

Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science

Volume 27 | Annual Issue

Article 65

1920

Bird Records of the Past Two Winters, 1918-1920, in the Upper Missouri Valley

T. C. Stephens
Morningside College

Copyright ©1920 Iowa Academy of Science, Inc.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias>

Recommended Citation

Stephens, T. C. (1920) "Bird Records of the Past Two Winters, 1918-1920, in the Upper Missouri Valley," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 27(1), 395-407.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol27/iss1/65>

This Research is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa Academy of Science at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science by an authorized editor of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

BIRD RECORDS OF THE PAST TWO WINTERS, 1918-1920, IN THE UPPER MISSOURI VALLEY

T. C. STEPHENS

The area here considered includes northeastern Nebraska, northwestern Iowa, South Dakota, and southwestern Minnesota. From scattered points throughout this region specimens have been sent in to A. J. Anderson to be mounted, and it is through his courtesy that many of the records are here presented. Local records, in the vicinity of Sioux City, are made by the writer unless otherwise credited.

The winter of 1918-1919 presented a minimum of ornithological interest, locally. The usual winter birds were here, but practically none of the less common smaller birds were noted. Among the larger birds a number of valuable records were obtained, both locally and from the surrounding area. Perhaps the most important for this season are those of the Duck Hawk, Snowy Owl, White-winged Scoter, etc.

The winter of 1919-1920 was much richer in its yield of material. Attention might be especially called to the flight of Bohemian Waxwings, and the records of the Crossbills, the Magpies, the Kingfisher, and the Tufted Titmouse. Among the larger birds which are especially noteworthy are the Common Tern, the Laughing Gull (though both of these are rather early to be considered as winter records), the Surf Scoter, the Red-breasted Merganser, and the hybrid duck. Concerning the latter specimen, the writer is very much indebted to Dr. C. W. Richmond for otherwise inaccessible information, and also for permission to present it in this paper.

Many of the common birds which are found every winter are not mentioned in the following list.

1. Pied-billed Grebe. *Podilymbus podiceps*. This species was seen at McCook Lake, South Dakota, as late as November 2, 1919, and November 10, 1918 (Allen).

2. Loon. *Gavia immer*. The Loon is seen on the lakes in this locality only as a migrant, and is not at all common. On April 19, 1919, Mr. Anderson mounted one which had been sent in from Le Mars, Iowa. And on November 15, 1919, another was

sent in from Badger Lake, Monona County, Iowa. Both were females.

3. Laughing Gull. *Larus atricilla*. On September 29, 1919, Mr. A. F. Allen found the carcass of a recently killed gull in immature or winter plumage at Lake Goodenough, Union County, South Dakota. Considerable difficulty was experienced in identifying this specimen, and the writer, though now satisfied, is subject to correction in the above determination. It is deemed advisable to publish the chief diagnostic characters, since this is the first local record of this species.

The back is pearl gray; the wings, except the primaries, are similar, but with more of an ashy tinge. The head is mottled, the forehead having more white; the nape is blackish; the back of the neck between nape and back, is grayish. The throat, under neck, and all underparts are pure white — no pinkish being noticeable. The tail is white above, with a sub-terminal black band of one inch width, and very slightly tipped with white. The eye is margined above, below, and behind with white, making three-quarters of an eye-ring; the other quarter of the eye-ring in front is distinctly black. The first and second primaries are wholly black, or blackish, except for a visible white spot at the tips scarcely as large as a pin-head. The other primaries (third to sixth) are also black with a distinct white tip, the latter increasing slightly in area to the size of the nail of the little finger. The feet were black; the bill is black now, though Mr. Anderson describes it as of "dark umber" color when fresh. The sex was undetermined.

In the diagnosis *franklini* and *philadelphia* have been excluded because of the color of the primaries; *sabini* has been excluded because the tail is not forked.

