

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.

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**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.