



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

VOL. V

JANUARY, 1934

No. 1

COME TO ALEXANDRIA!

The two local members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology hereby extend to the members of the Society their most cordial greetings, and an expression of their earnest hope that each one will try to attend the approaching convention of the Society. Alexandria is an ideal place for such a gathering, on the Potomac River famous for its bird life, and within ten or fifteen minutes of Washington where center our Government's vast activities in bird study. This affords us collections of birds, living and dead, and the world's best scholarship, both in books and in men. From such resources we hope to draw heavily for our program.

Rates in our headquarters hotel will be published, but even lower prices can be gotten in lodging houses.

We stand ready to do anything we can for the comfort and pleasure of our guests of the convention. Our aim is to have present as many of you as possible. It will help in making arrangements if you can let us know you will be coming; but do not stand back because you cannot tell beforehand; come anyway.

---Mrs. Robert M. Reese
Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr., Chm.
Committee on Arrangements

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THE FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology will convene at the George Mason Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia, at 2:00 P.M. on Friday, March 9th. The program for the opening day will be as follows:

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| 2:00 P.M. | - Registration |
| 2:30 - 4:30 | - Reading of Papers. Open to public. |
| 4:30 - 5:00 | - Intermission for Committee Meetings. |
| 5:00 - 6:00 | - Business Session. Members only. |
| 7:00 | - Banquet |
| 8:15 | - Evening Session. Open to public. |

Saturday will be given over to a Field Trip, the character of which will be announced later by the local committee.

At the Friday evening session we shall have the privilege of having two nationally known speakers from the Biological Survey. Dr. H. C. Oberholser will speak on "The Water Birds of Virginia;" and Mr. Arthur H. Howell, author of "Florida Bird Life," will speak on "Field Trips on the Virginis Coast." Moving picture films of bird life will also be shown at this session.

Papers will be given by members of the V.S.O. at the afternoon session. The following titles have so far been listed with the Chairman of the Program Committee:

"The Bob-white and Some of Its Habits," Chas. O. Handley.
 "Some Literary Aspects of Ornithology," Martin Curtler.
 "The Relation of Bounties on Hawks and Owls to Increase in Mouse Injury to Apple Trees," M. G. Lewis.
 "A Day at the Nest of a Carolina Junco," J. J. Murray.
 "Adaptations in Birds," R. S. Freer

Each of the officers will make reports at the business session.

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- Guion, George Seth - 1716 American Bank Bldg, New Orleans, La.
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Woodring, George B. - Editor, "The Migrant," 2801 Natchez Trace,
Nashville, Tenn.
Wright, George M. - 213 Hilgard Hall, University of California,
Berkeley, California.

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Dr. MURRAY HONORED

Members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology in particular, and ornithologists of the southern states in general, will be greatly pleased to know of the election of our Editor, Dr. James J. Murray, of Lexington, as a Director of the National Association of Audubon Societies. It is our understanding that this honor has rarely if ever before come to a southern ornithologist. Our hearty congratulations to Dr. Murray on this much deserved recognition! Likewise, we extend our congratulations to the National Association and to the Virginia Society of Ornithology, which with much pride makes this contribution to the national work of bird protection.

---Ruskin S. Freer

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"THE BIRDS OF VIRGINIA"

When the V.S.O. was organized, on December 7, 1929, one of the major objectives which was emphasized for the new organization was the preparation and publication of a new book on the birds of Virginia. Much has been learned of the bird life of the Old Dominion since the publication of Rives' "Catalogue" in 1890, and Bailey's "Birds of Virginia," published in 1913. The major function of our bulletin, THE RAVEN, as adopted at the organization meeting, was the gathering of material for the new book. It is therefore with much satisfaction that we can now announce that Dr. Murray is at work on the manuscript. He may feel assured of the interest and willingness to help, of all members of the V.S.O.

---R.S.F.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF V.S.O. MEMBERS TO THE AUK

The writer recently became interested in looking up notes published on Virginia birds in THE AUK, under the heading of "General Notes." Then it occurred to me that it would be worth the time to determine how much material had been contributed to this department by members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. Issues for the years 1929-33 inclusive were examined, with the following results:

Dr. J. J. Murray, on Virginia birds, 28 notes, 82 inches of type, or approximately 13 pages; Murray, on North Carolina birds, 4 notes, 15 inches or $2\frac{1}{2}$ pages; Murray, with Mr. Alexander Sprunt on North Carolina birds, 4 notes, 16 inches or $2\frac{1}{2}$ pages; Ruskin S. Freer, 9 notes, 31 inches or 5 pages; J. B. Lewis, 4 notes, $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches or $2\frac{1}{3}$ pages; Martin Curtler, Chas. O. Handley, F. M. Jones and M. G. Lewis, 1 note each.

Counting inches may seem like rather trivial business, but the total results speak well for the activity of V.S.O. members. A list of titles was also prepared, but lack of space prevents giving it. I shall be glad to furnish it upon request of interested individuals.

---R.S.F.

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A TRIP TO THE EASTERN SHORE

On a former visit to the Eastern Shore of Virginia I observed nests of the Baltimore Oriole as common in northern Accomac County and one as far south as Tasley. I was much interested to see several well kept nests of this bird in the vicinity of Cape Charles and the worn fragments of one on the lawn at Kiptopeke, the home of Mr. Henry A. Wise, at the southern end of the peninsula, on the afternoon of December 19th. Game Warden Doughty tells me that the Baltimore Oriole is a common summer resident in all parts of Northampton County. This brings the summer range of the Baltimore Oriole considerably south of my former observed limit. I wonder if anyone knows the southern limit of its summer range on the western shore of the Bay? I have not observed the bird even in migration at either Richmond or Ashland.

On the ferry from Old Point to Cape Charles, 10:10 A.M. to 12 noon, December 18th, the following observations were made: 34 Herring Gulls were counted about the wharf at Old Point, between 15 and 20 followed the boat across the bay and about 80 met us at Cape Charles, forty some being counted on one barge in the harbor. From a few to about a dozen Bonaparte Gulls kept abreast of the boat much of the way across and others passed at intervals. Sixty-five gannets, 2 in dark plumage, were counted, but this number could probably have been doubled by scanning the water more closely with the glass. A number of Loons (var.?), fully 60 in one flock near midstream, were seen. A number of small flocks of Scoters and 10 old squaws were the only ducks observed. All of the Scoters near enough for identification

were apparently of the Surf variety. Two Turkey Vultures and one Black Vulture feeding with a flock of Herring Gulls on carrion on the beach at Cape Charles completed the list of birds seen. At the wharf at Oyster that afternoon a bird flew **by** which resembled closely the Spotted Sandpiper, but I could not be certain of the identification.

I boarded the patrol boat "constance" at Oyster with Game Warden E. J. Doughty, Jr., and Rufus Charnock a little after 6 A.M. on the 19th. As we left the wharf the unmistakable call of a yellow-legs was heard at some distance and repeated several times. Several flocks of unidentified shorebirds were seen flying low over the water during the morning. Other birds observed were 6 Great Blue Herons, 9 Herring Gulls, 5 Hooded Mergansers, 1 American Merganser, 1 American Golden-eye, about 200 Surf Scoters, about 25 White-winged Scoters and about 15 American Scoters. All of the Scoters, coots as the wardens call them, were near the mouth of the Channel leading from the marsh to the ocean.

We went up the marsh about 8 miles from Oyster in the "Constance"; then went into the marsh proper in a row boat to hunt for duck traps. As the game wardens had judged from the scarcity of ducks in the marsh before we entered, freshly plucked feathers and corn floating about the marsh made it a certainty that a duck trapper had just preceded us and emptied his traps. Two traps constructed of poultry wire and fish netting were located and destroyed. Other baited spots were found indicating that portable traps were also being used. Game Warden Doughty reports having destroyed 14 duck traps this season, most of them from this same marsh, but the traps are easy to construct and are replaced almost as soon as the wardens are out of the way.

The game warden in Accomac County destroyed seven duck traps on the same morning that we were in the marsh and removed four ducks, one of which had been drowned. Trapping ducks for the market is the most serious offense we have to deal with on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Apparently a majority of the citizens are in sympathy with the duck trappers. The trappers are very hard to comprehend and often escape with less than the minimum fine even when convicted. The game wardens are of the opinion that more ducks are being trapped illegally at the present time than are killed by the hunters.

Since it is almost next to impossible to catch the trappers red-handed and even harder to get justice in the courts, the game wardens are now resorting to the distribution of corn soaked in kerosene and tar on the marshes where the trapping is most prevalent. A few trials indicate that ducks will desert a marsh treated with such a concoction. If the ducks can be kept out of the baited marshes, the duck trappers can't operate.

I saw a lone Snow Goose, apparently a crippled bird, in a wheat-field at "Kiptopeke" on the nineteenth.

---C. O. Handley

VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS CENSUSES

Norfolk, Dec. 3, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Distance covered, about seven miles; weather, partly cloudy and mild. Horned Grebe, 4; Great Blue Heron, 1; Canada Goose, 2; Wood Duck, 3; American Merganser, 1; Turkey Vulture, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1 immature, 2 adults (the old eagles were found at their nest, one was observed bringing material to the nest); Marsh Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Coot, 3; Killdeer, 1; Herring Gull, common; Laughing Gull, 10; Clicker, 25; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Crow, 10; Checkadee, 3; Carolina Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 1; Brown Thrasher, 1; Robin, fairly common; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 3; Starling, common; Myrtle Warbler, common; Red-wing Blackbird, about 25; Towhee, 3; White-throated Sparrow, common; Song Sparrow, common; Junco, common; Fox Sparrow, 2; Field Sparrow, 5.

