

Two Additions to the Bird Fauna of Kansas. — I wish to record the addition of two species to the bird fauna of Kansas. They are as follows:

1. **PARASITIC JÆGER** (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). — A young male was captured along the Kansas River near Lawrence on October 10, 1898, by Banks Brown. The specimen was mounted by Leverett A. Adams and is now in the museum of the University of Kansas. This species not having been previously reported as "seen" or "likely to occur in Kansas" is an absolute addition to our avifauna.

2. **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL** (*Loxia leucoptera*). This species was inserted in my first editions of 'The Birds of Kansas,' in 1872, on the authority of Dr. T. M. Brewer, and was omitted from my fifth edition (May, 1903) because its occurrence in Kansas had not been verified by actual captures. I am glad to report two recent captures. The first was that of an adult male in fall plumage, shot by Leverett A. Adams near Lawrence, in Douglas County, November 4, 1899. This specimen, mounted by E. D. Bunker, is now in the museum of the University of Kansas. The second capture was that of a young male, taken at Hays City in western Kansas, September 15, 1902, by C. W. Miller, who has the specimen in his own collection.

These two additions, together with the three recorded in the January number of 'The Auk,' increase to 347 the number of species and varieties of birds personally known to me as occurring in Kansas. — F. H. SNOW, *Lawrence, Kan.*

Mortality Among Young Birds, Due to Excessive Rains. — During the summer of 1903, prolonged dry and warm weather, lasting through the greater part of May and the first week of June, was followed by an excessive rainfall. From June 6 to 14, inclusive, I was at Demarest, N. J., and from the evidence that there came under my notice, I became convinced that the mortality among young birds in the nest was far beyond normal, owing to the heavy rains which so closely succeeded each other.

Wishing to see how extensive this abnormal mortality might be, I wrote to some thirty ornithologists in various sections of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, inquiring regarding this subject. To a number who furnished interesting information, I am greatly indebted, as well as to others who courteously replied to my queries, stating that they were unable to furnish any information on the subject.

The deductions which may be gathered from the data thus collected are, first, that there was, at least in some sections, an unusually heavy mortality among young birds as a result of exposure, cold, and in some cases drowning, due to heavy rains, as well as an unusually large number of nests with eggs which were deserted because of the eggs becoming wet and chilled; second, it would appear that in other sections such mortality was not evident. This may be due to the difference in the predominating species of the different localities, or to difference in environment of nests, in the sections covered by the observers so reporting.

A few examples of cases coming under my notice at Demarest, are as follows: on June 7 a Field Sparrow's nest was found in a weed clump in a meadow, containing three young. On the 13th three lifeless, water-soaked bodies lay in the nest, which the birds would have left in a few days. On June 11 a Kingbird's nest was found just completed, and this nest was subsequently deserted by the birds before any eggs had been laid, apparently as a result of its continued soaked condition. On the same date, and in the same orchard I examined a Bluebird's nest, in a knot-hole in an apple limb, their second nest for the season, and containing at this time four eggs. On July 4 I visited this nest again, and the wet, decaying, and deserted eggs were still in the nest, which had evidently been partly filled with water.

On June 13 I photographed a nest of four young Chipping Sparrows, in a grapevine, close to a house. The situation of this nest seemed ideal for withstanding the weather, a number of large leaves sheltering it very well. The young were then almost ready to leave the nest. On the morning of the 15th, following a day and night of hard rain, these birds were found dead.

Mr. S. H. Chubb, of this city, reported to me a case on Staten Island, of the drowning out of a family of young of the Tufted Titmouse.

Mr. S. N. Rhoads wrote me that though he could not doubt that there had been an unusual mortality among young birds owing to the heavy rains, he had not, in his limited field work, seen any evidence of it. Mr. William B. Burke, writing from Rochester, N. Y., said that this subject had been brought up at a meeting of the Ornithological Club, and that the consensus of opinion was "that there had been no perceptible loss among young birds as a result of excessive rains in this region." He added that living adjacent to a ninety acre beech wood, he had seen no evidence of unusual mortality among young birds, and that friends from Canada reported that there was no apparent loss there.

Mr. Josiah H. Clark, of Paterson, N. J., reported that at Crystal Lake the prolonged rains flooded a Bluebird's nest in a hole in a stump, causing the birds to desert the four eggs that the nest contained. He also cited the case of a House Wren's nest which had been flooded and deserted in the same manner.

Mr. T. H. Jackson, of West Chester, Pa., writes: "Although I kept no record, I noticed that a great many nests were broken up by the cold rains during the early summer of 1903. Approximately I should say at least fifty percent among the smaller species failed to mature in the nests. Am sorry I can not give you more accurate information."

Mr. John Lewis Childs, of Floral Park, N. Y., writes that on Long Island he had been unable to find any evidence of unusual mortality among young birds. He further adds, however: "At a recent visit with John Burroughs up the Hudson Valley, I learned that he had examined a great many nests this fall, and in a large number of them found the remains of young birds, and he is of the opinion that large numbers of nestlings died, perhaps as high as twenty-five percent."

I have in the past fifteen years examined a very considerable number of nests, and it has been my experience that normally it is an unusual thing to find dead young in the nest. I should say that each such find the past season was so much evidence indicating an unusual mortality, and I am of the opinion that could such data all be gathered, it would be found that the effect of the unusual season of 1903 on bird life was very marked.—B. S. BOWDISH, *New York City*.

The Rapidity of the Wing-Beats of Birds.—Attention may well be directed to a neglected phase of the problem of flight, for while foreign observers have devised graphical methods for measuring wing movements too swift for discernment by the human eye, little or nothing is known about our birds of slow flight, in which it is possible to count the wing-beats. On several occasions, I have had opportunity for watching Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*) following in the wake of a steamboat running at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour, and on calm days I find the wing-beats in this species average about one hundred and eighty to the minute. Varying conditions make difficult even such simple observations as these; but the coöperation of many observers in this almost untouched field may some day furnish valuable data. Laboratory experiments abroad, with harnessed birds, show that the wing-beats of a Sparrow are 780 a minute, of a Duck, 540, of a Pigeon, 480, and so on, while at home we only know that wings are too swift for most cameras. The subject is a large one and I merely wish to stimulate interest in it, by thus lightly touching upon it.—JONATHAN DWIGHT, JR., M. D., *New York City*.

A Correction.—In 'The Auk,' Vol. XIX, No. 3, July, 1902, p. 331, in the first line, "Faxon and Allen" should read Faxon and Hoffmann.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, *Concord, Mass.*

Audubon's 'Ornithological Biography.'—I have just purchased a copy of the above work, the first volume of which bears the imprint,

Philadelphia: | Judah Dobson, Agent, 108 Chestnut Street; | and |
H. H. Porter, Literary Rooms, 121 Chestnut Street. | MDCCCXXXI.

Coues's Bibliography makes no mention of this imprint, nor can I find another set the first volume of which bears such a one.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Concord, Mass.*

Delaware Bird Notes.—A hasty visit to Lewes, Del.—Cape Henlopen—on February 5, 1904, admitting of but an hour's walk across the frozen marsh and barely into the cedars and pines bordering the ocean sufficed to note the following, amongst the species:—Myrtle Warblers, numerous; Robins and Bluebirds, abundant; several Savannah Sparrows, a flock of 18 Snow Buntings, one Catbird, a single Brown-headed Nuthatch, and two Red-breasted Nuthatches.—C. J. PENNOCK, *Kennett Square, Pa.*



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