4. Common Tern. *Sterna hirundo*. On October 5, 1919, Mr. Anderson received and mounted a Common Tern which had been sent in from Le Mars, Iowa. This is the only authentic specimen of this species of which I know for northwestern Iowa. The relative abundance of *fosteri* and *hirundo* can be determined only by taking a larger number of specimens.

5. Double-crested Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax auritus*. The writer saw a mounted specimen of this species among a small collection in one of the cottages at Crystal Lake, Dakota county, Nebraska. The young man who had mounted it said that it had been shot at Crystal Lake in the fall of 1919, the exact date not being remembered.

6. Red-breasted Merganser. *Mergus serrator*. On November 25, 1919, Mr. Anderson received two mergansers from Wakefield, Nebraska. One of the specimens was clearly a female of *americanus*, having a deep red color on the head, with no gray; the bill was one and seven-eighths inches long, with one and three-eighths inches between the tip and the nostril. The other specimen was quite different. The plumage on the crown of the head contained some gray color; the bill was two and a quarter inches long, with one and five-eighths inches between the tip and the nostril. This specimen, we concluded, was a female of *Mergus serrator*, which makes about the sixth specimen of this species which Mr. Anderson has mounted.

7. Hooded Merganser. *Lophodytes cucullatus*. On November 11, 1918, Mr. Anderson received and mounted a male taken at Brown's Lake, Woodbury county, Iowa. On October 31, 1919, he received two females and an immature male from the same locality. And on November 3, 1919, he received a male which had been taken a short distance up Big Sioux river.

8. Hybrid. On November 4, 1919, two birds flying together (as reported) along Big Sioux river were shot by a hunter, who had them both mounted. One was a Black Duck, and the other proved to be an interesting hybrid between the Mallard and the Muscovy Duck. This bird was thirty-three inches long (tip of tail to tip of bill), and weighed six and a quarter pounds. The length of wing was thirteen and three-fourths inches; culmen, two and one-fourth inches; width of bill, one and one-eighth inches. The hind toe is lobed.

The head, back and upper tail are blackish with dark green iridescence. The breast is dark chestnut brown, grading darker above and lighter below. The belly is whitish, mottled heavily with black. A description, with samples of the plumage, was submitted to the Smithsonian Institution for identification. A very full reply was received from Dr. Chas. W. Richmond, Associate Curator of Birds, which, by kind permission, is reproduced, in large part, herewith.

"In reply to your letter of the 7th, enclosing sketch of a strange duck, I beg to say that there is little doubt that the bird represents what is known as a hybrid between the Muscovy Duck and the Mallard. Specimens of this hybrid are not common, and appear to be usually found in a wild state, though the cross must occur in a state of captivity, inasmuch as the breeding ranges of the wild birds are separated by hundreds of miles.

"The bird was first described in England by Donovan, in 1818, as *Anas bicolor*; later from the Continent by Schinz (1837) as *Anas purpureo-viridis*; by Bonaparte in 1841, as *Anas aeneo-rufa*; Gosse named it from Jamaica, in 1847, as *Anas maxima*; Bell called it *Fuligula viola* in 1852, from New York, and Philippi in 1860 named it *Anas iopareia*, from Chile.

"It thus appears to have been found in the Old World, where the Muscovy does not occur in the wild state, and it is not at all improbable that some, at least, of the crosses have been between domestic ducks and Muscovies; possibly all of them, as there is quite a range of variation in the colors of the various specimens. . . . All of the birds I have seen have been very large."

In a later letter the same correspondent adds that he has "since been informed that some observers have seen these birds in a domestic state, but our taxidermist, Mr. N. R. Wood, tells me that while he has seen hundreds of them in domestication, they all showed the characters of the Muscovy, and were probably crosses between the male of that species and the female of the mallard or the domestic bird. Possibly the wild birds that crop up from time to time are crosses between the female Muscovy and the male of the other."

9. Black Duck. *Anas rubripes*. In a preceding paragraph mention is made of a Black Duck taken up along Big Sioux river on November 4, 1919.

