

NOTES.

ROOK FEEDING ON MUSSELS.

ON November 17th, 1946, I observed a Rook (*Corvus f. frugilegus*) collecting a mussel from the shore at Ardnadam by Dunoon, Argyllshire, carrying it into the air some short distance and then letting it drop. This action was repeated three times, when the shell broke among the pebbles. The bird devoured the contents and then flew away to some high trees in a neighbouring wood.

I can state that the bird was definitely a Rook and not a Crow, as I saw the bare whitish patch at the base of the bill clearly.

CHARLES F. PRIESTLEY.

JAY TAKING SLOW-WORM.

ON July 16th, 1946, at Herringfleet, Suffolk, I found a Jay (*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum*) shaking an object—which I thought was a snake—on the ground. It swallowed a piece about four inches long with difficulty, and then picked up another and larger piece and knocked it on the ground. From a distance of about ten yards with x12 binoculars I then saw the object was alive and, scaring the bird away, found it to be a Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*) minus its tail, which the Jay had swallowed.

I released the Slow-worm, which measured twelve inches in length, and it went into the undergrowth.

This is not recorded in the section on food in *The Handbook*.

H. E. JENNER.

[Although *The Handbook* does not mention Slow-worms, or indeed any reptile, amongst the food of the Jay, the German *Handbuch* includes snakes amongst "small vertebrates" taken by *G. g. glandarius*. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that lizards and Slow-worms are also taken on occasions, though actual records are desirable.—EDS.]

RUSTIC BUNTINGS IN SUSSEX.

ON November 18th, 1946, I visited the Midrips, which is an area lying in Sussex about 5½ miles W.S.W. of Dungeness Lighthouse, consisting mainly of several shallow and marshy lakes surrounded by swamp, shingle and grass and separated from the Channel by two high banks of shingle.

From the top of the inner of these banks I watched, through 8x binoculars and in very good light, a pair of buntings which were feeding among the grass and weeds less than 20 feet from me, but of whose identity I had, at the time of observation, no idea. After most careful comparison of my notes with descriptions in *The Handbook of British Birds*, I came to the conclusion that the birds were undoubtedly a pair of Rustic Buntings (*Emberiza r. rustica*).

The following description is taken from my field notes. Male: back and mantle chestnut, flecked with black; chestnut and unflecked

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