January 7, a flock of about twenty-five Common Terns, and twelve Gannets were observed in the lower harbor - also a Cormorant. This is the first time I have found Gannets this far inland. January 10, a small flock of Bonaparte's Gulls were observed feeding in the upper harbor, first I have seen this year. At last I have added the Blue Jay to my Norfolk County list. Found one below Great Bridge, on October 29th. I can see no reason why they should be so scarce and I believe they can be found elsewhere in the county. However, this is the only record I know of. ---A. O. English

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Newport News. The Mariners' Museum grounds, 1000 acres, Tuesday, December 26, 1933, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Rainy, with heavy clouds and frequent showers, calm. Temperature at start, 44 degrees F.; at finish, 40 degrees F.; 7 miles on foot, 4 miles by car. Birds seen: Pied-bill Grebe, 4; Herring Gull, 15; Ring-billed Gull, 40; Laughing Gull, 2; Bonaparte's Gull, 6; Forster's Tern, 1; Hooded Merganser, 1 (female); Mallard, 100; Black Duck, 200; Gadwall, 5; Baldpate, 8; Wood Duck, 60; Lesser Scaup Duck, 8; Ring-necked Duck, 14; American Golden-eye, 2; Ruddy Duck, 15; Coot, 56; Killdeer, 4; Bob-white, 6; Bald Eagle, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Flicker, 2; Phoebe, 2; American Crow, 7; Fish Crow, 3; Goldfinch, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 20; Field Sparrow, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 50; Song Sparrow, 22; Towhee, 1; Cardinal, 10; Myrtle Warbler, 4; Carolina Wren, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Tufted Titmouse, 10; Carolina Chickadee, 12; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Hermit Thrush, 1; Bluebird, 1. Total, 42 species, 715 individuals. Due to the fact that the census was made single-handed and under extremely unfavorable weather conditions I failed to get some of our regular winter birds, such as the mockingbird, meadowlark, pipit, white-breasted nuthatch, and several of the ducks.

---George C. Mason

Henrico County, Va. (Byrd Park to Curles Neck Farm). Dec. 26, 6:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Cloudy all day, light to heavy intermittent showers until 2:30 P.M.; visibility poor most of time; vegetation covered with ice at daybreak; wind southwest, light; temperature 32° at start, 33° at return. Thirty miles by automobile and 4 miles on foot, but within area not exceeding 15 miles in diameter. Observers together most of time. Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Canada Goose, 500 (est.); Mallard, 21; Black Duck, 1; Pintail, 20; Wood Duck, 1; Ring-necked Duck, 152; American Golden-eye, 15; Bufflehead, 2; American Merganser, 7; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 3; Killdeer, 3; Herring Gull, 66 (partly est.); Ring-billed Gull, 3; Mourning Dove, 89; Barred Owl, 1 (came to squeak); Great Horned Owl, 1 (heard); Belted Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 26; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 4; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Pileated Woodpecker, 2 (heard); Phoebe, 1; Blue Jay, 9; Crow, 62; Carolina Chickadee, 11; Tufted Titmouse, 23; Brown Creeper, 5; Winter Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 9; Mockingbird, 4; Brown Thrasher, 2; Robin, 1; Hermit Thrush, 4; Bluebird, 39; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 12; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 10; Migrant Shrike, 1; Starling, 987 (partly est.); Myrtle Warbler, 1; Meadowlark, 71; Red-winged Blackbird, 3500 (est.); Rusty Blackbird, 3; Purple Grackle, 1; Cardinal, 37; Purple Finch, 1; Goldfinch, 36; Towhee, 4; English Sparrow, 56 (partly est.); Slate-colored Junco, 125 (est. 6 flocks); Field Sparrow, 31 (3 flocks); White-throated Sparrow, 187 (est., 9 flocks); Song Sparrow, 24. Total, 59 species, approximately 6,195 individuals. The Phoebe was seen at close range by all of the observers.--Mrs. Elizabeth H. Shaw, Mrs. A. O. James, Edward Davis, and C. O. Handley.

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Amelia. Vicinity of Amelia and Winterham, 7:25 A.M. until noon, 2:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. Clear, no snow, temperature at start 47°, light wind from north; 11 miles on foot, 16 miles by automobile. Senior observer alone in A.M.; three working together in P.M. Turkey Vulture, 13; Black Vulture, 10; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Bob-white, 8; Mourning Dove, 46; Flicker, 4; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Phoebe, 3; Blue Jay, 47; Crow, 35; Chickadee, 7; Tufted Titmouse, 8; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 11; Robin, 14; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 11; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 12; Shrike, 1; Meadowlark, 8; Purple Grackle, 2; Cardinal, 5; Purple Finch, 8; Goldfinch, 18; Junco, 139; Field Sparrow, 33; White-throated Sparrow, 37; Fox Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 22; Species, 35; individuals, 508. Number of individuals given are actual count. With juncos, white-throats, field sparrows, and song sparrows probably as many were missed as were counted. An unusual occurrence for this section was the finding of a flock of Blue Jays, 30 individuals of which were counted. They were probably migrants. The Purple Grackle is also of rather unusual occurrence here in winter. No locations for water birds are within reach of our party.

---Miss Mary C. Sheppard,
Harry J. Sheppard,
John B. Lewis.

Charlottesville. Dec. 27; 10 A.M. to 1 P.M., 2 P.M. to 4:30 P.M.; chiefly through woods; clear in morning, overcast and dreary in afternoon; temperature at start, 24°, at finish, 30°; wind west to southwest; distance, 15 miles, chiefly on foot; birds very inactive. Turkey Vulture, 2; Black Vulture, 2; Mourning Dove, 3; Northern Flicker, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 6; Blue Jay, 30; Crow, 25; Carolina Chickadee, 12; Tufted Titmouse, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 3; Carolina Wren, 4; Mockingbird, 3; Robin, 1; Hermit Thrush, 6; Bluebird, 20; Golden-crowned Kinglet 25; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 3; Starling, 50; Myrtle Warbler, 1; English Sparrow, 30; Cardinal, 8; Purple Finch, 1; Goldfinch, 5; Junco, 50; Field Sparrow, 10; White-throated Sparrow; 4; Song Sparrow, 20. Total - species, 33; individuals, 344. Many more White-throats must have been here. I have not previously noted Ruby-crowned Kinglets between November and April. In addition to birds noted on the census, the following birds are present here this winter - Red-headed Woodpecker, Winter Wren, Cedar Waxwing, Migrant Shrike, Meadowlark, and a few Towhees. Also, Tree Sparrows were seen on Dec. 18, the first recorded here in seven years. Other notes: Oct. 2, Rose-breasted Grosbeak - less common here in fall than in spring. Dec. 15, a beautiful male Cooper's Hawk, very blue in color. Dec. 28, three Red-shouldered Hawks soaring together, one of them very noisy. Dec. 26, a Phoebe. A note of some interest is that of an Upland Plover which I saw on the Richmond Road 20 miles east of here on June 19, 1933. It may have been nesting there.

---Martin Curtler.

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Naruna. (Birds observed around my home, including a short walk through woods to highway.) Dec. 23, 7:00 to 10:00 A.M.; clear with distant haze; slight wind from south; temperature 45°. Turkey Vulture, 6; Phoebe, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Flicker, 1; Crow, 8; Tufted Titmouse, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Carolina Chickadee, 2; Mockingbird, 1; Robin, 1; Bluebird, 5; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 3; Starling, 25; Meadowlark (singing at a distance), 3; Goldfinch, 9; White-throated Sparrow, 1; Field Sparrow, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 15; Song Sparrow, 4. Total, 21 species, about 101 individuals. Dec. 16, Cedar Waxwings, 40; Dec. 17, Killdeer, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Dec. 19, Marsh Hawk, 1; Dec. 21, Prairie Horned Lark, 11; Note of Great Horned Owl, Dec. 31.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Harrisonburg. Dec. 27; 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.; Clear; 3 inches of snow; wind north, light; temperature 10° at start, 20° at return. Waterman's Wood to Tide Spring and return, diameter of 12 miles; farm land, pine-cedar, and oak woodlots, and along stream with cover of thin ice; 21 miles by auto, 5 miles on foot. Four observers working together. Turkey Vulture, 16; Black Vulture, 5; Red-tailed Hawk, 5; Sparrow Hawk, 5; Bob-white, 51 (4 coveys); Belted Kingfisher, 1;

Northern Flicker, 3; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 8; Prairie Horned Lark, 50 (4 flocks); Blue Jay, 3; Eastern Crow, 375 (part. est.); Carolina Chickadee, 12; Tufted Titmouse, 13; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 12; Brown Creeper, 1; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 6; Thrush (sp.?), 12; Bluebird, 8; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 16; Starling, 750 (part. est.); Myrtle Warbler, 2; English Sparrow, 28; Meadowlark, 27; Cardinal, 28; Goldfinch, 14; Slate-colored Junco, 240; Tree Sparrow, 55; White-throated Sparrow, 20; Song Sparrow, 1; Snow Bunting, 1. Total, 35 species; 1,778 individuals. The Snow Bunting was seen by all observers with 8x binoculars, feeding with the White-throated Sparrows on the black berries of the Honeysuckle vines about 10 feet above ground.

---D. R. Hostetter, Homer Mumaw,
Titus Lehman, Melvin Ruth.

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Lexington. Dec. 22, 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Clear in morning, light clouds in afternoon; ground bare; fairly strong west wind; temperature 36° at start, 60° at finish. About 35 miles by auto, 6 miles on foot. Big Spring Pond, White Rock Mountain, open fields. Observers together. Great Blue Heron, 1; Mallard, 2; Common Black Duck, 1; Green-winged Teal, 1; Turkey Vulture, 45; Black Vulture, 3; Sharp-shinned (,) Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Bob-white, 7; Killdeer, 3; Mourning Dove, 33; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Northern Flicker, 1; Northern Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 6; Phoebe, 1; Prairie Horned Lark, 40; Blue Jay, 3; Eastern Crow, 109; Carolina Chickadee, 10; Tufted Titmouse, 18; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 3; Mockingbird, 9; Eastern Robin, 2; Hermit Thrush, 1; Bluebird, 40; Migrant Shrike, 3; Starling, 450; Myrtle Warbler, 9; English Sparrow, 70; Meadowlark, 14; Cardinal, 22; Purple Finch, 6; Goldfinch, 40; Slate-colored Junco, 73; Tree Sparrow, 26; White-crowned Sparrow, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 12. Total, 43 species, about 1080 individuals. We have not known the White-crowned Sparrow to winter here before.

