

1933 NOTES

2-24-33

a small flock of house finches were feeding on City Court House grounds, eating from the dry ground patches where the snow had been removed.

3-6-33

The Western Evening Grosbeaks have been our regular, daily guests during the winter months. Three bopelder tree were the drawing cards. Due to earlier favorable weather conditions, the birds congregated in the near-by canyons. One could always depend upon their presence on the flats of Rock Canyon where they were to be found feeding on the seeds of the mountain ash, and mountain maple. It appears that about six or seven days of dull, inclement weather in succession would drive them down to the valley. The average flock that visited the bopelder tree at home was about 40 birds but their numbers fluctuated from day to day. The females outnumbered the males 1 to 5. Providing there was no cause for them to leave the tree, they would stay until late afternoon when they would generally leave in one large flock. They would immediately gain an altitude of 200' or so feet and then continued in a horizontal manner. They are not an early morning feeder here but would arrive in late forenoon. During the extremely cold weather the birds settled down to good concentrations feeding but with the turning to more favorable days their feeding was accompanied with extra circular activity such as flying from tree to tree, inspecting and pecking at the tin roof, looking in the windows, pecking at the snow, hunting thru the seed masses on the ground, ranging out over the adjacent fields and offering vocal sounds. The seeds of the bopelder were first taken from the top of the tree and its extremities but by the end of their winter stay many areas of the tree had only the supporting petioles present while the other seed clusters were stripped to the extent of accessibility. The degree of work was also recorded in the blanket of seed strewn upon the ground. One would wonder why they would not merely snap off a seed cluster and then take to the ground and eat it ^{in a} more comfortable position, but no, they seemed contented with their own procedure which was almost tiring to even witness. Where the seeds are accessible feeding appears to be very simple but as the seeds became less accessible matters become complicated which necessitates a new form of acrobatics. By hanging down with feet pointing in opposite direction to a bird in normal posture the bird is able to reach most seeds and with this method the seed centers are eaten one at a time