

female returned in a few minutes from afield, approached and left the nest as previously. The male again resumed his songs and calls from his favored perch some 30 feet from the nest.

Dr. Wesley Lanyon, an assistant Curctor of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, has spent considerable time studying Meadowlarks and is still engaged in research of the two species. Dr. Lanyon had learned of this far ranging Western Meadowlark and viewed the bird a few days prior to June 26. On this date he arrived to trap the male bird, his mate and the brood.

The male was finally trapped late in the day by using another male Western Meadowlark as a decoy. Prior to capture, the Dutchess songster's identity had been confirmed by songs and calls. Now, further verification of its being a Western Meadowlark was aided by noting the paler coloring of the upper parts and the extension of the yellow color of the throat up on the bird's cheek.

The female Eastern Meadowlark was trapped at the nest and the young, ready to fledge, were also taken. The entire family was transported that night to the Museum's aviary on Long Island where Dr. Lanyon hopes to accomplish further breeding of the parents and the hybrid brood.

Recent correspondence regarding these Dutchess County birds informs us that all are in excellent plumage and healthy. The sex ratio of the young, worked out on the basis of wing measurements made from the fresh basic plumage of last fall, is four females and one male.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that there has been a gradual easterly spread of the Western Meadowlark over the past half century. Sightings have been made in the Western part of New York State. However, The Dutchess County incident is the most easterly nesting sighting of the species and the mating, plus the successful rearing of the hybrid young is most unusual. The future will doubtless disclose more such immigrants and it behooves us, when afield, to be alert to this possibility, and to make careful observations.

(Mrs.) Alice D. Jones, Knolls Rd., Poughkeepsie

Effects of unharvested corn on bird populations: Last fall (1962), on our farm near Binghamton, we were unable to harvest about two acres of corn, and it remained standing all winter. Snow was drifted deeply in the field all winter and the grain attracted only a few crows and raccoons.

This Spring (1963) the bird population seemed to be greatly enhanced by the attraction of the grain. The following figures for 1963 represent the highest numbers of birds counted at various times between April 1st and May 15. The figures for a comparable period in 1962 are from my day by day records for this immediate area.

	1963	1962
Rusty Blackbirds -----	9	none
Red-winged Blackbirds -----	150	50
Crows -----	40	5
Cowbirds -----	40 to 50	10
Starlings -----	60 to 80	50
Grackles -----	100 to 120	0 to 5
Mourning Doves -----	10	0 to 4
Mallard Duck -----	one pair	none
Black Duck -----	one pair	none
Bobolink -----	8 to 10	5
Meadow Lark -----	10 to 15	5

To add to the picture of the bionomics of this spot there have been the nestings of two avian predators in the immediate vicinity. A Great Horned Owl nested within a few hundred feet from the south end of the corn field and two owl fledglings finally left this nest on May 22. The other predators are a pair of Cooper's Hawks which are nesting within a few hundred feet from the north end of the field. The Black Ducks remained to nest at a nearby pond and the grackles are nesting in this area where they have not nested within my memory or at least my record keeping.

The Mourning Doves are still in the neighborhood though the corn has been plowed under. The Doves (two pairs at least) have shown signs of nesting activity.
Claude R. Howard Jr. R. D. #2, Binghamton

Chestnut-Collared Longspurs Sighted in Columbia County: On Thursday, February 14th, 1963 Mr. Henry Thurston of Claverack and Mr. Paul Erlenbach of Ghent, New York members of the Alan Devoe Bird Club, were in the field observing Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and Lapland Longspurs. They were on the level river plains in the Township of Kinderhook when they saw two Chestnut-collared Longspurs in winter plumage with a flock of Lapland Longspurs. Mr. Thurston had previous field experience with the species and had little doubt of what he saw.

Mrs. Donald Radke, records chairman of the Alan Devoe Bird Club, notified Dr. E. M. Reilly as soon as possible. However, a week passed before he was able to get to the area. February 21st was clear (cloud cover about 1/10th) windy (10-15 mph) and cold (5°-6°F). The snow cover on the open fields was about 10-15 inches deep and crusted. Where the farmers had spread manure on top of the snow large flocks of the winter field birds had gathered. Thurston, Erlenbach and Reilly went to the spot where the rarities were first sighted but saw only two or three Lapland Longspurs with the Horned Larks and Snow Buntings.

Cruising about the large area several large flocks of birds were seen including one flock which we estimated contained a minimum of 100 Lapland Longspurs. Since the New York State Museum did not have good specimens of winter Lapland Longspurs several unsuccessful attempts were made to collect one or two of these. The wind combined with the bright sun on the snow and skittish birds made proper stalking impossible and the cold prevented waiting in "ambush" any length of time.

On one such foray Reilly sighted two Chestnut-collared Longspurs with a flock of Laplands. The reddish brown of the shoulders and the prominent white patches on the tail separated them from the nearby Lapland Longspurs using 7 x 35 coated optic field glasses at a distance of about 70 yards. When flushed the distinctive "black triangle on a white wedge" tail field mark was observed. Reilly was never able to get closer than 50-60 yards to the birds, but twice more had good looks at the species he had never before seen in the field. Thurston and Erlenbach had remained near the car on this occasion. On another trip the following week Reilly failed to locate the birds.

The Chestnut-collared Longspur *Calcarius ornatus* has been collected only three times in New York; all on Long Island: September 14, 1891, February 16, 1889 and April 27, 1923. There is at least one other sight record from the State, but details are lacking. This high prairie species of Longspur which winters south to central eastern Mexico, sometimes finds its way to the Atlantic coast in winter and has been thus recorded from New Brunswick to New Jersey. Its occurrence inland in New York, even although still in the Hudson River Valley is apparently an even rarer event.
Henry Thurston, Paul Erlenbach, E. M. Reilly, Jr.

Crow migration observed at Sodus Point, Lake Ontario: The pallor of a long winter held its frozen grip on Western New York in early March. Migrants were long overdue in the Rochester area, but the Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) ignored the weather, and followed their stringent migrational urge by the calendar.

On February 20, their erratic flights signaled the start of the spring migration. That Wednesday, approximately 250 Crows flew east along Lake Ontario via Sodus Point. From February 20 to May 9 daily counts were made at Sodus Point. The highest estimates occurred on March 9 & 26, and April 19 when roughly 12-14 thousand birds were counted each date. With a few exceptions, such as March 10 and March 25, when a probable 11,000 birds flew per day, and the exceptions listed below, only a couple hundred crows or less were seen per day.

March 2	Approx 6,000	March 18	Approx 1,000
March 16	Approx 8,000	March 24	Approx 1,000
March 17	Approx 5,000	April 4	Approx 2,500