---J. J. Murray, R. P. Carroll,
J. H. Grey, Jr.

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Additional Lexington Notes: A female Old Squaw, which had probably been slightly injured, was captured alive by two boys on one of the streets of Lexington on Christmas morning. A male Green-winged Teal was still present at Big Spring at the end of December. It had been there all fall, and up until Dec. 11 a female had been associated with it. I saw a female American Golden-eye on a small pool at the very edge of the Midland Trail, a much travelled highway, on Dec. 16; and another that had been captured at East Lexington about Dec. 23. A Red-shouldered Hawk, now rather scarce about here, was being worried by some Crows on Dec. 19. Prof. Freer reports a flock of Pine Siskins in Petite's Gap on Dec. 10. I saw a pair of Ravens out in the Valley within a couple of miles of Lexington on Christmas Day.

---J. J. Murray.



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PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

VOL. V

FEBRUARY - MARCH, 1934

Nos. 2 & 3

OFFICERS OF THE V. S. O. FOR 1934

All 1933 officers of the V. S. O. were re-elected to serve in 1934. The list of these officers was printed in the January issue of THE RAVEN.

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FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA - MARCH 9 & 10, 1934

At 2:30 P.M. on March 9th, 1934, the Fourth Annual Meeting of The Virginia Society of Ornithology convened at The George Mason Hotel in Alexandria. Previous to this 16 members and 11 visitors had registered. Dr. McIlwaine welcomed the Society to Alexandria and Prof. Freer made response. An invitation was received from Mr. Mangum Weeks of 319 N. Royal Street to view his Audubon prints between 5:30 and 6:30 P.M. Telegraphic greetings and regrets that she was unable to be present were read from Mrs. C. L. Burgess of Lynchburg.

Dr. Murray, Chairman of the Program Committee, presided during the reading of papers. Mr. Curtler's interesting paper on "Some Literary Aspects of Ornithology" related some of the ancient records and beliefs concerning birds. Each of the papers by Mr. M. G. Lewis, Mr. Handley, Mr. English, and Dr. Murray brought forth some discussion. Three papers were read by title.

Prof. Freer took the chair again. He commented on the fact that this Society had not taken any active part in conservation and called attention to a recent article in Bird-Lore which described Musselman's work in increasing the Bluebird population in Illinois. Furthermore he suggested that we have a Conservation Committee, either temporary or permanent, and that Mr. Handley would doubtless have some valuable information for such work. There were no additional comments and no action taken.

A Resolutions and Nominating Committee, consisting of Mr. Brown, Chairman, Mr. Curtler, and Mrs. Shaw was appointed. The Executive Committee was asked to meet during the Intermission. Thirty-two persons attended the afternoon session. Roll call and introductions showed that 17 of these were members. Dr. McIlwaine stated that the several attempts to obtain a boat for the field trip had been unsuccessful and that we would consequently go by automobile. Meeting adjourned.

It was almost 5:30 when we reassembled after the Intermission for the business meeting. The minutes of the 1933 Annual Meeting were read and approved. Dr. McIlwaine suggested that we adjourn the business meeting until after the evening session in order that we might see the Audubon prints. It was so moved and carried. Mr. Handley and Mr. English were appointed to audit the Treasurer's accounts. Announcements were made about the dinner and the evening session. The business meeting then adjourned.

About 20 members and visitors availed themselves of Mr. Weeks' invitation and were pleased by the old home, Herrick's Life of Audubon, and the rare Audubon Prints.

The dinner was held at the George Mason Hotel and was attended by 61 people, including members, friends from the Washington Audubon Society and the Alexandria Garden Club, and guests. A mounted Raven, which occupied the place of honor at the Speakers' table, belongs to Mrs. Reese. The Invocation was by Dr. Murray. After the dinner Prof. Freer, the toastmaster, introduced several speakers. Dr. McIlwaine, the chairman of the local committee on arrangements, in his unique manner, suggested that brevity by the speakers would be appreciated. Mr. Dan Hollenga, Secretary of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, added his welcome to the V. S. O. Greetings from organizations and items of interest concerning birds were brought by Dr. T. S. Palmer, Secretary of the A. O. U., Vice-president of the National Association of Audubon Societies, and President of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, and by Dr. Alexander Wetmore, Ass't Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in charge of the National Museum. Dr. Harold C. Bryant, who is in charge of Education and Research in the National Park Service, brought greetings and advice from the Cooper Ornithological Club. Some of her experiences with winter bird feeding were told by Mrs. Leo D. Miner of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia. Mrs. McGiffin of Alexandria gave several pleasing solos.

About 100 people assembled in the auditorium of the Westminster Building for the evening program. Mr. Arthur H. Howell of the Biological Survey, in his address "Birds of the Southern Coast of Virginia", told of the birds found in an early summer trip from the Dismal Swamp along the Coast to Charleston, S. C. He showed the distinguishing characteristics of several of the birds by the use of skins. Dr. Oberholser, also of the Biological Survey, illustrated his address on "Virginia Waterfowl" with lantern slides. The audience was impressed by the large flocks of waterfowl - as high as 10,000 or 12,000 of a species - that he had seen on the Potomac River. Two reels of Stoddard films depicting waterfowl of the Southern states were shown by Mr. Handley.

After the evening program, the adjourned business meeting was continued. Plans for Saturday morning were made first. Since some wished to go to the National Museum and others wished to see the

waterfowl along the Potomac, two parties were planned, one under the leadership of Mr. English to the Museum and the field trip under the direction of Dr. McIlwaine. Both groups met at nine o'clock in the Hotel lobby.

The Treasurer's report was read and accepted, and is on file. It shows a balance of \$41.81 in the Treasury on March 8, with bills paid to date but dues from a goodly number of members unpaid. The Editor's report was read and accepted, and is on file. This report raised the question of whether we should attempt to have a printed rather than a mimeographed bulletin. Advantages and disadvantages of both were mentioned. A committee to make further investigation into the printing of THE RAVEN is to be appointed. The Secretary's report was read and accepted, and is on file. A summary of the data on membership, presentation of new members, and a report of the work of the Executive Committee were in this report.

In electing new members, it was voted that all nominated at this meeting should, upon payment of dues, be added to the list of new members in the Secretary's report. The following were nominated: Mrs. W. L. Thorp, Miss Mary E. Lloyd, Joseph S. Everly, and Mrs. Frank M. Dillard, all of Alexandria; John H. Grey, Jr., Lexington; T. L. Engelby, Roanoke. These and those named in the Secretary's report were elected to membership in the V. S. O.

The activities of the Executive Committee included the naming of Roanoke for the 1935 Meeting and the recommending of a resolution on the baiting of waterfowl. The resolution as passed by the Society is "In view of the continued decrease in the number of wild waterfowl to the point that several species appear likely to be exterminated, be it resolved that The Virginia Society of Ornithology go on record as opposed to all baiting of waterfowl within one hundred yards of any blind, battery, or other device from which birds may be lawfully taken."

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, reported as follows: "Be it resolved that the Virginia Society of Ornithology

1 - tender its appreciation to the Alexandria members for their gracious hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made by them for our entertainment.

2 - express its heartfelt gratitude to its officers for their loyally efficient service during the past year.

3 - testify to the honor conferred upon it by the participation in the program of Dr. Oberholser and A. H. Howell.

4 - thank Mr. Weeks of this city for the unusual opportunities afforded it of viewing his valuable Audubon collection.

5 - extend its sincere thanks to the management of the George Mason Hotel for the many courtesies shown the Society."

The report was accepted and the resolutions passed.

The Committee, not having understood its double function, had no nominations to present. Dr. McIlwaine moved that the present officers be re-elected. The motion was seconded. Dr. McIlwaine took the chair and called for nominations from the floor. Miss Rives was nominated for Treasurer but objected to the nomination. The acting chairman called for the vote and declared the present officers re-elected.

Prof. Freer commented on the confusion in our use of the term "Annual Meeting", both the meeting in Norfolk in 1933 and the present one having been termed the "Fourth Annual Meeting." He said that this present Meeting should be called the Fourth Annual or the Fifth Stated Meeting.

The register of members who attended any or all of the sessions, of visitors who registered at the afternoon session, and the program are appended. With the adjournment of the business meeting, the formal sessions of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the V. S. O. came to a close.

On Saturday morning 26 members and visitors went by automobile along the Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway from Washington to Mt. Vernon and stopped at several points to look at birds. The list of the species seen is recorded in THE RAVEN. We returned from the chilly but interesting trip to a warm welcome and a delightful luncheon at the McIlwaine home.

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AFTERNOON PROGRAM

Welcome - Dr. Wm. B. McIlwaine
Response - Prof. Ruskin S. Freer
Some Literary Aspects of Ornithology - Martin Cartler
The Relation of Bounties on Hawks and Owls to Mouse Injury to Apple Trees - M. G. Lewis
The Bob-white and Some of Its Habits - C. O. Hamaley
Field Observations Relative to Scarcity of Bob-white following the August Storm - A. O. English
Adaptations in Birds - Ruskin S. Freer (Read by title)
A Day at the Nest of the Carolina Junco - J. J. Murray
The Altitudinal Distribution of Birds in the Virginia Mountains - J. J. Murray (Read by title)
The Monologue of a Bird-Banner - Mrs. W. L. Thorp (read by title)

INTERMISSION

BRIEF BUSINESS SESSION AT 5:30 P.M.

DINNER AT 7:00 P.M.