10. Wood Duck. *Aix sponsa*. Mr. Anderson mounted two specimens, as follows: a male, taken at Brown's Lake, Iowa, October 14, 1919; a male, taken at Lake Goodenough, South Dakota, September 22, 1919.

11. Ring-necked Duck. *Marila collaris*. One taken at Brown's Lake by a hunter on October 26, 1919, and mounted.

12. Bufflehead. *Charitonetta albeola*. The following specimens were mounted by Mr. Anderson:

November 6, 1918, a male from Orchard, Nebraska.

October 14, 1919, one from Winside, Nebraska.

October 31, 1919, one from Winside, Nebraska.

13. White-winged Scoter. *Oidemia deglandi*. An immature male was taken at Brown's Lake on December 3, 1918, by a hunter; mounted by Mr. Anderson, No. 3306.

14. Surf Scoter. *Oidemia perspicillata*. Mr. Anderson received a female specimen of this species from Mr. O. W. Remer, of Le Mars, Iowa, on November 16, 1919. The bird was taken

at Blue Lake, Monona county, Iowa. It was mounted as No. 3514, and probably still remains in Mr. Remer's private collection.

15. Whistling Swan. *Olor columbianus*. Three specimens are to be recorded as follows:

November 1, 1919, a female from Dakota City, Nebraska. No. 3489.

November 7, 1919, a female from Winside, Nebraska. No. 3497.

November 20, 1919, (sex ?) from Valentine, Nebraska. No. 3517.

16. Trumpeter Swan. *Olor buccinator*. (?). A swan was brought to Mr. Anderson on November 19, 1919, which he identified as *buccinator*. It was shot along the Nebraska side of the Missouri river between South Sioux City and Dakota City on, or about, November 14. When received by Mr. Anderson it was in too bad shape to mount, but he took the following description: Length of bill, three and seven-eighths inches; tip of bill to nostril, two and one-eighth inches; no yellow spot on the bill; number of tail feathers, fourteen. These points are not conclusive, of course; but Mr. Anderson felt quite sure that this bird differed from *columbianus*, of which he had three specimens on hand for comparison. He has also mounted *buccinator* in previous years. The facts are here presented for what they are worth.

17. Black-crowned Night Heron. *Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*. On October 19, 1919, Mr. G. O. Ludcke saw a large number of these herons at Woonsocket, South Dakota. He estimated that there must have been two hundred, at least, roosting in the tall grass, there being no trees in that vicinity.

18. Sandhill Crane. *Grus mexicana*. On September 15, 1918, a Sandhill Crane was shot near the "High Bridge" over the Missouri river, within the city limits of Sioux City, and delivered to Mr. Anderson. It was too badly damaged for mounting.

19. Avocet. *Recurvirostra americana*. On September 28, 1918, three of these birds were shot out of a flock of eight at a point about thirty miles southwest of Atkinson, Nebraska. All three were mounted by Mr. Anderson.

20. Wilson's Snipe. *Gallinago delicata*. Mr. G. O. Ludcke saw a large number of these birds on the bottom land near Hornick, Iowa, on September 26, 1919.

21. White-rumped Sandpiper. *Pisobia fusicollis*. A great many were seen at Lake Goodenough on September 22, 1919, by Mr. Ludcke. Several were taken, but none were preserved.

22. Sharp-shinned Hawk. *Accipiter velox*. One was shot by

G. O. Ludcke near McCook Lake in South Dakota on September 29, 1919.

23. Broad-winged Hawk. *Buteo platypterus*. A female was sent in from Plainview, Nebraska, and mounted by Mr. Anderson on April 27, 1919 (No. 3372). Another specimen (sex?) was taken on September 28, 1919, in Greenville, Sioux City (No. 3456).

24. American Rough-legged Hawk. *Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*. The following specimens were received by Mr. Anderson:

October 20, 1918, one shot by Anderson near Sargeants Bluff, but not mounted.

November 27, 1918, a male taken south of Crystal Lake, Nebraska. No. 3300.

November 27, 1918, a female taken at the same place. No. 3301.

