

appearance it resembled *Elymus mollis* Trin. being about 3 feet high, robust, and glaucous. But the spikelets all occurred singly, in this respect resembling the condition found in *Agropyrum*. A specimen was submitted to Dr. A. S. Hitchcock, the eminent Agrostologist of the Bureau of Plant Industry at Washington, D.C.,

who reported concerning it: "This specimen is different from anything that I have seen. I am unable to place it with any species known." The presumption at present is that it is a hybrid between *Elymus* and *Agropyrum* but further investigation will be necessary to determine its exact status.

JOHN TOWNSON

May 13, 1856 — October 9, 1934

On October 9, 1934, John Townson, a well-known naturalist-sportsman of Toronto, died suddenly while proceeding to his shooting blind at Weller's Bay, Prince Edward County, Ontario. Mr. Townson was born at Carlisle, England, on May 13, 1856. At the age of three he came to Canada with his parents who established residence in Toronto.

John Townson represented that admirable group of sportsmen who are primarily naturalists and secondarily marksmen. His bag was frequently divided between scientific collections and the tables of his many friends. He was familiar with such shooting stations as Long Point (Norfolk County), Weller's Bay, St. Clair Flats, and Conroy's Marsh (Halton County), in Ontario. His proficiency in identifying waterfowl and shorebirds was widely recognized and his interesting accounts of the ways of birds in general

appeared regularly for upwards of fifteen years in the *Toronto Globe*. He also contributed articles to *Rod and Gun* which are dependable records of observations. His only contribution to *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* concerned the nesting of the Lesser Scaup Duck at Toronto, (Vol. 44: 167, 1930).

Mr. Townson's memory for incidents and information concerning the Toronto region, covering a period of more than three score years, was most remarkable. As a member of the Brodie Club he formed a valuable link between the past and present in our rapidly changing environment. His passing, at the age of seventy-eight, takes from Toronto natural history circles a most useful life and an admirable individual who enjoyed the wide range of human activities from the sportive to the serious.—L.L.S.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

WHITE TIPS OF *Napaeozapus* TAILS.—That the amount of white tip on the tail of *Napaeozapus* was far from constant was apparent to me from my first acquaintance with this species. Recently, while showing my collection to some friends, I laid a series of nine *Napaeozapus* on the table, arranged in order of the amount of white on the tips of their tails. Two distinct groups were apparent, one with only a small amount of white, the other with a considerably larger amount. The former group consisted entirely of females, the latter of males. When specimens from other collections were compared with mine, this grouping was broken up, but the data still show a slight sex differ-

entiation with respect to the extent of the white tip. Since the tip of the tail is so often torn in wiring, it is suggested that an additional measurement "White Tip of Tail" should be taken before skinning specimens of *Napaeozapus*.—C.H.D. CLARKE, *University of Toronto*.

UNUSUAL NESTING OF EASTERN REDWING (*Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus*) AT TORONTO.—Two unusually situated nests of the Eastern Redwing were found by the writer in the Humber marshes at Toronto on June 25, 1934. Both were in willows bordering the marsh, one eight feet up, the other eleven feet and they contained

partially incubated eggs. No explanation can be offered for such unusual nesting as plenty of sites were available in the rushes and a number of nests were found there.—C. E. HOPE, *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology*.

CROSSBILLS AND STARLINGS.—On August 31st, 1934, I had the pleasure of spending a very profitable day with that enthusiastic naturalist, Mr. Kay, of Port Sydney, Muskoka District, Ontario. During our general conversation he observed that the White-winged Crossbills, formerly abundant in the Macy Lake district, were now but occasionally seen. Moreover, their disappearance had coincided with the early occurrence of large flocks of Starlings in the area, several years ago. He correlated the two facts on the grounds that the Crossbills formerly fed extensively on the seeds of the Elm. Now the Starlings consume the seeds and none are left for the northern visitors. Just another link in the chain of evidence which has piled up against the introduction of foreign species.—A. E. ALLIN, M.D., *Toronto*.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*).—In the March, 1935, issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* I saw F. L. Farley's report of the Red-breasted Nuthatch having wintered at Camrose, Alberta. Last autumn three of these birds came to my feeding place and two have been fed all through the winter with other birds. During our very severe month (parts of December and January) I felt a bit anxious about them, but they came through in good condition and are still feeding daily (March, 1935). They are very tame and come close to my hands when I am putting out fresh food, "talking" to me all the time.—ELSIE CASSELS, *Red Deer, Alberta*.

FOX SPARROW WINTERING AT TORONTO.—In view of the scarcity of published winter records for this species the following occurrence may be worth reporting.

A single bird spent the winter of 1922-23 in and around a garden in North Toronto and was seen on numerous occasions from December 11th to March 25th. It appeared to be normal in every way and survived in spite of fairly deep snow through most of January and February.—R. D. USSHER, *King, Ontario*.

GERMAN BIRD BANDS.—The German Ambassador has officially advised the Government of Canada through the Honourable Mr. J. H. Thomas, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, that official bird bands or rings used by two German bird observatories in studying the movements and life histories of wild birds bear, in addition to a serial number, the following inscription:—

"Vogelwarte Helgoland" or "Vogelwarte Rosstitten".

The words "Germania" "retour" or "urgent" are also sometimes inscribed on the bands.

Should any person in Canada take a bird wearing a band from either one of the two German bird-banding stations, it would be very much appreciated if they would report the facts to the Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, Ottawa, who has custody of the official bird-banding records for Canada.

Reports concerning wild birds wearing bands of any kind are very much appreciated by the National Parks Service of Canada since every banded bird reported helps to add to the store of valuable scientific data being collected by the banding method. Bird banding in North America is an international investigation of the general life histories of native wild birds and is being conducted in full co-operation between the Canadian and United States Governments which have the assistance of hundreds of voluntary co-operators throughout Canada and the United States in conducting this valuable work. Reports concerning bird bands, if mailed in Canada, may be forwarded postage free if enclosed in envelopes marked "O.H.M.S." and addressed to The Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, Ottawa.

REVIEWS

Contributions from the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, No. VI Phytogeographic Studies in the Peace and Upper Liard River Regions, Canada. With a Catalogue of the Vascular Plants. By Hugh M. Raup.

Pp. 1-230, Plates 1-9, map. February 15, 1934. \$2.50.

This work contains an interesting historical description of the exploration of the region followed by an account of the Geology, Physio-



Hope, C E. 1935. "Unusual Nesting of Eastern Redwing (*Agelaius phoeniceus* phoeniceus) at Toronto." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 49(8), 139–140.

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