

etc. The habitat near Schenectady is repeated in spots northward up to the Lake George area — and farther up?"

Eared Grebe Collected near Olean: Between 1 and 6 A.M. April 24, 1967 a severe storm passed through the Olean area with strong west winds, leaving 2-3 inches of snow. This storm forced many waterfowl to seek shelter on rivers and ponds of western New York. The count of birds taken at 1 P.M. that day on the Allegheny River from Olean Creek a half mile downstream was: 1 Red-necked Grebe, 306 Horned Grebes, 3 American Widgeon, 2 Ring-necked Ducks, 120 Lesser Scaup, 6 Common Goldeneye, 113 Buffleheads, 94 Oldsquaw, 93 White-winged Scoters, 1 Ruddy Duck, 1 Hooded Merganser, 4 Red-breasted Mergansers, and 12 Bonaparte's Gulls. For counts of birds from other areas see *Prothonotary* 33:70-71.

This same storm may have brought the Eared Grebe (*Podiceps caspicus*), with black neck, which Joseph A. Grzybowski observed on April 30, 1967 on the Allegheny River at the Olean Sewage Treatment Plant with 7 Horned Grebes. This was about one mile downstream from where the count was made on April 24. Later in the day the bird was collected by S. W. Eaton with the help of Grzybowski. It was a female, ovary 7.0 mm. $\times$ 20.0 mm.; bill 21.1 mm.; wing 127.1 mm.; tarsus 41.6 mm. The specimen is mostly in 'breeding feather' but still not in 'high plumage'; neck and throat still with small freckling of winter feathers. Rump not as dark nor sides of rump as chestnut as a May male from Colorado; primaries all grayish underneath — NO WHITE — making it agree with descriptions of *P. c. californicus*; bill black; iris scarlet orange with silvery ring around pupil; eyelids orange; tarsi black. Weight 279.5 grams. This specimen appears to be the first collected in New York State, although two specimens have been obtained from the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. It is #1080 in the St. Bonaventure University collection.

Beardslee and Mitchell (1965, *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*, p. 85) state that the first sight record for this area was Nov. 14, 1948 at Braddock's Bay. Since that time the species has been reported almost every year, most records being in October and November

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Sparrow Hawk Nest in Martin House: Two years ago we put up a Martin house. Two springs we waited for Martins in vain. This year, on April 16th, with a wave of migrating swallows a pair of Martins came, looked, landed on the house chattering in Martinese. They circled, came back and inspected some more. And then came the Sparrow Hawks and chased the Martins and they were not seen again. A disappointment, but two lively months followed.

Since late March the Sparrow Hawks had been using the Martin house off and on for a perch (so we thought). Now suddenly we became aware that they had more serious intentions and planned to use this as their nesting box. Sure enough, on April 20th, the female started sitting in the left attic hole of the Martin house and from then on there was to be continuous turmoil in our garden for over two months. Turmoil when the male came with shrill ki-ki-ki-ki's when he was bringing food to the female and took over the nest duties for a while. More turmoil when both adults began feeding the hatched young on May 20th, preceding every appearance at the nest with resounding ki-ki-ki's stirring up Robin, Catbird, Tree Swallow, Grackle and sparrows in hot pursuit. During this time, whenever we started to do some chores in the garden, we would immediately hear the familiar ki-ki-ki overhead and the swooshing of wings as the adults dove at us. We could see that there were three young in the attic hole. As they grew, the adults had quite a time getting into the opening with whatever prey they brought in. Most of the time it was a mouse, sometimes a frog, once a bird. Apparently the crowding in the hole became unbearable to one determined young who left his nest on June 11th and moved into the south attic room of the Martin house. And still there were 3 heads visible in the North

attic room. Two days later 4 young were out and disappeared into the tall grass out of our sight but not of the ever-present surveillance of the watchful female. And to our amazement there was one more young in the box. And into July seven Sparrow Hawks, old and young, dominated the aerial scene at Home Farm.

Bill and Trixie Strauss, Home Farm, Amenia, N.Y.

Reprinted from *Wings over Dutchess*, 7(9):6, Sept. 1967

Song Sparrow Chasing Cowbird: About 5:40 P.M. on May 8, 1967, a rainy day, my attention was attracted by a female Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) walking rapidly along the floor of a 25-foot bridge which spans a creek in front of our house. A Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) was pursuing the Cowbird as it walked along the west side of the bridge to the north end, crossed to the east side and started south. Each time the Cowbird stopped, the Song Sparrow rushed at it. When the Cowbird stopped midway on the east side and the Song Sparrow rushed at it, the Cowbird flew onto a branch overhanging the stream. The Song Sparrow followed, whereupon the Cowbird flew under the bridge and alighted on a willow on the west side of, and several feet above the bridge. From my window about 50 feet northeast of the bridge, I could see that the Cowbird had flown underneath the bridge without stopping. It returned to the southwest part of the bridge and the performance was repeated, except that when the Song Sparrow chased it onto the overhanging branch at the east side of the bridge, the Cowbird flew up under the bridge, was out of sight not more than 2 or 3 seconds, then flew out the same side and alighted on the lawn with a small white object on the end of its bill. This it deposited in the grass, pecked at it once or twice, then flew off when a Starling alighted very close. I rushed out doors, frightened the Starling while it was still looking at the object. I found two halves of a Phoebe egg shell (pure white) and the yolk below them in the grass.

The Phoebes usually nest under the bridge on the inner side of one of two I-beams. The nest is only visible from directly under the bridge and the water has been too high this year for me to check it. Some years the Song Sparrows have nested at the southwest corner of the bridge where there is a thick growth of Red-osier Dogwood, willow and Virginia Creeper, part of it overhanging the stream.

Mary Welles, Big Flats, R.D.1, Elmira, N.Y.

House Sparrow Nest in Cattail Marsh: The nest of the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is usually associated with, or located very near human dwellings. David Peakall brought to my attention the Summers-Smith monograph on this species (1963) which states: "Nests are usually on buildings, either in holes under roofs or in creepers. Less frequently in the branches of trees and rather seldom in holes in trees. When tree sites are used these are invariably close to buildings, very rarely more than a hundred yards away." This past season a pair of House Sparrows raised two broods in a hollow willow stump at Vischer Ferry Game Management Area surrounded by many acres of marsh and some distance from human habitation.

The management area consists of 810 acres of which one-half is river bottomland at about 190-foot elevation, one-quarter is shallow ponds and one-quarter is wetland. It lies adjacent to the Mohawk River in Saratoga County between Locks 6 and 7 of the N.Y.S. Barge Canal.

The birds were first observed on May 20, 1967 when the male was mist-netted and banded on a dike adjacent to the cattail marsh frequented by the pair. They represented the first of their species that I have seen in the management area in over ten years of observing the area, and the male was the first banded there in three years of banding. Their attachment to a particular area of marsh was considered peculiar at the time, and also on May 26 when they were seen again. However, it was not until June 17 that the female was observed carrying food to young at a hole in a willow stump. The stump was in a pond, about three feet deep and immediately adjacent to an extensive cattail marsh, and stood about 9-10 feet above water level.