EVENING PROGRAM

The Birds of the Southern Coast of Virginia - A. G. Howell
Virginia Waterfowl - Dr. H. C. Oberholser
Moving Pictures of Birds

REGISTER OF MEMBERS

Paul W. Bowman, Washington, D. C.; Ralph M. Brown, Blacksburg; Martin Curtler, Charlottesville; J. W. Eike, Woodbridge; A. O. English, Norfolk; T. L. Engelby, Roanoke; Jos. S. Everly, Alexandria; Elizabeth Fentress, Norfolk; Raskin S. Freer, Lynchburg; John H. Grey, Jr., Lexington; Louise M. Goodrich, Richmond; Florence Hague, Sweet Briar; C. O. Handley, Richmond; D. R. Hostetter, Harrisonburg; Mrs. J. B. Jurgens, Bon Air; John B. Lewis, Amelia; M. G. Lewis, Salem; Mary Lloyd, Alexandria; Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr., Alexandria; George C. Mason, Hampton; J. J. Murray, Lexington; Mrs. Robert M. Reese, Alexandria; Bernice Rives, McKenney; Mrs. F. W. Shaw, Richmond.

REGISTER OF VISITORS

Howard Ball, Washington, D. C.; Mr. and Mrs. John S. Boswell, Alexandria; H. G. Deigman, Washington, D. C., Mrs. M. L. Hill, Alexandria; Miss Huyett, Norfolk; Fred Jurgens, Bon Air; E. R. McCormick, Berryville, Mrs. J. J. Murray, Lexington; Dorothy L. Scoggan, Lynchburg; Alexander Wetmore, Washington, D. C.

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THE FIELD TRIP ALONG THE POTOMAC

Starting from the George Mason Hotel about 9:30, our trip took us up the Memorial Highway to Washington, with stops at Four Mile Run and Roach's Run; then back again and down the Highway almost to Mount Vernon. (An incident: that one policeman who nags us bird students. He held me responsible for all the parking along the Highway all the morning. And maybe he was not so far from right.) By 1:00 o'clock we were back in town for a pick-up lunch with Mrs. McIlwaine and me.

The weather was about as bad as could be. A dark, gray day, with a biting wind from the North. The snow on the ground seemed to increase rather than diminish the difficulty of seeing the birds. And my! how cold our hands got. Pretty soon the field glasses were shaking so that we could distinguish almost nothing. Around eleven o'clock the snow began to drive from the North, very fine.

The fact that the river had been frozen over up until a few days before the day of the field trip further lessened the chances for

seeing water birds. Most of the ducks had left for points south. Ordinarily this date is the peak of the season for waterfowl, but on this day we only saw scores where we should have seen thousands.

We were looking mainly for water birds, but I never saw all birds much more scarce. Very few ducks. The only really notable record was turned in by Chas. O. Handley, who saw a Common Loon. These are rare on the River. The composite list is as follows:

Common Loon, Pied-billed, Grebe, Common Mallard, Red-legged Black Duck, Common Black Duck, Gadwall, Baldpate, American Pintail, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, American Golden-eye, American Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Bob-white, American Coot, Killdeer, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Eastern Belted Kingfisher, Redheaded Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Eastern Crow, Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Eastern Robin, Hermit Thrush, Bluebird, American Pipit, Starling, Myrtle Warbler, English Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Cardinal, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Red-eyed Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

The Pied-billed Grebe recorded here is the first I have seen this season. Miss Cooke gives its earliest date as February 22. But with the River frozen over a week ago, I think this date quite early for the season.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

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THE PLIGHT OF THE POTOMAC WATER-FOWL

(The following letter, written on February 27, 1934, is of considerable interest to bird lovers. Editor.)

"I wonder if the present plight of the waterfowl wintering on the Potomac below Washington has come to your notice. As a result of the freeze-up in that region a number of ducks had already starved and several thousand more were in dire need of sustenance when their plight came to the attention of our Commissioner Wm. S. Snow and Game Warden Harry Johnson, both of Alexandria, on February 11th. The marshes, except for a few small holes which swift water kept free of ice, were frozen over. These open spaces were black with ducks but there was little or no food available in them. The frozen marshes were dotted with ducks, some of them dead, and many too weak to fly or barely able to fly. A few live ducks, with their feet frozen in the ice, were also found. At one point hundreds of ducks had followed up a small open spring branch underneath the Memorial highway a hundred yards or more into the woods, where tracks in the snow

indicated that they were in search of acorns and other edible food.

Immediately the ducks were discovered, Judge Snow purchased a ton and a half of corn at his own expense and had it put out. The Biological Survey then took over the feeding from Washington to Mt. Vernon and our Commission the remainder of the area affected in Virginia waters. I understand from Mr. Johnson that the Survey has continued the feeding since February 12th, supplying a half a ton of corn every other day for that purpose.

I was in Washington on February 19th and that afternoon had an opportunity to see the ducks coming in to feed just after the corn had been put out. It was a great sight. There were fully 2,000 ducks in sight of the Memorial highway at the time. Between a thousand and twelve hundred came in to one sand bar to feed. Mr. Johnson says that the ducks seen by me were only about one-fifth of the total. At the time of my visit there was considerable open water in mid-stream, the Washington-Norfolk boat having gone out during the day. This open water was too far away to make out for a certainty the number of ducks congregated there, although a few could be seen with the aid of 6 x glasses.

Of the ducks observed, I would judge fully 90% were black ducks, 5% were baldpates, and the remainder in the order of abundance were lesser scaups, ring-necked ducks, canvasbacks, mallards and redheads. Many of the black ducks were of the red-legged variety. Judge Snow informs me that fully 70% of the black ducks killed in that vicinity are of this kind.

One kingfisher and a great blue heron observed on a small open branch were probably finding slim picking but, since both could still fly, they were evidently finding something to their liking.

Judge Snow states that of the ducks found dead the ring-necked duck predominated. Several ducks were seen to injure themselves by striking clear ice which had apparently been mistaken for open water.

Some evidence of poaching and illegal trapping came to our attention but this was of little consequence and has probably been almost, if not entirely, eliminated through the activities of our game wardens. However, some of the devices used in catching ducks are so simple and so inconspicuous that it is a wonder that more ducks are not trapped. But just the fact that there is a game warden on the job apparently has a good psychological effect on most people.

It is hard to say just what effect the present blizzard will have on bird life, but it cannot be serious. Everything here is under about six inches of soft snow with a two inch crust of sleet over it and all exposed vegetation is coated with ice. It is melting very little. All of our game wardens have been instructed, if they think it advisable to do so, to distribute some grain for feeding birds and to encourage as many as will to feed at their own expense. This will

help some but the only real relief will come with a good thaw. That can be expected within a day or so at the most.

---Charles C. Handley

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BIRDING IN FLORIDA

(The following is an excerpt from a letter to Mr. Freer from Mr. J. Adger Smyth, son of Dr. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., of Salem. The younger Mr. Smyth has been collecting in Florida for most of the winter.)

"On Christmas Eve four of us left Orlando for a week at Cape Sable, the southernmost tip of the mainland of the United States. We drove a Ford roadster with a canoe above on poops to the bumpers, and a couple of stay-ropes to the body. After we passed Miami we headed down on the Key West Highway for a few miles and then went over through Royal Palm Hammock, a State Park, and thence to the Cape Sable region over one of the worst roads I've ever seen. Through the mangrove swamp we constantly saw White Ibises and Wood Ibises, flying up in small numbers from the canals and swamps beside the road. Herons were abundant all through the region, notably Little Blue, Little Green, Louisiana, Snowy Egret, American Egret and Ward's (Great Blue) Heron. The Florida Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo l. alleni*) was quite common. We took several specimens. Barred Owls (Florida Barred Owl, *Strix v. alleni*) were hooting in the swamps toward evening, and as we came out onto the savannah where the town of Flamingo is located we saw a pair of Barn Owls. We located in a fisherman's shack on the edge of Florida Bay. The town of Flamingo consists of some six or eight fishermen's shacks along about four miles of savannah just in from the Bay. These shacks are uninhabited except for short terms during hunting season. The nearest town or settlement is the town of Florida City, thirty miles away toward Miami.

On Christmas Day, after skinning our two hawks and a Florida Crow, we launched the canoe and started out to some of the keys nearby. The water for over two miles out to these keys is very shallow except in spots and forms an excellent feeding ground for Herons in the early morning particularly. We saw an abundance of those mentioned above, as well as the Great White Heron. On the first island we found four Great White Heron nests with 2, 3, 3, 4, eggs respectively. We took one set of four and went on to the next island. There I put up my camera and tried for an hour to get a picture of a Great White at its nest, but without success. We found a Bald Eagle nest with two eggs on one of these islands. Incidentally I have been greatly impressed with the abundance of Eagles down along the Florida coast. On the coastal highway from Melbourne to Miami we counted no less than ten nests within sight of the highway!

The next day (26th) we took the car about eight miles west to a big canal and paddled up that for several miles. Along the way we saw countless ducks, mostly Blue-winged Teal and Florida Blacks,

though with a sprinkling of Shovellers, Pintail and Scaup. Three times we saw Duck Hawks plunge into a flock of Teal, the ducks wheeling every way, and finally diving straight into the water to elude their pursuer. On one mud flat there were about 600 White Ibises, mostly adults, feeding and standing around. When they arose with the sun shining on their white wings and reflecting over to us, I was reminded of the Greater Snow Geese at Quebec two years ago. We were much closer to these birds. There were Red-backed, Semi-palmated Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeer, Snipe, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Coots, etc. We finally got up to Alligator Lake after carrying the canoe through waist-deep mud for 100 yards. 'Gator Lake is lined with mangroves growing out in the shallow water near the shore. These trees were full to the breaking-point with Wood Ibises and their nests. There must have been 1000 nesting pairs there. Some of the nests were just started, some had five eggs. The majority held four eggs. It was a wonderful sight to see these birds circling up and up into the sky until they were mere specks against the blue, while below more birds flew out of the trees, adding to the circling tower. Florida Cormorants were commonly nesting. All of the Herons above-mentioned were there except the Great White. The Black- and Yellow-crowned Night Herons also were nesting. We came out of one little estuary into a rather large part of the lake to see sixteen Roseate Spoonbills fly out of a tree. Later we saw several more singly and in pairs. They were probably just beginning to nest, as Sam Grimes of Jacksonville was there about three weeks later and found nests with eggs. As we were leaving we found an estuary leading straight to the canal and saved ourselves the hundred yard carry.

