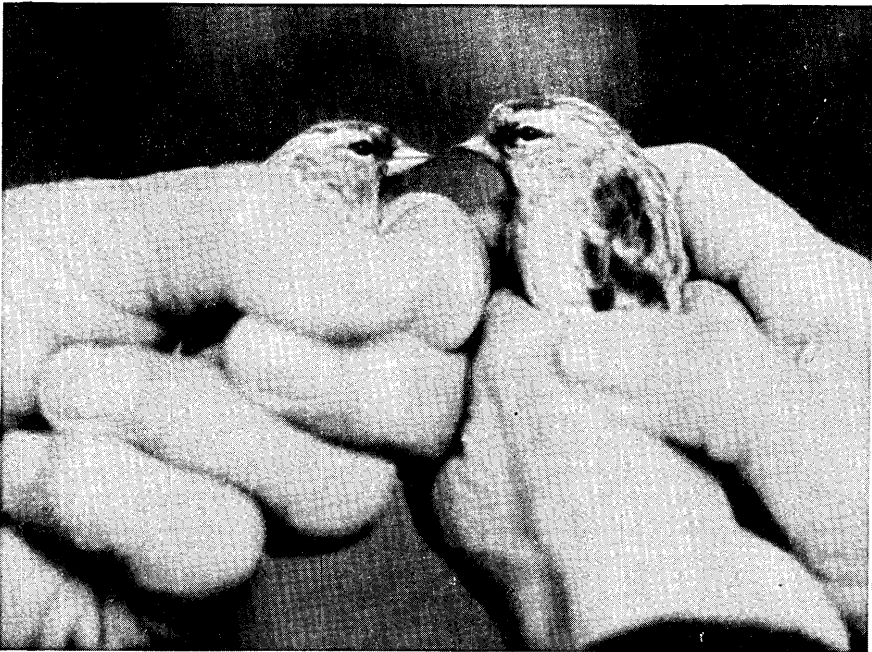


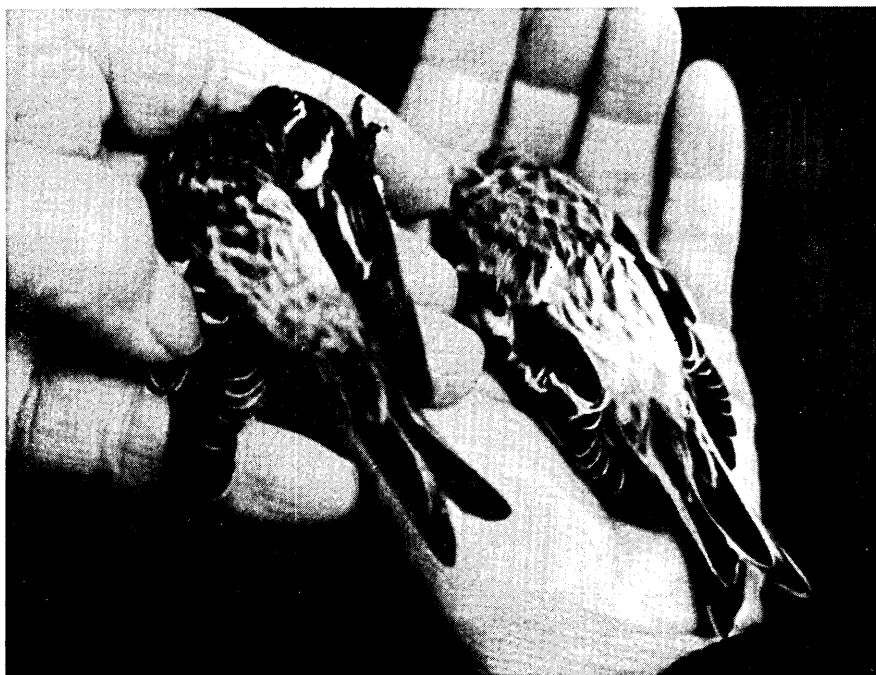
NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Hoary Redpoll in Onondaga County: On 13 February 1978, I noticed a very pale redpoll at my window feeder in Jamesville, Onondaga County. At the time, I estimated that approximately 150 redpolls were present at various feeders in my yard. I have often heard the expression "frosty" in connection with the appearance of the Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni*), but to me this bird appeared soft gray rather than brown. I had seen three or four birds in the past that I considered to be Hoary Redpolls, and had read all the field guides and articles I could find. From these, I decided that the size of the bill is the most important point. I could stand within 18 inches of the flock and at one point must have been less than a foot from this individual. At no time did I feel positive that the bill was any different from that of a Common Redpoll (*A. flammea*). It might have looked a bit broader where it met the face, and it might have been shorter. With constant feeding movements and nervousness because of two resident predators, it was extremely difficult to make a good comparison. Seeing this bird with a flock feeding in a field or in trees, this could serve as a field mark only after other points had been noted.



