

stuck in willow (*Salix* sp.) branches (Sherick, Blue Jay, 24: 143, 1966), and a Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) trapped by Spanish moss (*Tillandsia* sp.) (Funderburg, Florida Naturalist, 40:65, 1967). In Saskatchewan, young Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) are reported to frequently get caught in the sticky sap of gumweed (*Grindelia perennis*) (R. W. Nero, pers. comm.). Arthur P. Cooley of East Pachoque, New York, reported a Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*) trapped in common burdock (*Arctium minus*) (O. L. Austin, Jr., pers. comm.). The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology reported a dead Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*) gripped by the burs of a burdock (*Arctium* sp.) in an attempt to extract seeds (Archibald, Newsletter to Members, 55:4, 1970). From all indications, the frequency of entanglements in vegetation appears to be fairly common especially in the *Arctium* species.—RICHARD D. BROWN, *Science Dept., P.O. Box 10, Garden State Academy, Tranquility, New Jersey 07879, (Present Address: Dept. of Zoology, Ohio State Univ., Columbus, Ohio 43210) 30 December 1969.*

**The double-scratch in the genus *Pooecetes*.**—During the summer of 1969, I observed Vesper Sparrows (*Pooecetes gramineus*) double-scratching as they fed in a garden plot near Frederick, Frederick County, Maryland. This behavior was observed infrequently and consisted primarily of a rapid backward kick of both feet. Harrison (Wilson Bull., 79:22-27, 1967) had no evidence of this behavior in this genus—WALTER KINGSLEY TAYLOR, *Department of Biological Sciences, Florida Technological University, Orlando, Florida 32816, 20 November 1969.*

**Common Grackle kills Cedar Waxwing in air.**—During the first week of August, 1966, I saw a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) kill a flying, immature Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*). At Lac des Abatis, 40 miles east of Gracefield, Quebec, Canada, I was observing a flock of Cedar Waxwings feeding some 60 feet above a sandy point that jutted into the lake. Evidently an eddy in the air by a lone white pine was providing insects. A Common Grackle flew into the flock from above, hit one bird a blow, apparently on the nape, and followed its fall to the ground. The bird was dead, its neck broken by the time I reached it from 50 yards away. The grackle flew off at my approach. I examined the waxwing and took it to our fishing camp to skin. Looking back, I saw the grackle return, and search for its kill at the spot of the fall. It walked about the area, hunting thoroughly between the short marsh grasses, and then left. The skull of the waxwing showed no ossification.

According to James Baird (pers. comm.) there are a number of references in the literature to Common Grackles killing or attacking birds the size of House Sparrows. Baird and Smith (Wilson Bull., 77:195, 1965) comment on "the improbability of a grackle successfully pursuing and capturing a healthy small bird." Here, however, is an instance.

I am grateful to Mr. Baird for his interest, and assistance, in this note.—ERMA J. FISK, *17101 S W 284 Street, Homestead, Florida, 31 October 1969.*

**First nesting colonies of the Lark Bunting in Missouri.**—The Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) is a Great Plains species that has not been recorded breeding eastward into Missouri. Easterla and Anderson (Checklist of Missouri birds. Audubon Soc. Mo., 1967) consider the species as an accidental transient and summer visitant in the northwestern corner of the state. Two specimens and seven sight records are recorded for Missouri, with all of the sight records of recent occurrence.

On the morning of 5 June 1969 while conducting a Breeding Bird Survey in north-

western Missouri, I discovered a colony of breeding Lark Buntings in a field two miles northwest of Tarkio, Atchison County. A minimum of nine males and three females were observed. The males were often observed in aerial song displays when not perched on a weed stalk or fence. That afternoon, I flushed a female from a partially completed nest. The nest (photographed) was in a dug-out depression in a clump of young (10–12 inch tall) cocklebur (*Xanthium* sp.). It was constructed of last year's dead soybean stalks that were scattered throughout the field. For one hour I observed and followed another pair of Lark Buntings that flew to an adjacent, freshly plowed corn field to feed. During this time the male was observed to court and copulate with the female from eight to ten times.

The gonads of a male and female which were collected (DAE 2263, 2264) indicated breeding (testes-15 × 10 mm; ova-5 × 5 mm and below). They weighed 37.5 and 36.5 g.

The colony was in an 80-acre field that had been cultivated and sown (drilled?) to orchard grass (*Dactylis glomerata*) in spaced 12-inch rows earlier in the spring. At the time of discovery the orchard grass was short (8–12 inch tall) with numerous young (10–12 inch tall) cocklebur plants growing between the rows. Plant cover was about equally distributed between cocklebur and orchard grass. The 80-acre field and surrounding farmland has a rolling terrain and at the time the farmland was either freshly plowed corn fields or tall (3 ft) orchard grass.

On 2 June 1969 J. Fairlie observed a courting pair of Lark Buntings in a field near Lake Contrary, south of St. Joseph, Buchanan County. By 4 June a colony of at least 10 males and two females were established. Male Lark Buntings were often observed in their aerial song displays and copulation between pairs was observed twice. On 4 June Fairlie found a female Lark Bunting impaled on a barb wire fence. Loggerhead Shrikes (*Lanius ludovicianus*) were possibly responsible. On 9 and 11 June Fairlie and F. Lawhon observed a female carrying nesting material. Lawhon and Fairlie continued observing this breeding colony up until 1 July when at least two pair (male and female photographed) were still present with both of the females observed carrying food, presumably to young. These two colonies are 59 air miles apart.

The invasion of breeding Lark Buntings into northwestern Missouri appears to be a recent phenomenon regulated by changes in climate and land use that have influenced other western and southwestern fauna to recently expand their range into Missouri (Brown, *Condor*, 65:242–243, 1963; Schwartz and Schwartz, *The wild mammals of Missouri*. Univ. Mo. Press, Columbia, pp. 334–335, 1959; Warner, *Wilson Bull.*, 78:289–300, 1966). At the Atchison County breeding colony there was a considerable amount of bare ground between the orchard grass and cocklebur which could have originally attracted the Lark Buntings to the field, perhaps simulating the short grass prairie conditions preferred by the species to the west. Human disturbances such as plowing, cultivating, and the planting of crops undoubtedly make the habitat more favorable for breeding Lark Buntings and could aid the species in extending its breeding range eastward into Missouri.

These two northwestern Missouri nesting colonies are the first breeding records for Missouri and represent one of the easternmost breeding localities for the species. Apparently the nearest breeding site to Missouri is that recorded by Rice (*Bull. Kansas Ornithol. Soc.*, 16:1–2, 1965) who observed a nesting colony during June–July 1964 in northeastern Kansas (Shawnee County) a distance of 90 and 70 air miles southwestward from the Atchison and Buchanan County sites.

Appreciation is extended to Floyd Lawhon and James Fairlie for making available their field notes.—DAVID A. EASTERLA, *Department of Biology, Northwest Missouri State College, Maryville, Missouri 64468 12 January 1970.*