

good numbers this winter, the only crossbill report was one Red near Cashiers, N.C., on 8 January (Douglas McNair). Despite their having been common in the fall at nearby Highlands, McNair was unable to find any Red Crossbills in that town in the winter.

CBC ROUNDTABLE

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pecking at the driveway long enough to eat more gravel than they could have lifted off the ground.'

"So we are still wondering what the warblers found so attractive on lawns and driveways. Although the eyes of such birds are better suited than are man's to detect and identify tiny objects at close range, it seems scarcely possible that the warblers are able to recognize and devour morsels too small for Mrs. Parsons to see through her magnifying glass."

John V. Dennis (*A Complete Guide to Bird Feeding*, Knopf, 1980) recommends providing both grit (preferably seashore sand or ground oyster shells) and eggshells at feeding stations, the former for use primarily as a grinding agent and the latter for the calcium content. He points out, however, that several kinds of grit are useful sources of minerals. Dennis notes that supplying grit is especially important when the ground is covered with snow. Desperate for grit, birds sometimes peck at the crumbling mortar of old brick buildings and congregate dangerously close to highways where narrow strips of ground have been cleared during snow removal.

Although there now seems to be convincing evidence that warblers frequently peck grit, their bills do not appear to be well adapted for the process. Perhaps the birds Mrs. Parsons observed remained capable of flight because they were successful in only a few of their many attempts. On sandy Hilton Head Island, birds suffer no shortage of grit, so the warblers' regular consumption of Mrs. Chapin's eggshells should be primarily for the mineral content. After receiving her letter, I put out eggshells, but my birds have not yet developed a taste for them.—ELOISE F. POTTER, Route 3, Box 114 AA, Zebulon, N.C. 27597

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