

*Spizella pallida*. CLAY-COLOURED SPARROW. —  
Abundant breeder in low shrubbery.

*Junco hyemalis*. SLATE-COLOURED JUNCO. —  
Common breeder in pine zones.

*Melospiza m. melodia*. EASTERN SONG SPARROW.  
— Abundant breeder in shrubbery wastes  
and edges of marshes.

*Melospiza l. lincolni*. EASTERN LINCOLN'S SPAR-  
ROW. — Regular migrant.

*Melospiza georgiana*. SWAMP SPARROW. — Com-  
mon summer resident in marsh.

*Passerella i. iliaca*. EASTERN FOX SPARROW. —  
A common early spring migrant with a  
loud clear song.

*Pipilo e. erythrophthalmus*. EASTERN TOWHEE.  
— Rare visitor. Noted once.

*Passerina cyanea*. INDIGO BUNTING. — A breed-  
ing colony known here since 1923. First

nest discovered June 23, and four eggs  
laid by July 1, 1927. Of late years the  
birds have spread out, and are now found  
five or six miles away. Frequents hazel  
brush on hillsides. First reported here in  
1926, making a re-discovery for the province  
after an interval of over twenty years.

*Spiza americana*. DICKCISSEL. — Noted once.  
Very rare.

*Calamospiza melanocorys*. LARK BUNTING. —  
Rare visitor. Noted once.

The total number of all species recorded is  
209. Of this number about 114 are estimated  
to be summer residents. Actual breeding  
records total 75 species.

The average migration list for the spring  
numbers about 140 species, and the highest  
record was made in 1932 with 151 species  
recorded.

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

THE PYGMY OWL (*Glaucidium gnoma pini-  
cola*) AN ALBERTA BIRD. — As far as I have  
been able to learn there are no published records  
of the pygmy owl having ever been found in  
Alberta. The following information, obtained  
from authentic sources, would indicate that this  
diminutive mountain dweller is, at least, a casual  
winter visitor in our province, with the proba-  
bility that it will be found to be a permanent  
resident in the timbered slopes of the Rockies  
within our boundaries. For the data submitted  
herewith, I am indebted to Mr. A. D. Hender-  
son, Belvedere, Dr. Rowan, Edmonton, and Mr.  
F. L. Bebee, McLeod Valley, all residents of  
Alberta. On December 7th 1932, as Mr. Hen-  
derson's hired man was on his way to the barn  
to do the morning chores, he noticed a very  
small owl sitting on the woodpile. Without  
making any attempt to escape, the bird was  
caught in the hand and taken into the house. It  
was in a dazed and exhausted condition, probably  
from the intense cold. The heat of the house  
soon revived the bird and it was placed in a  
cage. There it was fed raw meat and a dead  
shrew. On seeing it Mr. Henderson immediately  
recognized it as a pygmy owl. After more  
than a month in captivity the bird was given  
its liberty on January 12th, 1933.

During the same winter (1932-33) Dr. Rowan  
received two pygmy owls from Phoenix, Alber-

ta, a coal mining town a few miles east of  
Nordegg, and approximately 75 miles west of  
Red Deer. One of these, a female, had been  
caught alive in a barn, on November 11th, 1932.  
It was quite thin when received and died a few  
days later. The second, a male, was received  
on January 10th, 1933. Both skins are now in  
Dr. Rowan's collection.

On November 13th, 1932, Mr. Bebee's neigh-  
bor, a Mr. Holland at Peers (about 100 miles  
west of Edmonton) saw a small owl catch a  
house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) on the  
wing. Three days later, November 16th, Hol-  
land shot with a .22 rifle, what he believed to  
be the same owl, and gave it to Bebee. This  
proved to be a pygmy owl. Regarding the  
second pygmy owl reported by Mr. Bebee, I  
quote from his letter, dated March 12th, 1936.  
In this he submits his notes taken from his  
diary, as follows: "Saturday, December 17th,  
1932, shovelled snow in the forenoon and when  
working, Rupert [his brother] picked up a nice  
pygmy owl in the woodpile. It was dead and  
frozen stiff. It had not died of hunger as it  
was in full flesh. As near as I could tell the  
bird must have made an impetuous rush at a  
mouse or bird and wedged itself between the  
blocks of wood and was unable to get out. In  
the afternoon I skinned it". Both these skins  
are in Mr. D. Wilby's collection, at Heather-



down, Alberta. Mr. Bebee states that he collected another pygmy owl near his home the previous winter, either in December 1931, or January 1932, but cannot give the exact date. A letter from Mr. Wilby states that he has two skins of the pygmy owl which he received from Mr. Bebee, and adds, "Authentication O.K."

