

they soon began to weaken and died when about six days old, when they "were just beginning to show feathers." Young Field Sparrows and two Cowbirds hatched and tended in the same way, lived for only a few days; similar experiments with Bobolinks and Yellow-winged Sparrows had a similar ending. In each case the foster-parents were faithful to their charges. "To briefly summarize the work I have described in some detail," says Mr. Scott, "forty-one different eggs of wild birds, representing six species, and three young birds already hatched, form the aggregate of individuals dealt with. All of the forty-one eggs were fertile, and were hatched by the foster-parents. This is suggestive in regard to the propagating powers of wild birds, and though not conclusive, indicates a much higher percentage of fertility in the eggs laid by them than obtains in song birds when caged, or semi-domesticated. None of the young which were hatched from these eggs reached a greater age than seven days which would seem to indicate that the food supplied by the foster-parents, which was the same on which they raised their own offspring, was of a kind so different from that used by wild birds in rearing their young, that it proved inadequate, I also believe that the nest lining was of a character so unlike that of the nests natural to the foster-chicks, that it prejudiced their development and growth."

Evidently canary-bird food is not a good substitute for the large proportion of insect food our wild passerine birds are known to furnish for the sustenance of their nestlings.—J. A. A.

**Scott on 'The Inheritance of Song in Passerine Birds.'**—In a recent paper in 'Science,' Mr. W. E. D. Scott presents some interesting observations on the inheritance of song in hand-reared Bobolinks and Red-winged Blackbirds.<sup>1</sup> The birds were kept where it was believed they could not hear the song of their own species, but were allowed to hear the songs of many other birds. In the case of the Bobolinks, there was no resemblance, either in the call-notes or the song, to any sounds uttered by wild bobolinks; the call-notes of the Redwings resemble those of the wild birds, but the song "seems to be made up of a composite jumble wherein robin and thrush-like notes of great clearness and volume predominate." This is rather surprising when we consider how persistent are the call-notes and the general character of songs in wild birds, both in time and space, as exemplified throughout large genera, and even among species of allied genera, as in certain genera of Thrushes, Flycatchers, Bobwhites, etc.—J. A. A.

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<sup>1</sup> The Inheritance of Song in Passerine Birds. Remarks and Observations on the Song of hand-reared Bobolinks and Red-winged Blackbirds (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus* and *Agelaius phoeniceus*). By W. E. D. Scott. Science, N. S., Vol. XIX, No. 473, p. 154, Jan. 22, 1904.



1904. "Scott on 'The Inheritance of Song in Passerine Birds'" *The Auk* 21, 400–400. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4070224>.

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