Next day we ran out of water so we paddled several miles to East Cape and got a bunch of coconuts for drinking material. We found another Bald Eagle nest with one egg, saw several tropic birds and a Pigeon Hawk. Sparrow Hawks, Red-shoulders and Marsh Hawks were abundant. I got one Rat Snake (*Elaphe guttata*) up in a coconut tree.

On the 28th we collected some specimens we'd gone especially after. I went out to one of the islands for a Great White Heron. On the way out I shot a 25 lb. Jewfish which we ate that night and the next morning. I also saw one half-grown young bird in the bushes with some of the other Heron nests. We spent the afternoon putting up the skins of a White Ibis, Great White Heron, three Cape Sable Seaside Sparrows, etc., and in packing the car for our departure.

We spent one day and a night on the Kissimmee Prairie looking into Eagle nests, looking for Caracara nests, watching Sandhill Cranes, Pinewoods Sparrows, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, Brown-headed Nuthatches, etc. Altogether it was a most delightful trip.

Since that time I have been staying in Orlando, going out collecting and photographing in nearby places. Have been down to the

prairie several times and to places nearby and in between. Have recently visited in a cypress swamp near town, a colony of Ward's Heron, Cormorant, and Anhinga. They are all nesting in the tops of the trees, presenting quite a problem for a photographer."

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MUSEUM PLANNED FOR LYNCHBURG COLLEGE

Establishment of a museum at Lynchburg College in the near future is suggested by Professor Ruskin S. Freer, head of the general science department, in presenting a "museumette exhibit" in the main hall of the administration building.

"We have the beginnings of such a collection now," he said, asking contributions of materials to add to the present collections.

The aim of the "museumette" exhibition is to stimulate interest in a permanent collection by presenting exhibits from the field of the natural sciences. Plants and animal materials and rocks and minerals will provide the subjects for the displays. It is tentatively planned to change the exhibits twice a week. The first of the demonstrations shows the initial classes of the earth's rocks, with labels and explanatory texts accompanying each class. Representative samples of local rocks are listed for showing next week.

Most of the exhibits will be selected from collections of the school, but it is hoped that loan exhibits will be secured for the display.

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AN ALBINO CARDINAL

On Sunday, February 11, 1934, at my home, 'Glenn Cove,' Lynnhaven, Virginia, I noticed a most peculiar freak in bird life. My brother had noticed a bird on the lawn with a curious streak of white around its neck. Later, when I had put out 'chick feed' at the feeding station, I was able to observe the bird at about twenty feet distance. With my field glasses I could see it perfectly and could tell that it was a female Cardinal. The topknot was normal and the bill red, but the head and shoulders were snow white. The other birds seemed to be shy of it. I wonder if any other members of the V. S. O. have ever noticed such a bird.

---Lucy Pendleton Kearns.

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GOLDEN EAGLE IN ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

On January 10, 1934, two duck hunters shot a Golden Eagle on North River a few miles from Lexington. The bird was brought to me

for identification, and has since been mounted and put on exhibition in a store in Lexington. One of the men had crippled a duck, which had dropped into the water. The eagle flew down as if to take the duck, but without success. As it flew to a nearby tree the hunters followed it up and killed it. The eagle was in rather fully developed plumage. The top and back of the head was ochraceous buff, but there was none of this 'golden' marking on the neck. The basal two-thirds of the tail was white, but the white had black fleckings over it. The spread was very small, being only 73 inches. The length was $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches; wing, $23\frac{1}{2}$; tail, $13\frac{1}{2}$. The spread of the foot from the point of the hind claw to the point of the longest claw was $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches, almost as great as the spread of a man's hand. The bird was rather emaciated and weighed only eight pounds when freshly killed. This is the first record for Rockbridge County, although one was shot some six or eight years ago just over the line in Bath County.

---J. J. Murray

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FIELD NOTES

Lexington. For years I have felt sure that the Fish Crow occurs here occasionally in late winter and early spring. On the V. S. O. field trip we heard both common Crows and Fish Crows calling, and when on the day after my return from Alexandria I heard the supposed Fish Crow here I realized that the identification which I had tentatively made was correct. The first one heard this year was on Feb. 16th, and it has been heard occasionally through the month. The male Green-winged Teal referred to in my last notes remained on Big Spring Pond until Feb. 12. A few Mallards and Black Ducks were seen during January and February, and a female American Merganser was brought to me Jan. 2. I saw 5 Red-tailed Hawks on one day, Feb. 12, and 3 Ravens the same day. Phobes have been very scarce this winter. Robins were first seen in large flocks on Feb. 19. Many Myrtle Warblers and Purple Finches and the first Fox Sparrow were seen on the same day. Tree Sparrows have been unusually common of late, 120 being seen during the big snow on Feb. 20.

---J. J. Murray

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Peaks of Otter. The Appalachian Trail Club made a trip to the Peaks on the afternoon of Feb. 17th. As we were returning from the mountain a Brown Thrasher was seen near the Hotel Mons. I would hardly have believed my eyes, but there were several of us together, and Mr. Freer was along to confirm the identification.

---Katherine P. Claytor.

Blacksburg. A male Mallard on Big Stony Creek, Giles Co., Dec. 18, and a male Lesser Scaup on our ice pond in late December and early January. Cedar Waxwings and Whitethroated Sparrows (this is very early) in January. Brown Creepers have been fewer this winter than in any year of my observations here. My first Fox Sparrow on Feb. 18. A flock of 50 Robins, March 5.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Naruna. Have erected an improvised feeding station for birds. Unusual birds feeding there are Prairie Horned Larks. Phoebe have been wintering here. Hermit Thrush seen Jan. 1 and Feb. 13. A Great Blue Heron passed over on Jan. 26. Robins here, Jan. 27.

---Bertha Daniel.



THE RAVEN

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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

Vol. V

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Nos. 4 & 5

SOME VIRGINIA CORRECTIONS TO THE 1931 A. O. U. 'CHECK LIST'

In a work of such magnitude and of such infinite detail as the 1931 'Check-List' of the American Ornithologists' Union some errors are practically inevitable, as are also the omission of points that should probably be included. Some of these errors and omissions, mainly the latter, affect Virginia. It seems worthwhile to tabulate some of these points for the benefit of Virginia students who are constantly using this volume in their work. In the following paragraphs where no data are presented or where there is no reference to literature, the facts will be found in my paper on "Additions to the Virginia Avifauna since 1890," published in 'The Auk' for April, 1933, pp. 190-200.

There are a number of species which have occurred casually in Virginia and for which there is no mention of Virginia when a list of such occurrences in other states is given. Among these species are: Wood Ibis, Swallow-tailed Kite, Ruff, Glaucous Gull, Franklin's Gull, Western House Wren, Russet-backed Thrush, and Sycamore Warbler. Other such species, for which data are given in "A Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias," by Dr. William C. Rives, are: Hutchins's Goose, Black Brant, and Eastern Lark Sparrow. For the last of these species there are also more recent records in literature.

There are several species for which the statement of range given in the 1931 'Check-List' seems to need modifying. The range of the Black Vulture is still limited in the 'Check-List' to the Tropical and Lower Austral zones, whereas this bird has extended **its** range **throughout** the Transition Zone in Virginia and other southern states, even breeding high up on the mountains. The extreme northwestern part of the state is the only region in Virginia in which we do not have positive knowledge of its breeding. The Kittiwake is said in the 'Check-List' to winter "casually to Virginia," but there seems to be no positive record for its occurrence within the State. Dr. Rives informs me that he is now doubtful about the statement given in his book in regard to its occurrences. The statement as to the breeding of the Cabot's Tern seems at least to need qualifying. The only breeding record of the Cabot's Tern for many years past is a single record given in Bailey's "Birds of Virginia," "from one of our coastal islands" in the summer of 1912. There are inland records for the Fish Crow in Virginia; as a permanent resident at Washington ("Birds of the Washington, D. C., Region," p. 43), and as occurring at Charlottesville (Ridgway, 'Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club,' VII, 4, 250).

In the case of two of the woodpeckers there is a gap left between the ranges of adjacent sub-species. For the Northern Pileated Woodpecker and for the Northern Downy Woodpecker the range is given as Canadian and Transition zones, and for the southern form of each the range is given as the Lower Austral Zone, with no mention of the Upper Austral in the range of either. The northern form of the Downy certainly occurs throughout the Upper Austral in Virginia, and the form of the Pileated Woodpecker occurring in the Upper Austral is also most probably the northern.

For still other birds information has come to light since the publication of the 'Check-List' that will modify its statements. The Forster's Tern has been reported on the coast in winter. The Prairie Horned Lark has now been found breeding in Virginia at Fairfax, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg and Lexington. The Loggerhead Shrike has been taken in east central Virginia. The Wayne's Warbler has been found to breed abundantly in the Dismal Swamp region. And the Lark Bunting has been taken at Lexington.

---J. J. Murray

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A BACK YARD TRAGEDY

Last summer while observing the birds in the yard from an upper story window, I noticed the direct flight of a mockingbird into a bush heavily covered with honey-suckle vines. This entry was followed by several violent shakings at intervals. Speculating as to the cause of such actions, I got my glasses and in a few minutes observed the bird emerging in a ruffled state. After preening her feathers for a few seconds, she flew away. A few minutes later she returned with a twig about five inches long and with some difficulty on account of the twig, disappeared in the bush. Two other trips were made at short intervals with twigs about the same length. Examining the bush later, I found the three twigs in the bottom of a hollowed site about eight inches square. The preparation of this site was no doubt the cause of the actions I had observed earlier. This happened about noon on April 16th. During the afternoon I revisited the site and found several more twigs, apparently assembled for the beginning of a nest. The construction continued on the 17th, and on the afternoon of the 18th appeared almost completed, bits of paper and rags being used prior to the final lining. On the afternoon of the 19th I found the next completed, approximately three and one-half days being required to complete a perfect nest.