December 3, 1918, a female from Lester, Iowa. No. 3305.

25. Ferruginous Rough-legged Hawk. *Archibuteo ferrugineus*. A male was sent in from Ponca, Nebraska, on February 11, 1919, and mounted by Mr. Anderson (No. 3347).

26. Golden Eagle. *Aquila chrysaetos*. The following specimens are to be recorded from Mr. Anderson's shop:

October 29, 1918, a female from Plainview, Nebraska. No. 3285.

December 31, 1918, a male from Winside, Nebraska. No. 3320.

February 28, 1919, (sex ?) from Jackson, Nebraska. No. 3557.

February 8, 1920, a male from Beresford, South Dakota. No. 3561.

27. Bald Eagle. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. The following specimens are to be recorded:

October 12, 1918, a male from Leeds, Sioux City, Iowa.

November 3, 1918, a female from Akron, Iowa. No. 3291.

28. Duck Hawk. *Falco peregrinus anatum*. On November 4, 1918, Mr. Anderson collected and mounted an immature female Duck Hawk, this being taken near Badger Lake, Monona county, Iowa (No. 3286). This is the second record of this species in the Sioux City area.

29. Sparrow Hawk. *Falco sparverius*. One sent in from Bridgewater, South Dakota, was mounted by Mr. Anderson on September 15, 1918.

30. Osprey. *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*. A male Osprey was shot at Jackson Lake, Nebraska, on October 9, 1919, and mounted by Mr. Anderson.

31. Barn Owl. *Aluco pratincola*. An unusual number of these birds were mounted during the period covered by this report, as follows:

October 19, 1919, a female from Walthill, Nebraska.

November 6, 1918, a male taken locally. No. 3288.

November 27, 1918, a male from Winside, Nebraska. No. 3299.

November 29, 1918, a female from South Sioux City, Nebraska, No. 3302.

April 13, 1919, a male taken locally. No. 3370.

October 15, 1919, a female from Dakota county, Nebraska. No. 3473.

October 20, 1919, a female from Ethan, South Dakota. No. 3469.

November 17, 1919, a male from Leeds, Sioux City, Iowa. No. 3513.

32. Long-eared Owl. *Asio wilsonianus*. A male captured on the grounds of the Sioux City Country Club on October 25, 1918, was mounted (No. 3284).

33. Short-eared Owl. *Asio flammeus*. A female was taken at Riverside Park, in Sioux City, on November 18, 1918, and mounted by Mr. Anderson (No. 3294). On December 21, 1919, three or four Short-eared Owls were seen at Pierson, Iowa, by E. W. Johns. Mr. W. R. Mills saw eleven at the same place on December 26, and Mr. L. B. Snyder counted twelve on the same date. Mr. Johns saw seven or eight again on March 2 and 4, 1920. At this time they seemed to spend the day in the Red Cedar trees of the town park. Mr. Mills last saw these birds on March 14, 1920, at which time there were only two individuals.

34. Barred Owl. *Strix varia*. This is a very unusual species in most of this area. On November 23, 1919, Mr. Anderson received a female which had been shot in Mulhall's pasture, near Riverside, Sioux City (No. 3522).

35. Saw-whet Owl. *Cryptoglaux acadica*. Mr. Wier R. Mills, of Pierson, Iowa, kindly furnishes the following note: "On March 13, 14, and 18, 1919, I saw a Saw-whet Owl in a pine tree in our yard. I am positively sure of my identification in this instance; and Johns saw the bird and said there was no question whatever about it."

36. Screech Owl. *Otus asio*. These birds have been present during both seasons, but are becoming less numerous in town, because many people dislike them for one reason or another and destroy them.

37. Great Horned Owl. *Bubo virginianus*. The three specimens received during the two seasons seem rather meager in comparison with the records of the preceding season. Considering the number of specimens and the localities, there is no evidence of an invasion of these birds.

December 31, 1918, a female from Greenville, Sioux City. No. 3321.

March 21, 1919, a female from Wynot, Nebraska. No. 3363.

