

GENERAL NOTES

Conducted by M. H. Swenk

An Early Arrival of the Bobolink in Indiana.—On March 13, 1932, during a hurried trip to Ohio, as dusk approached and we were driving rapidly, we saw a lone Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) fly up and across the road into a field. I could not understand how that bird could be in this part of the country at that early date, for I never previously had seen it before May 4, with one exception. It generally is found, according to my past records for ten years, between May 4 and June 13, although these dates may not be those of first arrival. One year (1924), the Bobolink was seen April 6. That was my earliest record before this year. But we have had unusual winters the past two years, hardly knowing winter had been with us. I believe the Bobolink had come upon the heels of the mild winter, before it knew it was not yet time for migration. As a rule these birds come in flocks, as I have seen fifty or more males together before they separate, making it evident, as with some other migrants, that the males come first together. The Robins do this, the males appearing about two or three weeks before the females. Many different varieties arrive together, then separate. I have seen the Bronzed Grackles, Starlings, and others all feeding on the ground together in the early spring. Warblers and other small migrants do the same. Birds of many varieties collect together in the fall before returning to the south, but when they are nesting they will have nothing to do with the other birds of various species.—MRS. HORACE P. COOK, *Anderson, Ind.*

Further Comment on the Nesting of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.—I have read with much interest the note of Mrs. Horace P. Cook, of Anderson, Indiana, (WILSON BULLETIN, XLIV, p. 45), on the nesting of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea caerulea*). In more than forty years of observation I have never seen a nest of this species in a location other than on top of a horizontal limb. I have found them placed as Mrs. Cook describes, on top of the lower fork of a limb that branched vertically, so that the upper fork furnished some protection to the nest. Also, I have frequently noticed that the nests of both gnatcatchers and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds usually disappear in whole or in part soon after the young leave them, and the following incident suggests a reason.

I had located a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher's nest about thirty feet up in a slender oak, and a few days after the young had left it I went to the place to collect it. After shinning about two-thirds of the way up to the nest, I paused on a limb to catch my breath. In less than a minute a gnatcatcher came to the nest, and with much twittering began to pull material out of it. She soon had a bill full and flew away to the south. Thoroughly interested, I waited, and in a few minutes she returned and carried away another bill full of material.

I came down and followed her line of flight directly to where she was building a new nest. I had no means of knowing whether or not it was the same bird building a second nest from the materials of a first nest.—JOHN B. LEWIS, *Amelia, Va.*

Ground-Nesting Birds.—Two very unusual records of ground-nesting birds have come under my observation, one of the Eastern Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*) and the other of the Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). In June, 1929, in crossing a field, I found where an Eastern Mourning Dove had



Cook, Horace P. 1932. "An Early Arrival of the Bobolink in Indiana." *The Wilson bulletin* 44(2), 115–115.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/214216>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/208063>

Holding Institution

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

Sponsored by

IMLS LG-70-15-0138-15

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Wilson Ornithological Society

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.