In spite of the bird's effort to conceal her nest, it had been found by others and built in vain. On the evening of the 20th, on my arrival home, I was greeted by some small boys with the news that they had found a bird's nest, and insisted on showing it to me. Examination proved that the nest had been removed and replaced in a loose manner. The following evening, the 21st, I removed the nest, scattering it near the site, and hung the lining on a post nearby. Four days later, the 25th, curiosity urged me to examine the site again. Much to my surprise, a new nest had been built and one egg

had been laid. All but a few pieces of the old lining had disappeared and I concluded the same bird had rebuilt the nest. During the following three days three other eggs were laid. On May 10th I found four young birds about two days old, about twelve days having been required for incubation. But ill fortune was to follow. On the 12th one of the young birds was missing; on the 13th two more had disappeared; on the 14th one bird was still in the nest. Examining the nest in the late evening of the 15th, I again found the one bird. Stationing myself a few yards from the nest I began to speculate as to the cause of the disappearance of the other three birds, when my attention was attracted by a large rat at the edge of the thicket. An attempt to kill it proved unsuccessful and the following morning the fourth bird had disappeared.

Such are the tragedies in one's back yard.

---A. O. English, Norfolk, Va.

(This article was read by title at the Alexandria meeting. Editor)

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INTIMATE OBSERVATION OF FLICKER (*Colaptes auratus luteus*), NESTING

June 1, discovered hole with six eggs, in apple tree trunk. Hole 10 inches deep, 31 inches above ground. Bird incubatin. June 7, three birds hatched; 8th, fourth bird hatched. Two eggs infertile. Fledglings' gills very large, heavy upper mandibles much shorter than lowers. June 11, birds fat, completely naked, crying like miniature puppies. June 14, Tiny spines visible on tails, otherwise naked. Propped on elbows, whined and begged. Eyes fast closed. Weight single bird $2\frac{1}{4}$ ounces. June 15, standing against sides of hole, with open mouths begging. Claws very sharp. Back, breast, and wings showing blue feather coloration. Bursting of primaries. Tail spines $\frac{1}{8}$ inch and sharp. Eyelids cracked. One bird missing, probably taken by boys. June 16, fledglings stretching up, whining loudly with open mouths. Feathers developing fast under skin. June 17, eyes half open, very noisy, whining for food. Only tail and primary spines through. June 19, Upper mandibles length of lower. Eyes not fully open. Spines through shields, showing black and buff. Naked line down head center, red-brown crescent on back of head. Elbows of legs scaly. Toe-nails long and sharp. Tail spines $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, primaries $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Weight $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. Eyes wide open. June 22, one bird climbed to opening and looking out of nest. Displayed no fear. Gills prominent, also tongue when mouth was open for food. June 23, birds showed fear, shrinking back in hole, and whining loudly at my approach. Bodies well covered. June 25, Birds very fearful, flattened themselves in hole, whining loudly. June 27, birds retreated to bottom of hole in fear. I took one out, by force. Fully feathered, eyes bright, pecked my fingers in defence. Tail spines $1\text{-}7/8$ inches. Primaries $2\text{-}7/8$. Weight $5\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. Scudded back quickly when returned to hole, whining loudly. June 28, one fledgling on ground attempting

to clinch host tree, but fell backward. Very helpless on ground. I retrieved it. It sounded Flicker distress call, and rushed to bottom of its hole. Other two birds were absent from hole. One calling nearby, answered by parent. June 29, two young Flickers high in host tree early in the morning. Moved awkwardly, one searching under loose bark. Parent went to them. Parents had made no demonstration during my examinations, except to call once from adjacent tree. I was told this hole had been used by Flickers during several years.

---Mary D. Dise, Amherst, Va.

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ORNITHOLOGY added as COLLEGE COURSE

Ornithology has been added to the science curriculum of Lynchburg College in the department of biology. It will be a regular three hour course, devoted to lecture and laboratory work. The study and identification of birds will take place in the classroom, while field work will consist of trips taken before breakfast in the early morning.

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THE JUNE ISSUE OF 'THE RAVEN'

Owing to the small number of records sent in by members, two numbers (for April and May) have again been consolidated in this issue of THE RAVEN. The June and the July issues will be devoted largely to nesting notes. Correspondents are requested to send in all their May data immediately and their June data by July 5th. Data on nests found are especially desired. For common nests only the date and the number of eggs or young should be given, as, for example, Cardinal, 5/2, three eggs; 5/10, another nest, three small young. For unusual nests fuller data on location and progress of the nest should be given. Reports of nests in the Tidewater and coastal areas are particularly desired.

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FIELD NOTES

Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. I happened to spend nearly 24 hours on March 26th and 27th on the islands of Chincoteague and Assateague in Accomac County, Virginia. I wonder if a list of the birds I saw there, as corroborated by a good ornithologist who went with me, would interest the readers of THE RAVEN? By the bye, the "wild" ponies of Chincoteague weren't all drowned during the hurricane of last August. We saw a good many of them and were told that only about six were killed. Here is the list: Horned Grebe, 3; Holboell's Grebe, 1; Red-throated Loon, 1; Common Loon, 2; Herring Gull, numerous; Ring-billed Gull, a few; Sanderling, 1; Greater Yellowlegs, 10; Killdeer, 1; Canada Goose, 95; Brant, 160; Red-breasted Merganser, 75; Surf Scoter, 10; American Scoter, 3; White-winged

Scoter, 4; Scaup (? species), 2; Golden-eye, 5; Great Blue Heron, 2; Osprey, 2; Turkey Vulture, c. 20; Kingfisher, 2; Flicker, 2; American Crow, 2; Fish Crow, 20; Boat-tailed Grackle, 6; Redwing, 4; Meadowlark, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 2; Savannah Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 2; English Sparrow, 20; Cardinal, 4; Swallow (?Tree), 1; Myrtle Warbler, 4; Mockingbird, 1; Carolina Wren, 1; Robin, 1.

---Martin Curtler, Charlottesville,
Va.

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Naruna, Campbell County. Migrants: 3/4, Killdeer, Myrtle Warbler; 3/5, Pine Warbler; 3/6, Marsh Hawk seen near Winfall, circling low over a marshy pond. 3/9, Fox Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Vesper Sparrow. 3/17, Chipping Sparrow; 3/18, Towhee; 3/20, Woodcock. (The Woodcock was flushed from beside a brook that flows through our farm). 3/27, Great Blue Heron; (the Great Blue Heron was seen by my brother as it passed over our farm.) Phoebe and Hermit Thrush wintered here in small numbers. Pileated Woodpecker on 3/5, and Red-tailed Hawk on 3/17. The record of the Vesper Sparrow here on March 9th is the earliest record that I have for this species. 4/2, Brown Thrasher, Whip-poor-will, Cowbird (flock of 12), Meadowlark. 4/5, Black and White Warbler; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Bewick's Wren. 4/7, Swamp Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 4/10, Swifts, Ovenbird, Maryland Yellowthroat; 4/11, Yellow Palm Warbler; 4/13 Marsh Hawk; 4/18 Prairie Warbler; 4/19, Yellow-throated Vireo, Summer Tanager; 4/23, Redstart, House Wren. 4/24, Red-eyed Vireo; 4/25, Wood Thrush; 4/26, White-eyed vireo; 4/29, Parula Warbler, Scarlet Tanager; 4/30, Catbird, Chat, Hummingbird. Last Dates: Fox Sparrow, 4/1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4/7; Hermit Thrush, 4/2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4/5; Brown Creeper, 13, Junco, 4/22. Albino Field Sparrow, 4/8. Prairie Horned Lark, 4/10, singing.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Harrisonburg, March Notes: The following spring arrivals were first observed on the dates indicated. March; Meadowlark, 1st; Purple Grackle, Robin, 5th; Killdeer, 6th; Red-winged Blackbird, 7th; Bluebird, 8th; Song Sparrow, 14th; Phoebe, 17th; Mourning Dove, 18th; Field Sparrow, 27th; Chipping Sparrow, 31st. April: Cowbird, 1st; Vesper Sparrow, 3rd; Upland Plover, 4th. Very few Cedar Waxwings were seen this winter. During the past several years it was not uncommon to see them in flocks of 20-30.

April notes: The following species were first seen on the dates indicated: April - Towhee, 14th; Grasshopper Sparrow, 15th; Bewick Wren, 18th; Brown Thrasher, Chimney Swift, 21st; House Wren, 23rd; Orchard Oriole, 24th; Ovenbird, Maryland Yellowthroat, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Barn Swallow, Black and White Warbler, Wood Thrush, 28th; Kingbird, 30th.

On April 14, a female Red-breasted Merganser was found dead in a plowed field one and one-half miles west of Harrisonburg. The wing feathers were pitted by shot, but no bones were broken.

During a field trip on April 21st a number of us made the following observations on the Bluebird. We noticed a female bird sitting on the telephone wires near a pole which had a small hole about six feet above the ground. One in the group decided to investigate, and discovered the male Bluebird sitting on the nest sixteen inches below the entrance to the hole. This observation was made possible by a longitudinal split in the pole extending from the hole to the base of the nest. Fortunately the sun shone against that side of the pole, and the brightly colored male was plainly visible. He turned his head and watched as the different members in the group looked on, but he made no attempt to fly. On the return, both birds were sitting on the wires.

Within a half mile a second nest was found in a post hole in an orchard. On investigation a male Bluebird flew out. Apparently it was incubating, as the nest contained four eggs. Is this the custom among the Bluebirds? The literature I consulted made no mention of the fact that the male Bluebirds aid in incubation.

---D. Ralph Hostetter.

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Hollins College. Twice around the twentieth of March I visited Corvin's Cove Lake, back of Hollins College, and found many water-fowl, all ducks so far as I could determine without a glass, most of which were Canvas-backs, with a few Redheads.

---M. G. Lewis, Salem, Va.

