

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. Levi Penney of Woodlawn, Ontario, reported an unusual abundance of fall ducks in Constant bay on the Ottawa river, and attributes the phenomenon to the epidemic, during the shooting season, of influenza, which in various ways prevented the exodus of city gunners.

CLYDE L. PATCH, OTTAWA.

Last fall while rabbit hunting near Ottawa, Mr. Phil. Brady observed, resting about ten feet from the ground in a cedar tree, a Screech Owl which held in its claws an adult Ruffed Grouse. The death of the grouse, the throat of which was torn, cannot with certainty be credited to the owl which may have secured it after it had been killed by another agent; nevertheless the remarkable fact remains that the owl had sufficient strength to carry the grouse to an elevation of ten feet.

CLYDE L. PATCH, OTTAWA.

AN HERMAPHRODITE LOBSTER.—In the month of November, 1917, whilst engaged in making special observations on the lobster at Bay View, Pictou county, N.S., I found in a fisherman's trap, just after it had been drawn out of the sea, a lobster which was absolutely male on the left side and absolutely female on the right side. The specimen was sent intact to Dr. A. P. Knight, Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., with whom I was associated. This find was surely a remarkable one.

ANDREW HALKETT.

Reading Mr. Harlan I. Smith's note in a recent issue of THE OTTAWA NATURALIST, I am reminded of a mishap which befell another bird some years ago. While passing one of the fine spruces on the grounds of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, my attention was arrested by a fluttering of wings among the branches, which I found to come from a robin dangling by the tail from a tuft of twigs. Excited by my closer approach the bird managed to free itself, leaving behind a half-dozen tail feathers, which proved to be firmly glued to their anchorage by means of ordinary tar! Presumably it had come here and perched, perhaps over night, within tail's-length of the unfriendly mesh of branchlets, after having first frequented some newly-tarred surface in which the tips of the feathers had become daubed.

HERBERT GROH, PRESTON, ONT.

THE CANADA JAY.—There are few campers in the northern woods of Ontario who have not met with the Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*), one

of the most delightful of birds in spite of its bad qualities—Wis-Ka-Tjan or thief the Indians call it; it has well earned its reputation. The lumbermen have corrupted the name into Whiskey Jack and if any of their number misses some whiskey he is advised to go to this bird for information. Not only will this bird steal everything in the way of food about a camp, but we are sorry to say it will also eat the eggs of other birds as well as their young. If it were not for these bad qualities the most appropriate name for it would be "The Grey Nun" for with its beautiful grey color—white forehead, white throat and black at back of head and neck, also its delightfully soft eyes and gentle manner, it is typical of the nun. Although not seen in large flocks, half-a-dozen or more may often be met, and when they discover a camp in the woods there is great jubilation, we might say laughter, for their note at this time is much like laughter.

It might be supposed that a few such birds, somewhat less than eleven inches in length, could not make much impression on a hanging deer, and the camper would be surprised to find that one of his best haunches had disappeared in a few hours, this taken piecemeal and most of it hidden for future use. Last September when watching these birds it was noticed that they did not carry all their supplies to one place, but to several places and they were often tucked away between a hanging piece of bark and the trunk of the tree.

The Whiskey Jack is probably the easiest of any of our birds to tame. When camping not long ago, and while preparing a duck for cooking, in which one of these birds was much interested, it was induced to come and peck at the duck. Having once tasted this delicious morsel it forgot all fear, and drawing the duck gradually nearer the writer played hide and seek with it round his body and over his thighs the Whiskey Jack following. From that date this bird became our pet and would freely eat out of our hands. It would also come into our tent and wake us up by walking over us if breakfast was delayed too long.

F. F. PAYNE.

AN EPIDEMIC OF ROUP IN THE CROW ROOSTS OF THE LOWER THAMES RIVER, KENT CO., ONT.—Residents of the lower Thames valley, west of Chatham, Ont., report that large numbers of crows regularly winter in western Kent county and roost in the orchards and groves along the river. Mr. John Johnston says in a letter to the writer that "the date when the crows first wintered here was about 1895. It was a mild winter and a very late fall, and not a great deal of snow. They started



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