

killdeer were known to have nested. Leaving the young bird in a container, I hid nearby. The calls of the young bird soon attracted a pair of adults, which exhibited great interest in the container. Upon my appearance to free the captive the adults became very agitated and acted similarly to nesting birds or birds with young. They refused to approach the newly found bird, until I had retreated a great distance.

Upon subsequent visits to this area, these birds have exhibited the great agitation of parents but the young bird has not been seen.

It must be stated that this incident cannot be considered a proven successful adoption, although the indications are that it may have been. Unfortunately, time did not allow the procurement of a band so that the young bird could be marked. — Robert H. Cerwonka, State University College of Education, Potsdam.

Chuck-will's-widow in Monroe County: Late on the afternoon of June 1, 1961, Dr. Gerhard Leubner was netting and banding birds in a hedgerow just west of Braddock's Bay, and a short distance away Walter Listman was observing late spring migrants which were still passing along this narrow strip between two fields. Listman's attention was suddenly drawn to an unknown bird which arose from the ground almost underfoot, flew a short distance, and soon settled down again in thick cover. It appeared rather owl-like, but the brownish color and the long, squarish tail puzzled the observer.

By a combination of skill and luck the bird was driven into one of Leubner's nets. It then was seen to be a goatsucker of large size, with a general buffy appearance and brownish throat. Measurement showed the bird to be 12½ inches in length. Several colored pictures were taken of the bird, and these turned out very well in spite of the dull, overcast day.

The bird remained in this rather restricted area until at least July 2, when it was last seen by Warren Lloyd. The bird seemed partial to a low, horizontal limb of a pear tree and was often seen perched there. When driven off, it frequently circled around and returned to the same perch.

The area where the bird was found is a long, narrow strip of land about ¼ mile west of Braddock's Bay and about the same distance south of Lake Ontario. The immediate area is an abandoned pear orchard, well grown with vines and tangles and somewhat swampy. The area north of it is similar brushy thickets with some cultivated land and summer cottages along the lakefront.

In addition to the two original observers the bird was seen by Margaret Foley, John Foster, Warren Lloyd, Ruth MacRae, Al Malley, Tom Tetlow, and myself.

On May 19, 1959 Joseph Taylor reported having heard a Chuck-will's-widow near his home in Brighton (Ed — see **Kingbird**, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 78). The bird called persistently for a considerable length of time, even answering a recording of its call on one of the bird records. Mr. Taylor is familiar with the bird as a result of much time spent in its regular range in the South.

Insofar as I know, these are the only two records for the Chuck-will's widow in New York State. — Howard S. Miller, 54 Luella Street, Rochester 9.

Albinism in a Catbird: Notes on albinism in the **Kingbird** have always been interesting; since this is a comparatively rare occurrence, the following may be of additional interest.

On May 31, 1961, with Mrs. Helen Muhleman of Bronxville, I visited the Audubon Nature Center at Greenwich, Connecticut. Shortly after our arrival, we noticed several Catbirds calling near the entrance to the Center, and as we watched, a strange looking bird appeared in an open space, hopping around on the ground and in low bushes. We watched it with binoculars at about 25 feet.

The outstanding effect was a pale, ghostly grey, with white wing and tail feathers. The only color we could see was the chestnut of the under-tail coverts, confirming our identification of the bird, based on shape, size and actions, as a Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*). This is another example, therefore, of shades of red or brown being the last color to be lost, when partial albinism occurs . . . i.e. partially albino Robins usually having varying amount of red on the breast, and the Rose-breasted Grosbeak pictured in A. A. Allen's **Stalking Birds with Color Camera** (page 90) retained its rose breast.

The bird shortly disappeared into the bushes with other Catbirds. None of the Nature Center Personnel had seen it at that time. A subsequent visit of Mrs. Muhleman gave her a brief glimpse of the bird in approximately the same place which has a large tangled mass of briars nearby and is the favorite nesting place of Catbirds. At this date (May) it could not have been a bird of the year, so had escaped predators for at least a year. We will keep a close watch and try to find whether this bird raised a brood and produced others with the same trait. —

Mrs. Margaret Cornwell, 8 Hanfling Road, Scarsdale.

Crows Hunting mice: In late winter crows find their supply of food greatly diminished by the blanket of snow and the cold weather. Corn and other grains are hidden under the snow or held captive by the frozen ground. Insects have long since disappeared and crows often resort to animals that are killed on the highways or other sources of food. In late February crows sometimes find food by catching mice in the fields. I observed one phase of this during the winter of 1960 - 61.

While out hunting for rabbits I noticed a flock of ten or twelve crows perched in a hedgerow. After watching them for some time, I saw two crows fly out over the field and land on the snow. Closer observation revealed the crows had spotted two mice running around on top of the snow. One proceeded to run and half fly and caught one of the mice. After picking it up two or three times and tossing it like a cat would, it picked up the mouse and flew back to the hedgerow. While this was going on the second crow watched, but after the first crow had left, it proceeded to catch the other mouse in the same manner.

A second phase of mouse hunting engaged in by crows involves the location of nests as they become visible through the melting snow. I have found crow tracks in the snow near exposed nests. The nests were completely torn apart and the contents spread around on the snow. The locating of nests was very thorough for I could not find a single nest left untouched in the two fields I searched. I found no evidence that any mice were caught in this manner, or that it was the exposed nests that attracted the crows. Since the snow was melting, the possibility arises that the crows sighted the mice on the snow and chased them to the nest before the nest was destroyed and the mouse caught. — Howard E. Baer, Graduate Student, College of Education, State University of New York, Cortland.

Herring Gulls Catching Flying Ants: During the last two weeks of August, 1961, a large number of Herring Gulls attracted attention by their unusual antics. They were observed on several consecutive evenings about 6:00 P.M. flying in tight very low circles almost to the "stalling" point at about 200-300 feet altitude. Their necks were extended, and their heads would turn from side to side. Their legs were also extended, and their heads would turn from side to side. Their flight. Some were observed to suddenly dart their heads out, mouth open wide, and catch some object unseen by the naked eye. This activity continued from one-half to three-quarters of an hour, and when binoculars were used it was seen that the gulls were catching insects, in much the same fashion as swallows but of course without their fleet-winged finesse. It was impossible to identify the type of insects being caught; however, it is reasonable to suppose that the bulk of them were ants, since at this time there were myriads of winged ants emerging from our lawn and from other lawns in the immediate area. Being very familiar with the soaring antics of Herring Gulls I can accurately state that during the incident mentioned they were actively engaged in catching insects.

By the first few days of September the mystical ant flights had ceased and no further ant pursuit by the gulls was noted. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the object of interest was the ants, an item not heretofore mentioned as part of their diet. — Thomas Lesperance, Keeseville.

Correction: A Scarlet Tanager was present at Short Beach through Dec 10, in field note in May issue, should read unidentified tanager.