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Blacksburg. The early migrants have been slow in arriving this year. On March 18, at the South fork of Holston River, I saw 30 Pipits, and the first Towhee. March 25-27, 50 to 60 Scaups, the largest number of ducks ever recorded at one time at Blacksburg. March 29, American Merganser, the first one seen here by me. A large flock of Purple Finches was feeding on the campus during the last part of April. Eggs were about ready to hatch in the first Robin's nest of the season on April 26. The nest was built for the third year on one of the columns of the University Club.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Lexington. All the migrants have been late this year, with the exception of the Lesser Yellowlegs, which arrived on March 27, several days earlier than usual. Purple Finches and Myrtle Warblers unusually common in March. A Fish Crow was calling about town through March and up to April 7. Canada Geese have passed through in large numbers

than usual. One observer saw a flock of 20 at Cameron's Pond, on March 19. About the same date a flock of about 40 came down in a field near Timer Ridge Church. Ducks have been rather scarce. Mallards, Black Ducks, and Scaups have not been common. Baldpate, 3/28 (2 pairs), 3/30 (male); Green-winged Teal, 3/19, 3/28 (male); Blue-winged Teal, fairly common in April; Shoveller, 4/2 (2 males, 1 female); Wood Duck, 3/30 (female at Big Spring), 4/11 to 4/30 (male at Big Spring); Ring-necked, 3/19 and 3/28 (male); Hooded Merganser, 3/14 (2 males and a female on North River). Marsh Hawk, male on 4/7. Osprey, 2 on 4/28. Barn Owl, one in a tree in my yard, 4/5, worried by small birds. Red-breasted Nuthatch, never very common here, one on Jump Mountain, 4/2.

Nest Notes: Prairie Horned Larks have been found nesting here for the first time this season. I have seen four nests, a note on which has been sent to 'The Auk.' The pair of Duck Hawks is nesting here again this year, although I could not locate the nest in spite of a tire-some hunt over the cliff. On 4/21 I saw a female Sparrow Hawk fly into a nesting hole in a half-dead locust tree. On 4/23 there was one egg in the nest; and on 4/26 there were three eggs. The bird is now incubating three eggs. A Bewick's Wren nest, located on 4/27, had eight eggs on 5/3. A boy reported a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers Building a nest on a limb hanging over the water along North River on 4/28, and I discovered another pair with a nest half-finished in an old orchard on 4/30. The nest was only about 12 feet from the ground.

An addition to the Rockbridge County list is the Black-crowned Night Heron, of an adult of which I had a close view at Cameron's Pond on 4/10.

---J. J. Murray.



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A Wedding in the V. S. O. Family

A wedding of great interest to all members of the VSO family was celebrated on June 23, 1934, at Camp Kewanzee, high up on Apple Orchard Mountain in the Blue Ridge, when Professor Ruskin S. Freer, President of the VSO, was married to Miss Dorothy Louise Scoggan, who has so long published The Raven for the Society. The officiating minister was Dr. J. J. Murray, the Editor of The Raven. Miss Edna Callahan of Lynchburg was Maid of Honor, and Dean C. L. McPharsen of Lynchburg College the best man.

The wedding party rode as far as possible up the mountain and then hiked the remaining two miles to Camp Kewanzee, the bride being given a horse for the upward ride but scorning such assistance on the return trip. The ceremony was performed by the side of a green pool near the head of Hales Fork, just below the Camp. The day was perfect. On the nearby banks the mountain laurel was in full bloom. Surely no birds had a more beautiful chorus. Before the wedding the Veeries sang the marriage chant, while the Weed Thrushes played a flute obligato. The ring ceremony was used.

At the rustic camp Mrs. Gus Welch served a wedding dinner of chicken and hot biscuits and damson preserves, with a dessert of wild strawberries, that heavenly fruit of which old Izaak Walton, in 'The Compleat Angler' said, "Doubtless God could have made a better fruit, but doubtless God never did." After the dinner Mr. and Mrs. Freer left for New York, Ohio and Indiana.

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NESTING OF THE PILEATED WOODPECKER

On April 29, 1934, I found a nest of the Pileated Woodpecker in a large, dead limb of a hackberry tree, Celtis occidentalis, on the bank of Nibbs creek, in Amelia County, Virginia. The nest is about 40 feet high, and about 10 feet below the broken off end of the dead limb. The main fork of the trunk is living.

I had no opportunity to revisit this nest until May 12th, when I sat at the base of a tree about 40 feet from the hackberry where an opening in the intervening foliage gave me a view of the opening of the nest hole. While there the old birds made three visits to

feed the young. The female came first, lighting on the main trunk of the tree ten feet from the nest and remaining there about ten minutes. On going to the nest she lit below the opening with her head even with it and paused a few minutes. Then moving up a little she thrust her head and shoulders into the hole and vibrated her body rapidly as if feeding by regurgitation. Then she entered the hole and remained a minute, when she reappeared with feces in her bill which she at once carried away. Thirteen minutes later the male came to the nest and went through identically the same performance. Twenty eight minutes after the male had fed the young, or 41 minutes from her former visit the female returned, feeding and cleaning house as before.

It was a wonderful sight the two grand birds in the setting of big sycamores and hackberrys through whose tops the nearly level rays of the setting sun flickered and danced, alternately giving their colors an almost startling refulgence and again leaving them in shadow.

There was no opportunity to visit the nest again until the late afternoon of May 28th, when I found a lusty youngster sitting in the hole with head and shoulders out. He looked about him interestedly but made no sound for 10 minutes, until his mother came to the tree, when he at once began to squeal. The old bird evidently saw me, though I sat on the creek bank well screened by leafy branches, for she kept out of sight on the main trunk of the hackberry for several minutes before going to the stub. Then she kept on the far side, peering around first one side and then the other for two minutes before venturing around to feed the nestling. She fed by regurgitation, thrusting her bill into that of the young bird and vibrating it rapidly. This finished, she left at once, going about 60 yards, where she remained some time, calling several times. Soon the male came to the top of the tree but was suspicious and did not go to the nest. He cackled loudly and drummed vigorously three times, in about ten minutes, after which both old birds went away.

There seemed to be some rivalry between the nestlings as to which should have the privilege of sitting in the doorway, as several times the occupant appeared to be jostled vigorously from within, and once he slid back and another one took his place. As nearly as I could detect the heads of the nestlings were colored like those of the adults. For that reason I could determine that when the first bird retired from the hole a different one took his place, as the crest of the first covered the whole top of the head, while the forehead of the second was black. At 5 P. M., May 30th, the nest was deserted.

John B. Lewis.

A REVISION OF THE HOUSE WRENS

Dr. Harry C. Oberholser has published an interesting paper, "A Revision of North American House Wrens," in The Ohio Journal of Science (Vol. XXXIV, No.2, pp. 86-96, March 1934), in which he proposes that the name of the Eastern House Wren be changed from Troglodytes a. aedon to T. d. domesticus, and describes as new the Ohio House Wren, T. d. baldwini. This paper is of special interest to Virginia students since certain specimens of the House Wren taken at Smith's Island, Virginia, and hitherto considered the western form, parkmani, he now refers to the new Ohio form.

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Science, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, carried, in its issue for April 20, 1934, a full account, contributed by President Ruskin S. Freer, of the fourth annual meeting of the V S O at Alexandria. A summary of the program, a list of officers elected, and a statement of the resolution opposing baiting of wild fowl near shooting stands were included.

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Miss Hague to Edit The Raven during the Fall.

Dr. Murray, Editor of The Raven, has been granted a leave of absence from his church for four months of study in the fall and will be out of the State from August 15th to December 15th. During his absence Miss Florence Hague has consented to edit The Raven. Contributions for the July issue should be sent to Dr. Murray as usual, and by July 15th. Further nesting notes are particularly desired. After July 15th all communications should be sent to Miss Florence Hague, Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Virginia. The August and September issues will probably be combined.

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MEMBERSHIP

There are four types of membership in the V S O, honorary, sustaining, active and associate. At present there are three honorary members, elected on recommendation of the Executive Committee because of their outstanding contributions to the Ornithology of Virginia. In 1933 there were no sustaining members, 19 active members, and 35 associate members. The annual dues for sustaining members are \$5.00 or more; for active members \$2.50; for associate members \$1.50. All members receive THE RAVEN, and

all members who are residents of Virginia may vote, but only active members may hold office. It is hoped that many of our associate members who reside in Virginia will become active members. Any member may nominate individuals who are interested in bird study for membership. The Secretary will be glad to receive such nominations.

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CORRECTION

The name of Wm. B. McIlwaine, III, of Alexandria should have been included in the names of those nominated for membership in the V S O., of Alexandria.

FIELD NOTES

NEWPORT NEWS: The following are a few 1934 nesting records from the Mariners' Museum grounds.

May 7, Carolina Chickadee (hole in high stump); May 12th, Brown Thrasher (on first eggs); May 14, Catbird (nest finished); May 15, Osprey (on eggs); Phoebe (in R.R. cattle pass tunnel); Caroline Wren (in garage); Summer Tanager (nest started); May 22, Red-headed Woodpecker (hole in tall black gum); Chipping Sparrow (young just hatched); Mockingbird (nest finished); May 25, Summer Tanager (3 eggs in nest); Great Crested Flycatcher (hole in beech tree); June 9, Indigo Bunting (in young pine tree); Barn Swallow (under concrete highway bridge); June 11, Kentucky Warbler (feeding young); June 15, Pine Warbler (feeding young);

George C. Mason.

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ALEXANDRIA: "So much to be done; so little time to do it." An illustration: I go out to study the birds. Evidently here under my feet is the nest of a Maryland Yellow-throat. I search for an hour, in a little space of a few square yards, and do not find the nest. A great big hole in my morning, and nothing to show for it. And so it goes in Bird Study. But now and again a fellow can pick up a nest. Here are the records gleaned from my notes for the spring.

April 28. A Phoebe's nest in an abandoned open well, several feet below the ground level. The bird is incubating. Here's hoping the little ones will get out safely. (This nest was found on a field trip of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia. The place, above The Dyke.

May 7. Young starlings very noisy in their nest just beyond my study window. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are building on a small lateral branch 25 feet up, in a low, swampy wood on the Fort Hunt Road.

