

Why is not more money appropriated for research upon the effects of such chemicals to people, livestock, poultry, birds, and animals? Although ten to twelve millions of dollars now have been appropriated by state legislatures and the Congress for the fire ant program alone, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services receives only \$280,000 for research upon pesticides and wildlife this fiscal year!

The Food and Drug Administration needs more inspectors to examine milk, meat, fruit, and vegetables for heptachlor content in order to prevent shipments containing chemical residue, and thus to safeguard our children and ourselves. How can these foods be free of contamination when broadcasting of heptachlor continues so unnecessarily?

—The fire ant program has been found to be disastrous to many organisms—**WHY**

SHOULD IT BE CONTINUED?

—HAROLD S. PETERS
Research Biologist
National Audubon Society

"PASS THE BERRY"

One of the bird thrills of this season of the year is the hundreds of Cedar Waxwings which move in to clean up the berries. I recently observed two sitting on a limb. They were playing "pass the berry." The passage of the berry was so rapid the eye could not detect the passage, but would see the berry appear first in one beak then in the other. I watched for several minutes and the berry must have passed several hundred times without a single fumble.

—JENKINS JACKSON, Livingston, Alabama

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER PARASITIZED BY COWBIRD

On August 23, 1959, a female Prothonotary Warbler was observed feeding a young Brown-headed Cowbird along the bank of Mountain Fork Creek where it empties into Flint River fifteen miles northeast of Huntsville. The area is low, often flooded, and bears a very lush growth.

The Prothonotary is the only eastern warbler that nests in a tree cavity, yet the Brown-headed Cowbird parasitizes it. This is the first known for Alabama.

I remember Prothonotaries nesting in tin cans put up during the 1940's by Mrs. T. A. Wigginton of Nashville, Tennessee. Mrs. Wigginton had to remove regularly the eggs of persistent cowbirds. If the eggs were not removed, the warblers would sometimes build over them. Sometimes they desert the nest, but usually would rear the young cowbirds.

—MARGARET L. ROBINSON

Ed. note—Other Alabama cowbird victims include: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, White-eyed, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Blue-winged, Parula, and Hooded Warblers, American Redstart, Summer Tanager, and Indigo Bunting. We urge members to be on the lookout for additional hosts this spring and report them on these pages.

KRIDER'S RED-TAILED HAWK

This bird spent practically the entire winter of 1959 in the vicinity of my farm. I saw him on any number of occasions both flying and perched. On one occasion he was circling above me while two Crows dive-bombed him. I did not see a hit, but it had taken place as some of his large feathers were crushed and displaced. I have noticed in other instances that local birds seem to recognize a rare foreigner and resent his presence, and this itself becomes an aid in identification.

—JENKINS JACKSON, Livingston

REGIONAL WINGBEATS

DECATUR—Late fall and winter settled on the Valley and Yankee cold fronts moved in with clocklike regularity. Shallow backwaters iced over, and there were spittings of snow and sleet, but none that remained on the ground for more than a few hours, until the real storm of Feb. 13 & 14.

Wheeler Refuge continued to feel the continental water fowl shortage. In late December, Canada Geese reached a peak of 28,000, dropping about 10 per cent below normal numbers. Some 800 Blue Geese and 50 Snow Geese stayed for the winter. Ducks finally came to a peak of about 40,000 in early January, still a third below the count for the 1958-59 season. All diving ducks were scarce, but percentagewise, Black Ducks increased. On December 30, David Hulse and a hunting companion shot down a pair of Blue-winged Teal, both in full breeding plumage. Blue-wings aren't supposed to winter in the Tennessee Valley, but there are always a few ignorant ones who haven't read the books.

At least three partially albino Canada Geese used refuge fields. One freakish bird had the normal body coloration of a Canada, but a completely white head and neck, possibly a Blue Goose-Canada Goose hybrid.

Bonaparte's Gulls and Horned Grebes were seen throughout most of the period. On January 4, David Hulse spotted an adult Franklin's Gull, the second record for this locality, near the Decatur boat harbor.

The find of the period was a Golden Eagle, the first local record. One was sighted by David Hulse on December 19, another, possibly the same bird, by Paul Robinson, Henry Grammer, and Homer Blackwood on December 26. In both cases, observers had a close view of the bird and could detect the feathered shanks. We have suspected that some of the immature Bald Eagles seen locally each winter were really goldens, but these were the first solid records.

—THOMAS Z. ATKESON, P. O. Box 1643, Decatur, Alabama

HUNTSVILLE—The report from this area is rather commonplace, but this is usually true during the winter season. The territory covered in the reports from Huntsville usually includes Monte Sano and the country north and east, a sector with a 15-mile radius stretching from southwest of New Market to Gurley. Occasionally, observations are made from Gurley south to the Tennessee River, and once or twice during a season, the country to the west, from Huntsville to Decatur, is covered. An average of 8 hours each Saturday is spent in actual observation and approximately 100 miles of road distance is traveled.

Of the birds not seen in other seasons, the following have been sighted this winter: Marsh Hawk—common, Pigeon Hawk—1 sighted—Redstone Arsenal, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—common, Brown Creeper—occasional, Winter Wren—uncommon, Hermit Thrush—occasional, Ruby-crowned Kinglet—common, Golden-crowned Kinglet—common, Water Pipit—1 flock at Wheeler Refuge, Cedar Waxwing—occasional flocks, Myrtle Warbler—common, Rusty Blackbird—common, Purple Finch—common, Pine Siskin—rare, Savannah Sparrow—common, Vesper Sparrow—uncommon, Slate-colored Junco—common, White-crowned Sparrow—occasional (fewer than last year), White-throated Sparrow—common, Fox Sparrow—occasional, Lincoln's Sparrow—1 sighted 10 miles north of Huntsville, Swamp Sparrow—common, Song Sparrow—common, Lapland Longspur—3 in flock with Horned Larks at Wheeler Refuge.

—JIM and MARGARET ROBINSON, 1701 Oakwood Ave., N. E., Huntsville, Ala.

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