. They were in a light, outboard boat in the Little Shoal Creek embayment of Bankhead Lake, an impoundment of the Black Warrior River.

At this point the arm of water is at least 100 yards wide, but without current. The two officers observed a Turkey (*Meleagris gallapavo*) poult at least 30 yards from the south bank and swimming north; another was seen only a few yards from the north bank where a mature wild Turkey hen accompanied by at least two other poults was calling frantically. The poults were traveling toward the mother bird, swimming strongly and floating fairly high in the water. Maneuvering the boat alongside the first poult, the officers picked it up, examined it, carried it to near the north bank and released it. The female turkey remained in the vicinity until joined by the two poults that had been in the water.

The poult picked up was covered with down except for the wing tips, which were beginning to develop feathers. Its age was estimated to be 10 days. A probable explanation of what occurred is that the hen had flown across the embayment and then called her poults, which followed by swimming. The poults were so young that the possibility that they had attempted flight across the water and fallen in is ruled out. Both officers are thoroughly familiar with wild Turkeys. One poult was examined in the hand and the hen and remaining poults were observed at close range, leaving no doubt as to the accuracy of the observation.—LEO M. MARTIN AND THOMAS Z. ATKESON, *Box 1643, Decatur, Alabama, June 1, 1954.*

Grackle kills English Sparrow.—I saw a Bronzed Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) kill an adult female English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) about noon on June 2, 1954.

I heard sounds of conflict in my yard and saw four birds flying rapidly about in a small area: two Robins (*Turdus migratorius*), an English Sparrow, and a Bronzed Grackle. My eye followed the Robins as they veered off in separate directions, and then I became conscious of a struggle on the ground near the wall of the house next door. Here the grackle was holding the sparrow with its foot and driving its beak forcefully and rapidly against the sparrow's head. When I stepped forward, the grackle flew up into a nearby tree, where a pair of Robins had a nest. The grackle was attacked again by the Robins but persisted in the vicinity for several minutes. I was not able to determine if the nest had been molested.

The sparrow crouched on the ground breathing heavily. Both eyes were closed and fluid exuded from one of them. Fifteen minutes later its condition was unchanged. But when I returned six hours later, the sparrow was dead. It had not been moved nor damaged further. Dissection revealed that all of its wounds were on the head. Its forehead was severely crushed with fractures running down into both eye sockets and there was a puncture 3 mm. in diameter in the center of the occipital region. The eyeballs were intact.

As I was examining the dead sparrow, my daughter directed my attention to a headless bird fifty feet away, under the tree where I had first noticed the conflict earlier in the day. It proved to be an immature English sparrow, short-tailed but probably old enough to fly. It had been found early in the afternoon by children and appeared to have been killed the same day. It was badly lacerated in the shoulder area as though partly eaten, but was otherwise unmarked. I am not sure what killed and mutilated it but suspect that the grackle may have been engaged in this activity when attacked by the adult sparrow.—HAROLD MAYFIELD, *2557 Portsmouth Avenue, Toledo 13, Ohio, July 23, 1954.*