

was shot in the vicinity of Hamilton, by A. King, in the fall of 1925.—JAS. L. BAILLIE, JR., *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology*, TORONTO.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW AT TORONTO.—It is well to look flocks of birds over closely even if we feel reasonably sure of their identity, for there is always the chance of there being a stranger present. On December 11, 1927, while observing birds at the Lake Shore at Toronto, I noticed a sparrow among a flock of Tree Sparrows which appeared and acted differently. This bird had, it seemed, brown patches on its head instead of a brown cap and its bill was a much brighter color than that of any of the Tree Sparrows. But when I looked for the breast-spot characteristic of the species there was nothing I could be sure about in this stranger. Its breast was not clear grey nor streaked, nor had it any one spot. I called Jas. Baillie, who was some distance off, telling him I fancied I had found a White-crowned Sparrow. Together we followed the bird from bush to bush and after many views, more or less clear, we were convinced it was nothing else. Finally when we collected the bird all doubts vanished. The specimen is now in the Royal Ontario Museum. It proved to be a female, first year plumage, well marked, but the breast soiled to a dirty blackish grey and the tail feathers somewhat worn. Just how long this belated migrant would have remained is, of course, impossible to say, but it was in good condition with a fair amount of fat and judging from its activity was quite at home among the Tree Sparrows, whose numbers also included one Song Sparrow. The only note uttered was a quiet "tseep" which though feeble was sufficiently distinct to help arouse my suspicions from the first.—STUART L. THOMPSON.

NOTES ON THE EUROPEAN STARLING AT KAMOURASKA, QUEBEC, IN 1927.—At Kamouraska the European Starling made its first reappearance for 1927 on March 30, a mild day. Three Starlings spent that day, as well as March 31 and April 1, in a search for food on the ground near houses, after the fashion of the European House Sparrow. Later they disappeared.

It was not until May 4 that they appeared again, this time in little groups of two to six individuals each, which stayed in the vicinity until May 27. On June 11 and 30, I observed a little flock of a dozen of them at St. Pascal, Kamouraska County.

Later, on July 16, I saw a flock of twenty of them, among which appeared to be several young.

Young birds seemed to increase in numbers from that time to August 14, when I saw 75 young and adult Starlings together, after which they disappeared again until September 29. On and after the latter date they were to be seen again, in small flocks containing from 10 to 20. One might even see as many at times as 50 together, in company with the Crows, which had already assembled in numerous flocks for their autumn migration.

The Starling seemed to return southward with the last of the Crows, November 9 and 13, since when I have not seen them here.—WILLIE LABRIE.

FIRST OBSERVATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN STARLING IN THE VICINITY OF QUEBEC, P.Q.—At noon on January 22nd, 1927, Dr. D. A. Dery saw a male European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) near Beauport, a short distance north-east of Quebec City. The day was bright and warm and the bird was basking in the sunlight as it rested on a twig of an alder bush on a little slope beside a brook.

On March 6th, 1927, I set out to look for this species in the suburbs of Quebec City, and, to my astonishment, found a flock of between forty and fifty individuals.

They were along the banks of the St. Charles River near Scott's Bridge. I suppose they were feeding on the refuse from the snow dumps in the locality, although when I saw them they were in a clump of alders, from which they flew into a big elm. About one-half of the flock came down on the south side of a small hill which was bare of snow and fed there for a long while, so that I had a good opportunity to examine them through my glasses and to identify them without chance of any mistake. These are the first individuals of the Starling that I have seen.—R. MEREDITH.

SMOOTH PERENNIAL SOW THISTLE AT OTTAWA.—On August 6, 1926, an area of about a square rod, in a vacant lot in Ottawa West, was found infested with this notorious scourge of the middle West. It had previously been collected by Dr. M. O. Malte in 1922 at Billings Bridge, but not recorded. While these appear to be the first reports of its occurrence at Ottawa, it is being discovered in the course of weed survey work at many points in eastern Canada. In one locality in North Renfrew this summer, it proved to be even more plentiful than the glandular sow thistle, so prevalent in Ontario and eastward.

The differences between these two sow thistles appear to be merely varietal, in which case the smooth one should be known as *Sonchus arvensis* L. var. *glabrescens* Gunth.—H. GROH.



Groh, Herbert. 1927. "Smooth Perennial Sow Thistle at Ottawa." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 41(8), 188–188. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.338858>.

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