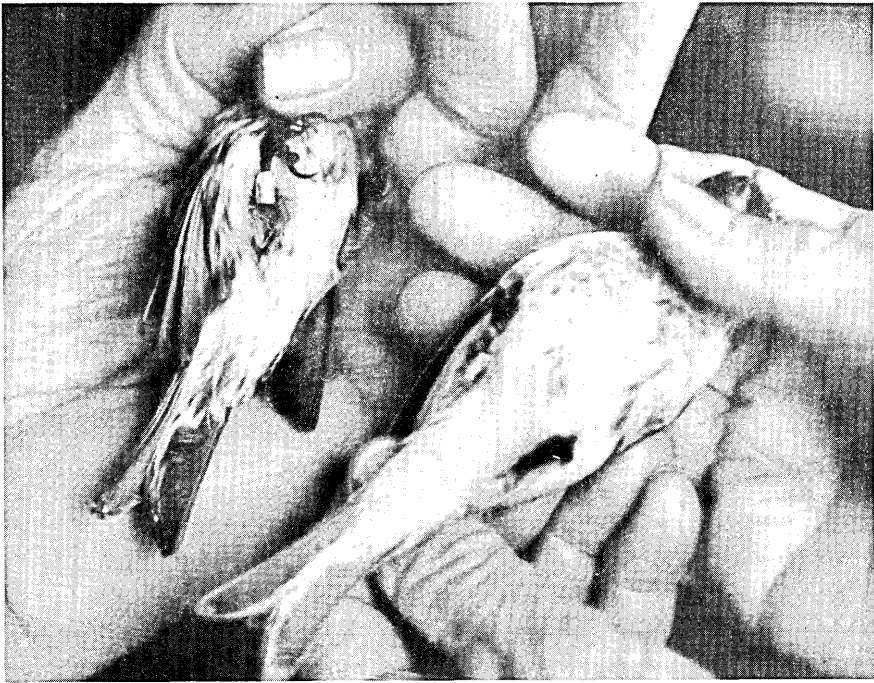
*Fig. 1. Comparison of bill shape:
Hoary Redpoll on right, Common Redpoll on left.
15 February 1978* Photo by Dorothy W. Crumb

On 15 February, this individual entered one of my banding traps. In the hand, next to a Common Redpoll, the 1-mm. difference in the bill and the difference in bill shape was readily evident (Fig. 1; see also Yunick, 1967, *Kingbird* 17: 66-68). The under tail coverts on the Hoary were completely free of streaking (Fig. 3). One other thing very noticeable on this bird in the hand was the white feather edgings. These show in Fig. 2 on the primaries and secondaries. The white also extends clear around the ends of the longest tail feathers. This shows particularly on the underside of the feather, but is also apparent from above. Since taking these photographs, I have handled over 150 redpolls, and not one of them has shown white at the ends of the tail, so I don't feel that this was simply a case of one individual without feather wear.



*Fig. 2. Comparison of rump:
Hoary Redpoll on right, Common Redpoll on left.
15 February 1978* *Photo by Dorothy W. Crumb*

Mention has been made in *American Birds* (1974, vol. 28, no. 3, p. 620) of the "pantaloons" effect in the Hoary Redpoll. From close observation of hundreds of Commons at my feeder this winter, I feel that this is a function of cold protection or the way the bird is standing. I watched this Hoary for many days and never thought the "pantaloons" were any longer. Every other Hoary Red-



*Fig. 3. Comparison of under tail coverts:
Hoary Redpoll on right, Common Redpoll on left.*

15 February 1978

Photo by Dorothy W. Crumb

poll that I have seen has been very cooperative, constantly exposing the rump by dropping the wings. This bird did this only occasionally, no more frequently than the Commons.

When looking for a Hoary Redpoll in a flock, look first for a very pale bird, remembering that there can be very pale Commons and very dark Hoary Redpolls. Look for light color around the face, an absence of streaking across the chest, and small, pale streaks on the sides below the wing. Then try for white feather outlines, rump, and under tail coverts. Finally, if you are fairly sure, check the size and shape of the bill if you have a nearby Common Redpoll for comparison.

On 16 March, a second Hoary Redpoll, unbanded, appeared at the feeder. This bird was light brown rather than gray, with heavier streaking on the sides than the first one. It would undoubtedly have gone unnoticed away from a feeder. However, it continually exposed the rump, and had all other field marks. It was still at the feeder on 23 March, but had still avoided the traps.

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