

Oriole (*Icterus bullocki*) nesting at Green River City, Utah. In this locality the orioles were quite numerous and were in the midst of their nesting season.

Maggies (*Pica pica hudsonia*) also were very common. One of these omnivorous feeders, a juvenile about one-half to two-thirds grown, was observed circling about an oriole's nest as though searching for a breakfast of eggs. The Magpie soon alighted in the tree in which the nest was hanging and began to come closer and closer to the beautiful swinging structure. Almost at the instant the Magpie settled upon the edge of the nest, the male oriole, which apparently was but a few rods away, was heard to give an abrupt and angry call of warning. A moment later the enraged male came with all his force at the intruder, striking it on the crown of the head. The Magpie dropped to the ground, stunned to such an extent that the writer was able to pick it up, and only after ten minutes could it regain sufficient strength to fly away.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C.*

**Bass eats Yellowthroat, young Stilts, and young Ducks.**—While fishing on Lake Okeechobee, Florida, in October, 1942, our party caught a three-pound largemouth bass (*Huro salmoides*) that had the remains of a Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) in its stomach. This fish struck savagely from under a clump of water hyacinth at a surface lure, and it is easy to imagine how it could catch a Yellowthroat, fluttering over the water to pick up floating insects, as I've seen them do in a similar manner.

Mr. Marvin Chandler of Okeechobee City tells me that some years ago he saw bass take downy young Stilts (*Himantopus mexicanus*) that had been frightened into the waters of Lake Okeechobee and were swimming there, and that he knew of eight of a brood of twelve downy young domestic ducks being eaten by bass in a single day on a tributary of Lake Istokpoga.—A. L. RAND, *Archbold Biological Station, Lake Placid, Florida.*

**Turkey Vulture feeding habits.**—On June 5, 1942, Elton J. Hansens and I flushed five Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*) on the Cross Keys Road, about two miles east of Glassboro, New Jersey. Upon arriving where the birds had been we found the remains of the carapace and plastron of an eastern box turtle, *Terrapene carolina carolina*. These parts had been cleaned of most of the meat. The turtle had been killed that morning by an automobile and what meat was left appeared fresh and no apparent decomposition had set in as no odor was noticeable.

On June 17, 1942, Mr. Hansens and I flushed a Turkey Vulture on the Cross Keys Road about a mile east of Glassboro. We found that the bird had been attracted by a dead gray squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis carolinensis*. The bird was flushed before it had a chance to start eating the squirrel. The squirrel was covered with greenbottle-flies (Calliphoridae), but there was no noticeable odor.

In both of these cases it is interesting to note that there was no odor which might attract the Vultures to these dead animals; also that in both cases they were interested in fairly fresh meat. This shows that odor may play little or no part in helping Turkey Vultures find their food.—WILLIAM F. RAPP, JR., *130 Washington Avenue, Chatham, New Jersey.*

**Defensive behavior of the White-breasted Nuthatch.**—On the morning of April 25, 1942, while conducting field observations on birds in Washington Park, Albany, New York, I witnessed a demonstration of the interesting defensive behavior of a

pair of White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta c. carolinensis*). Both birds were busily engaged in the construction of a nest in a knothole in a partially decayed limb about eighteen feet up in a soft maple tree. The male had just delivered to the female within the nest cavity a small amount of material that appeared to consist of the frayed vane of a delicate feather when the proceedings were interrupted by the presence of a prowling Northern Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis leucotis*).

Slowly and somewhat hesitatingly the squirrel ascended the limb toward the nest but at once the male nuthatch uttered a low alarm note and forthwith fluffed out his body feathers to their full extent. Still the squirrel came on. Then the male nuthatch, with all the contour feathers elevated and spread, and the wings extended as completely as possible, began a steady, rhythmic, side-to-side swaying movement, the while advancing toward and retreating from the now irresolute squirrel. Neither the bird nor the squirrel uttered a sound audible to the observer a few feet away. Presently the female nuthatch emerged from the nest-opening and joined her mate in the feather-elevating and rhythmical swaying of her body.

Both nuthatches remained close together on the limb, the female more or less completely covering the opening to the nest-cavity with her body and extended wings. This performance was continued for three to four minutes. The sight of these two suddenly enlarged birds with contrasting black and white coloration, rapidly vibrating wings, and threatening demeanor brought the squirrel to an uncertain halt; then a well-directed peck from the still quivering male nuthatch prompted the intruder quickly to take his departure from the scene.

While the birds themselves may have been in no acute peril from the squirrel, their mutual assumption of this unique oscillating attitude, similar to that sometimes employed in mating performances, obviously was effective in discouraging the presence of a larger, unwanted animal, which *threatened* real or at least imaginary danger.—DAYTON STONER, *New York State Museum, Albany, New York*.

**Canada Geese perching at Malheur Refuge.**—On April 30, 1940, while locating and recording data on waterfowl nests in the southern part of the West Swamp Field, in Unit 4 of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon, assisted by a crew of C.C.C. enrollees, the writer and the enrollees noted a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) perched on top of a fence post at the south edge of the field. The bird was observed for some time at a distance of 100 yards. It was facing a fairly strong wind which did not seem to affect its perching ability. The post was measured after the bird was flushed, and was found to be 65 inches high, the roughly diamond-shaped top being 10 inches by 7 inches. A C.C.C. foreman reported seeing a similar occurrence, on two different occasions, in Unit 2 near the old P-Ranch buildings of the Malheur Refuge, about ten days previously. This was about six miles south of the Unit 4 observation, and in all probability was not the same bird.

The following year, on April 24, while locating Canada Goose and Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) nests in the Unit 4-area mentioned above, the writer again observed a Canada Goose perched on a fence post. It appeared to be on the same post that the goose was noted using the previous year. There was no wind blowing that day. The goose remained on the post only a few minutes before flying away.