May 16, 1920, a female from McCook Lake, South Dakota. No. 3620.

38. Snowy Owl. *Nyctea nyctea*. The winter of 1917-1918 witnessed a very remarkable flight of Snowy Owls in this area, which was reported in detail in a previous volume of these Proceedings.¹ During the winter of 1918-1919 there was still evidence of a southward movement of these birds. But during the winter of 1919-1920 none were reported or brought in. These facts seem to cast a shadow of doubt upon the weather conditions being the primary cause of the movement. If the owl invasion of 1917-1918 was due to the failure of their food supply in the north (rabbits and hares) the partial movement of 1918-1919 would suggest a slow and proportionate recovery of the normal rabbit population in the north. The following records are to be reported for the season of 1918-1919 in the area being considered:

- November 7, 1918, a male from Parkston, South Dakota. No. 3290.
- November 21, 1918, a female from Westfield, Iowa. No. 3295.
- November 26, 1918, a male from Cole's Addition, Sioux City. No. 3298.
- December 4, 1918, a female from Renville, Minnesota. No. 3307.
- December 5, 1918, a female from Bridgewater, South Dakota. No. 3308.
- December 5, 1918, a female from Alta, Iowa. No. 3309.
- December 8, 1918, one at McCook Lake, South Dakota, Field Record.
- December 27, 1918, a female from Artas, South Dakota. No. 3317.
- January 20, 1919, one from Anthon, Iowa.
- February 3, 1919, a male from Hudson, South Dakota. No. 3340.
- February 3, 1919, a male from Hudson, South Dakota. No. 3341.
- February 3, 1919, a female from Hudson, South Dakota. No. 3342.

Specimen No. 3298 was shot while in the act of killing a quail. The record of December 8, 1918, was made by A. F. Allen. The specimen from Anthon, Iowa, was sent in alive to the Stone Park collection.

39. Kingfisher. *Ceryle alcyon*. The kingfisher has never been recorded here as a winter bird, so far as the writer is aware. The following note of Mr. Weir R. Mills will, therefore, be of interest: "I saw a Belted Kingfisher on January 1, 1920, near Pierson (Iowa). Although the day was cold and there was considerable snow on the ground, there were a few spots where the stream was not frozen over, and this was where I saw the bird. I had a fine opportunity for observation, and I am absolutely sure of the identification — never was more sure of anything."

40. Pileated Woodpecker. *Phloeotomus pileatus*. Mr. Anderson received a specimen of this bird on November 22, 1918, from Hill City, Minnesota. It would probably be *abieticola*.

¹ Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XXV, pp. 71-84, 1918.

41. Magpie. *Pica hudsonia*. Magpies seemed to be more numerous than usual during the winter of 1919-1920. There seems to be no way of determining at present whether these are Dakota birds which are driven south by the severity of the weather, or whether they have moved eastward in Nebraska along the Niobrara valley. Newspaper accounts indicated that Magpies were unusually numerous this winter in the vicinity of Ainsworth, along the Niobrara.

The Magpies were first brought to our attention on November 28, 1919, when a male was sent in to Mr. Anderson from Dakota City, Nebraska. It was later ascertained that this one was shot out of a flock of "two dozen or more" along the bluffs three or four miles north of Homer, Nebraska. Mr. Fred H. Schmidt, who sent the bird in, said that he had never seen that kind around there before; although he saw one or two around his farm nearly every day for some time afterward.

On January 4, 1920, Mr. Youngberg saw six Magpies at McCook Lake. On March 13, 1920, a female was sent to Mr. Anderson from Plainview, Nebraska, and mounted (No. 3578).

42. Purple Finch. *Carpodacus purpureus*. This species has now been seen in the field during the month of November for the last three years. The 1917 record was previously reported. On November 3, 1918, the writer, with A. F. Allen, saw one female near Stone Park. Mr. Allen saw a male on November 2, 1919, at McCook Lake, South Dakota, and a pair on November 23, 1919, in Dakota county, Nebraska.