It is significant that six of the specimens referred to were captured in November and December, 1932, and January, 1933, all within a period of three months; indicating that an incursion of the birds had taken place into the sparsely settled parts of the province. This was probably due to a scarcity of their usual food supply in the mountains. — FRANK L. FARLEY, *Camrose, Alberta.*

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THE HAWK OWL AND RAVEN IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO — On December 11, 1935, I had word from Fred. Bidsworth, Port Burwell, Ontario, that he and a friend were engaged in mounting a Hawk Owl which had been shot near there; and on the same day I received a specimen in the flesh which came from Long Point through the kindness of Mr. Lorne Brown, who keeps the light at the east end of the Point. This bird is almost as rare in Southern Ontario as is the Great Gray Owl, and we have no recent records for either of them in Middlesex County, nor are there any specimens extant. — W. E. SAUNDERS.

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HAWK AND RAVEN AT POINT PELEE. — In the October 1936 issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* under the caption of Avian Murder, Mr. P. A. Taverner misquotes a red-tail hawk when he tells of the killing of a raven by that bird. The facts are that two ravens not merely one, were seen on that morning; I fired at both of them but both passed on out of sight and I supposed them to be unhurt. When I arrived back at the house, the late J. S. Wallace brought out a raven which he had picked up. His attention was attracted by a red-tail which flushed close to the road along which he was walking and he went into the shrubbery to see what was the attraction. There he found the raven, dead, but it had apparently been killed only after a considerable struggle. Tracing back the marks of the fight, Mr. Wallace found the spot where the raven was apparently standing in the road when the hawk attacked it, and had then dragged it into the thicket where it might be eaten more readily. The whole

story is of a piece with the determination of nature to utilize potential food; a vigorous raven would have been left alone, but the wounded, and perhaps dying raven was a different concern altogether, and should be utilized for food immediately. Dr. William Beebe remarked on the utilization of injured individuals when he watched, with some trepidation at first the sharks swimming lazily about nearby, and paying no attention whatever to him, and near them the pigfish were carelessly swimming, though these fish form much of the food of the sharks; but as soon as a pig-fish was hooked by a line from the boat directly above, there was a rush of sharks, and the hooked fish was torn to bloody pieces and devoured.

Jack Miner plays on this same urge when he keeps blackbirds, blue jays, etc., in cages fluttering to get out, and thus attracts hawks within range of his gun, the hawks realizing that here is prey in trouble and therefore easily caught. Even hawks whose food consists normally of mammals and insects are brought near by the lure of easily obtained food and forfeit their lives. — W. E. SAUNDERS.

Note—I told the story as Mr. Wallace told it to us. Evidently Mr. Saunders being there at the time gives the additional details. — P. A. T.

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THE OCCURRENCE OF THE RING-NECKED SNAKE AT CAPE RICH. — Cape Rich is a point on the shore of Georgian Bay about nine miles north of Meaford, Ontario.

This survey was made on the afternoon of June 14, 1936. It covered an area which was 200 yards wide by 400 yards in length, most of it open but bordered by cedars, other conifers and a few hardwood trees.

The surface of the ground was covered with flat rocks. It was under these that the snakes were found. Almost every rock in the above area was turned over. All reptiles and amphibians were collected.

The total for the afternoon was: one spotted salamander, two red-backed salamanders, one common toad, one common garter snake about six inches long, and five ring-necked snakes. The last named varied in length from seven inches to a foot. Four cast-off skins were found under the rocks. One of these was definitely that of a ring-neck and it is probable that the others were also.

It may be worthy of note that all the ring-necked snakes were found under flat stones,





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