It is well-known that under certain circumstances Ring-necked Pheasants not uncommonly lay one or more eggs in the nests of other birds of their species and occasionally in the nests of chickens, Bobwhites, Ruffed Grouse, and Sooty Grouse (Bent, A. C., op. cit.) but apparently nothing is known of the fate of the pheasant's eggs under these conditions. On 16 May 1953 Dr. D. S. McGeen, in Waterford Township, Oakland County, Michigan, found three eggs of the pheasant in the nest of a Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) in which there were 8 of the host's eggs.

I believe that the pheasants' laying in the nests of Blue-winged Teals mentioned above was due to the destruction of the pheasants' nests by grass cutters and lawnmowers in the park area. This destruction probably caused the pheasants to seek other nests in which already-formed eggs could be laid.—WALTER P. NICKELL, *Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, 22 November 1965.*

Tufted Titmouse destroys bagworms.—Several times during August 1965, I found a bagworm (*Thyridopteryx*) lying on the grass under a large pine tree in our yard in La Grange, Lewis County, Missouri. Yet no bags were visible on the tree. Each bag had been opened and the "worm" was missing.

On the morning of 20 August, a Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*) carrying a bagworm, flew from a neighbor's ornamental evergreen into our pine. After working perhaps 30 seconds, the bird raised its head and gulped down some fairly large object. At the same time, the bag dropped lightly to the ground. Examination showed that the "worm" was absent and the upper end of the bag had been snipped off as neatly as if done with scissors—unlike the ragged tear in a cocoon robbed by a woodpecker.

Then I recalled that a family group of titmouses habitually visited the area, each morning, and centered activities around my neighbor's evergreen which was very heavily infested with bagworms. Before the next morning, my alarmed neighbor had disposed of his infested shrub. The titmouses ceased their regular visits and no more empty bags were found.—HENRY HARFORD, *Route 1, Box 1192, Mount Dora, Fla. 32757, 26 November 1965.*

Melanism in the Ovenbird.—A melanistic Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), was mist-netted at the American Museum of Natural History's Kalbfleisch Field Research Station, Huntington, New York (Long Island), on 4 September 1965. This bird, an immature female, had completed its first prebasic (postjuvenal) molt and was not fat. Mensurally, the specimen (A.M.N.H. 785767) falls within the range of variation of 32 fall females of *S. aurocapillus* examined. It appears to be aberrant only with respect to the greater intensity of melanin pigment in areas of the plumage that are normally dark (streakings on the breast and flanks, lateral crown stripes, and moustachial streaks) and the presence of melanin in regions where dark feathers normally are not found (pileum, throat, malar region, superciliary region, undertail coverts, and central back region). In addition, the bill is decidedly darker and the tarsi and feet are slightly darker than normal.

I know of no previously published report of such extreme melanism in *Seiurus*, and Dr. Stephen Eaton has written me that his studies of the genus uncovered nothing of this nature. Two additional melanistic specimens of *S. aurocapillus* were called to my attention, however, in response to inquiries sent to a number of museums. (1) Dr. Lester Short, Jr., of the U. S. National Museum, sent me a specimen (female, U.S.N.M. 375991) collected by John B. Calhoun near Emory University, Dekalb Co., Georgia, on 5 October 1943. It differs from the New York bird in having melanin still more profusely distributed in regions that are normally not so pigmented, including the throat, malar,

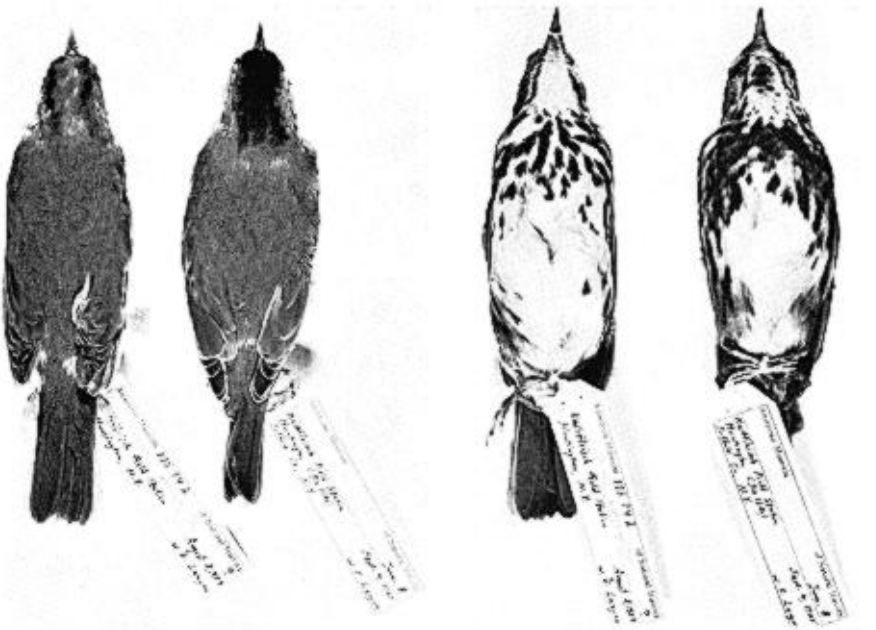

FIG. 1. Melanistic Ovenbird, located at the right in these dorsal and ventral views, is compared with a specimen of normal plumage.

and auricular areas. By virtue of this more extensive distribution of melanin, the Georgia specimen superficially appears darker than the New York bird, but, in actuality, the dark areas are grayer (less black). In 1953, Dr. Alexander Wetmore marked on the specimen label: "melanistic probably *furvior*." The Newfoundland race (*S. aurocapillus furvior*), described by Charles Batchelder in 1918, averages darker and more intense in coloration than the nominate form. (2) William Jolly, of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard, sent me a specimen (female, M.C.Z. 275952) collected by W. E. D. Scott near Kingston, Jamaica, on 29 November 1890. Though this specimen is less conspicuously melanistic than the New York and Georgia birds, it is unique in having melanin deposits in the lores and more or less at random throughout most of the remiges and rectrices as well.—WESLEY E. LANYON, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*, 27 October 1965.

Bachman's Sparrow in Oklahoma.—On 20 January 1965, I collected a female Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*) in an ecotone area of Post Oak-Blackjack Oak woodlands and open grassland about 12 km northeast of Ada, Pontotoc County, in south-central Oklahoma. This habitat is characteristic of a large segment of the state (Duck & Fletcher, 1945. "A Survey of the Game and Furbearing Animals of Oklahoma"). The bird appeared to be in good condition and had extensive subcutaneous fat deposits.

The wing measures 61.5 mm; the tail measures 50 mm, but the rectrices are not fully grown. It appears that the whole tail was being replaced at the same time as the rectrices are all sheathed at the base. The specimen was identified as *Aimophila aestivalis illinoiensis* by George M. Sutton.