43. Red Crossbill. *Loxia curvirostra minor*. This rather irregular species was noted four times last winter. One male and three females were seen by Mr. Anderson in the north part of the city on October 18, 1919. On November 2, 1919, Mrs. H. M. Bailey and Miss Aiken saw two males and four females feeding on wild hemp seeds in the Cardinal Glen. On the same date Mr. Allen saw a male and a female at McCook Lake, the male having been shot. Again on February 29, 1920, Mr. Allen saw a male and three females in the vicinity of Stone Park. Miss Ada B. Wendell, of Smithland, Iowa, writes that "American Crossbills were seen last Saturday, April 10, 1920.

44. White-winged Crossbill. *Loxia leucoptera*. The writer is also indebted to Miss Ada B. Wendell for the following record of occurrence at Smithland, Iowa.

"The White-winged Crossbills were first seen at our place December 10, 1919, but were reported a week or two before that.

I had a splendid opportunity to study them, as they came in small flocks of eight or twelve each day about four o'clock and ate the cones on our spruce trees, not over thirty feet from our door. They were dark red—more the color of the orchard oriole, and not as pink as shown in Reed's Guide. The white wing bar was very distinct. Could not give date when last seen, but think they were here most of the winter and seemed to be in small flocks here and there about town."

45. Redpoll. *Acanthis linaria*. The big flight of Redpolls was in the winter of 1916-1917. Since then there have been only a few stragglers. On January 19, 1919, a flock of six were seen in Logan Park Cemetery by Messrs. Allen, Ludcke and the writer. Three small flocks were reported by Mr. Allen in February and March, 1920.

46. Goldfinch. *Astragalinus tristis*. These birds, which are usually common throughout our winter season, were notable in their absence in the winter of 1919-1920. None were reported from the last of November to the last of February; while in most years at such a time they are hardly missed on any trip. Late in the spring local newspapers carried items referring to large flocks of Goldfinches in the southeastern corner of the state (Iowa). The following observations by Mr. Frank C. Pellett refer to the vicinity of Hamilton, Illinois, and Keokuk, Iowa.

"We are now having the most remarkable visitation of Goldfinches that I ever saw. The whole town is talking about the 'wild canaries' which appear in flocks of hundreds on the lawns eating seeds of the dandelion. All my life I have been accustomed to seeing these birds in small flocks of a dozen or more; but this spring thousands of them are present hereabout, and have been here for a number of days. One will see a big flock in the trees and on the grass, and walking a few blocks will see a similar flock; going into the country still other flocks will be seen."

One wonders to what extent this assemblage of one species took place.

47. Pine Siskin. *Spinus pinus*. Mr. Allen noted small flocks at McCook Lake in December and February. They were frequently seen by others during March and April, and as late as May 2, 1920.

48. Gambel's Sparrow. *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*. The writer saw four Gambel's Sparrows on October 5, 1919, in the

ravines east of Morningside. This is believed to be the first record of this species in the Sioux City area.

49. Tree Sparrow. *Spizella monticola*. This species did not seem to be present in the usual numbers during either season.

50. Cardinal. *Cardinalis cardinalis*. The Cardinal seems to be holding its own at least. A trip in the proper environment seldom fails to list several of them in almost any season.

51. Bohemian Waxwing. *Bombycilla garrula*. The last important visitation of Bohemian Waxwings was in the spring of 1917. None were noted during 1918-1919. In 1919-1920 they first appeared on December 16, and were seen in flocks of varying size throughout the winter and early spring, the latest date being May 4. No one reported any during March, but they were abundant in February, and were noted in small flocks throughout April. The largest flocks seen at any one time were estimated at about one hundred. The fact of interest is not so much the largeness of the flocks, as the large number of small flocks which were very generally distributed.

The writer has learned, through correspondence, of the occurrence of this species at other points. On December 15 a flock estimated at a hundred or more visited Trenton, in southwestern Nebraska. Miss Aiken observed a flock of about thirty at Carroll, Iowa, on the 25th and 26th of December; they were feeding on frozen apples. Mr. N. W. Williams told me of a flock at Ames, Iowa, during the last week of January. A flock of about twenty were reported by E. W. Johns at Pierson, Iowa, from the tenth to the twentieth of February.

The Bohemian seems to be chiefly frugivorous in diet in the winter season. I have never seen them eating seeds, and have searched through much literature for mention of it, but without success. In this immediate locality the most important item of food seems to be the fruit of the artificially planted Russian Olive trees in the public parks of the city. The large number of these trees scattered in the various large and small parks throughout the city no doubt plays an important part in holding these birds for so long a period of the winter. Among the other winter fruits which the Bohemian Waxwing has been observed to eat in this region may be mentioned the bittersweet berries, hackberries, wild grapes, frozen apples, and asparagus berries. The use of the last named fruit was observed twice in December by the writer, and once in January by Mrs. Bailey, and all in dif-

ferent localities. This was thought to be a novel observation, but the writer has since found that a similar observation was made by F. A. Pennington in Chicago, and reported in Bird-Lore (XIII, page 305, 1911).

The writer has examined a good many published accounts of the Waxwing in a search for notes on the food habits. The following table indicating the number of writers who have mentioned various food items may be of general interest.

Mountain Ash Berries.....	18
Juniper and Cedar berries.....	13
Insects	7
Hawthorne apples.....	4
Cultivated apples.....	4
Wild grapes.....	3
Rose hips.....	3
Bittersweet berries.....	2
Persimmons	2
Dogwood berries.....	1
Sumac berries.....	1
Buffalo berries.....	1
Smilax berries.....	1
Laurel berries.....	1
Asparagus berries.....	1
Hackberries	1
Barberries	1
Bearberries	1
Wolfberries	1
Cranberries	1
Chokeberries	1
Madrona tree berries.....	1
Russian Olives.....	1
Currants	1
Figs	1

A number of writers have seen the Waxwings catch and eat insects in true flycatcher style; this is usually late in the season, of course, or in the northern states where these birds may linger longer.

We wish to mention one other habit observed in these birds which seems to be peculiar. Two observers, at different times, told the writer of seeing Bohemian Waxwings alight in the snow and eat of it. One of the observers describes the method by saying that the birds lowered the head and scooped up the snow with the lower mandible. It is assumed that the snow was swallowed, although the action of the throat muscles was not noticed. In both cases the birds had just previously been feeding on

berries, and there might be some who would explain the procedure as a method of washing the beak; but why lower the mandible, as stated? The only mention I find of this habit is that by W. H. Bergtold, viz., "the birds (Bohemian Waxwings) were feeding on Russian Olives and snow." (Auk, XXXVI, page 342, 1917).

52. Brown Creeper. *Certhia familiaris americana*. About as usual in 1918-1919, but more scarce in 1919-1920.

53. Red-breasted Nuthatch. *Sitta canadensis*. Mrs. F. W. Marshall had one of these nuthatches as a daily visitor at her feeding shelf throughout the winter, and it remained as late as May 4, 1920. Miss Ada B. Wendell also reported the Red-breasted Nuthatch at suet stations in Smithland, Iowa. They would sometimes come in pairs.

54. Tufted Titmouse. *Baeolophus bicolor*. Miss Wendell also reports the Tufted Titmouse at Smithland during the winter of 1919-1920. She writes as follows: "The Titmouse has been reported by bird observers here for years. This winter they were seen the first week or so in January, one at a time. A few weeks later they came continuously to eat meat placed on the wood-pile, and usually appeared in pairs."

The Titmouse has never been observed in the western part of the county (Woodbury) so far as the writer knows. This is another species which presents a problem in distribution. Smithland is located in the valley of the Little Sioux river, and is surrounded by a heavier growth of timber than is to be found, perhaps, in any other part of the county. The question is whether these birds have reached this point by overland flight, or by closely following the wooded valley.

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY,
MORNINGSIDE COLLEGE.