May 10. A Field Sparrow's nest at the foot of a little shrub, concealed by grass bent over it, very much as is done by the Bobwhite. Four eggs. The bird is incubating. A very pretty sight. Twenty-five feet up in the crotch of a locust tree a pair of Redstarts is building.

May 28. Six or eight nests of the Long-billed Marsh Wren. All empty. Some of these nests are evidently just completed.

May 31. Out for a few hours with Mrs. Willard L. Thorp. She finds two nests, and I one. 1. In a little cedar along the road, about 8 ft. up, four little Field Sparrows, some days old. 2. A red-eyed Vireo is building its nest in a fork of a low, small branch coming out from the trunk of a large white oak. Elevation, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. In a nearby tree is a last year's nest, probably of this same bird, at about the same height. 3. Quite a find is the nest of a Black and White Warbler. In the woods, of course, but only a few yards from the highway. Both birds were very solicitous, so we knew we were close. We began a systematic study of the base of every tree around there. A pine had been blown over, partly pulling up, partly breaking, some of its roots. The nest was placed in a little depression back under one of these roots. It was a deep cup, made of grasses, roots etc., lined partly with horsehair or cowhair. Either a matter of note. One egg in the nest, and one an inch or two in front of it. I returned several hours later, replaced the stray egg in the nest, and got a picture. When I came again after several days the eggs were gone and the nest badly mutilated. I have no explanation.

June 4. Three nests of the Red-winged Blackbird. One on the edge of the Potomac River, seven feet or more up in a little water willow. This is the highest nest of the Red-wing I ever found. The other two were on the edge of Four Mile Run, placed in little bushes, and not over two, or at most three, feet above normal high tide. The high nest contained little birds, a day or two old; the others two and three eggs respectively. And those birds were keeping away the crows.

June 11. I never found the nest, but at my feet I discovered a baby Maryland Yellow-throat, feathered but not yet able to fly. 2. The golden-yellow nest of an Orchard Oriole, 8 ft. up in a little volunteer peach tree. The cup is deep, and at first I thought it empty. But finally my mirror showed me three tiny babies and one egg unhatched. Both parents were feeding the young. 3. And now my first find of the eggs of the Long-billed Marsh Wren. And where the nests were empty on May 28. I examined six nests. Four were empty; one had one egg, and one had five eggs. The most pretentious houses

were the empty ones. The eggs - tiny ovate things, cocoa-colored, darker at the large end.

June 12. A Baltimore Oriole is reported today as seen at Wellington Villa, about half-way between Alexandria and Mount Vernon, on the Memorial Highway. This bird was singing vigorously. Which means it is nesting close there.

June 14. A Catbird's nest among the little suckers on the trunk of a little tree, about three feet from the ground. Four eggs. The bird is incubating. 2. Several other nests of the Long-billed Marsh Wren. One contained one egg. And that too was a rather dowdy-looking nest.

June 14. An American Egret seen. Last year they were common by June 20. A very common bird along the Potomac all summer.

Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

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AMELIA: On the afternoon of March 25, 1934, following two days of snow and sleet, a visit was made to Beaver Pond, the largest body of water in Amelia County. The pond is about two miles long, and probably 300 yards wide in the widest place. On this visit Miss Mary C. Sheppard and Mr. Harry C. Sheppard, V S O members of this county were with me. We found several scattering flocks of ducks that we estimated contained an aggregate of between 75 and 100 individuals on the pond as well as a half dozen Coots. They were shy, only once allowing a close approach, but we identified with certainty Scaups, Mallards and Shovelers, named in the order of relative abundance. There were also a few that we believe to have been Red-heads, and some small ducks that were probably one of the teals. We greatly enjoyed watching a flock of about twenty Scaups that were feeding from the bottom about 75 yards from shore. Some were constantly going down while others bobbed up.

Appomattox River was in flood at the time, and Mr. Charles Ward, whose home is near it, says that the water covering his low ground fields was swarming with ducks that day. He says that "there were hundreds of them." This was by far the largest flight of ducks that has occurred in Amelia county in my four years of residence here.

At sunset April 29th, while on Nibbs creek I found a baby owl sitting at the foot of a large sycamore tree on the creek bank. No outside nests were in sight, but within about sixty yards of where the infant sat were two large trees each of which had in it a hole that might have been occupied by owls. The little fellow was chilled, and as I knew that the first predator that came along would be likely to put an end to him I took him home. During the next ten days he ate freely of fresh raw beef and grew rapidly. His wing feathers, which were just starting when I first found him, grew to a

considerable length and dark feathers began to appear among the gray down on his body. The morning of the eleventh day he was with us, he showed signs of paralysis of one leg, and by night he had lost the use of both legs and wings. The next morning he was dead. Probably his food was lacking in some essential. Although I have not seen either of the old owls, I am confident that the young one was a Barred Owl. This opinion was strengthened by hearing Barred Owls hooting near where the baby was found on the afternoon of May 30th.

On May 31st, while laying out hillside terrace on a farm on the north west side of Amelia county near the Prince Edward line, I found a nest of the Vesper Sparrow. It was on a hillside, in a field that has "laid out" last year and this, and is concealed under some stunted dewberry vines. The bird flushed as I passed near the nest and went fluttering off over the bare ground with tail expanded, giving me a fine opportunity to identify her. Three hours later, I returned and flushed her again to make doubly sure there was no mistake. The nest is quite deep and more firmly built than most ground nests, and is partly sunk in the soil. It contained four bluish white eggs that were thickly speckled with brown.

Later in the day, on a farm just across Sailor's Creek from the one on which the nest was found I saw a mela vesper sparrow that was singing from the fence that bordered a clover field that was being mowed. It seems possible that there is a small colony of them in that section. I hope to find time to look into this more fully.

I found two Hooded Warblers' nests the same week. The rough-winged swallows did not return to their nesting territory this spring and I have not heard nor seen the Brown-headed Nuthatches since Feb. 11th.

John B. Lewis.

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SWEET BRIAR: After the snow in late March, two or three Fox Sparrows and another bird or two were seen several times on two successive days in a small snow free area close to the house. But the climax came on the afternoon of March 24, when the following birds were seen within 15 minutes in this snow free space: male and female Cardinal; 3 Fox Sparrows; 1 Song Sparrow; 1 White-throated Sparrow; 1 Towhee, male;; 1 Junco; Robins; Starlings; and for a few seconds a White-breasted Nuthatch and a Carolina Wren. I rarely see either Fox Sparrows or Towhees here even in the woods.

Florence S. Hague.

CHARLOTTESVILLE: The earlier migrants were mostly very late at Charlottesville this year, due, I suppose, to the cold. 3/4 Purple Crackle; 4/12 Chimney Swift; 4/20 Water Thrush (? sp.); 4/23 Prairie Warbler; Maryland Yellow-throat; Grasshopper Sparrow; 4/24 Blue-headed and Yellow-throated Vireo; Yellow-breasted, Yellow, Black-throated, Green and Hooded Warblers, Ovenbird, Summer Tanager, and Baltimore Oriole; 4/28 Crested Flycatcher and Wood Thrush; 4/29 Catbird; 5/16 White-breasted Sparrow still here.

The Prairie-horned Lark is certainly found here and there as a breeder. It bred here last year and this year. I've seen it lately in several parts of the State, including between Madison Court House and Sperryville, and on the Blue Ridge near Swift Run Gap, above Stanardsville, Greene County.

Martin Curtler.

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NARUNA: Prairie Horned Larks have been seen here throughout the spring. I am certain they nest here but have had no chance to locate their nests.

Bertha Daniel.

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HARRISONBURG: The following May migrants were first observed on the dates indicated. Baltimore Oriole, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Nighthawk, Yellow Warbler, 1st; Red-eyed Vireo, 5th, Scarlet Tanager, Crested Flycatcher, 7th; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Wood Pewee, Bay-breasted Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Redstart, Ovenbird, Catbird, Wood Thrush, Black and White Warbler, 11th; Indigo Bunting, Bobolink 13th.

D. Ralph Hostetter.

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SALEM: White-eyed Vireo, one of the most common birds in Tidewater and lower Piedmont, Virginia, is very rare in the Western section of the State. It is important that any member of the Society having definite breeding records should report them. Birds were seen and heard six miles west of Salem on May 5th and May 6th. Later visits to the same locality did not reveal any of the birds this spring.

The first record of BLUE GROSBEAK made in this particular section of the State, so far as the writer is aware, was also made on May 5th, in the locality referred to above. No birds have been seen or heard since. Blue Grosbeak is common in Southside, Virginia.

M. G. Lewis.

LEXINGTON: 1934 Nesting Notes. On April 23, a Sparrow Hawk's nest with one egg was discovered in a hollow in a half-dead locust near Cameron's Pond. On 26th it had three eggs. The female was apparently incubating on 28th. On May 7th, five eggs. The female stuck close by to the nest and would not leave it even when I prodded her. Two of the eggs had hatched on May 26th. A week later the five young were developing rapidly. I was told of a second nest which had young on May 22d. Killdeer, nest with three eggs on a limestone ledge in a pasture on June 11th. I saw another pair with small young on June 19th. Mourning Dove, six nests with eggs, April 23 to May 26. A nest on Jump Mountain, May 23, was built on the ground on the roost of a clump of dead chestnut saplings. Hummingbird, nest, May 17, with two eggs 16 feet up on branch of a small cedar. Kingbird, nest just finished in an orchard, May 24, Phoebe, two nests, April 16 and May 18.

Prairie Horned Lark. five nests; April 16, four small young; April 20, well grown young; April 17, large young; April 23, large young; May 14, four naked young. I have been told of one or two other nests this season. Rough-winged Swallow, nest almost finished in highway cut, April 16, several nests, June 18, in creek bank, drowned out by flood. Barn Swallow, nest with fresh eggs, April 27; another with large young, June 11. Purple Martin, nests in colony in store building in town in early May. Titmouse, grown young with adults, June 20. White-breasted Nuthatch, grown young with adults, June 4. House Wren, Many nests; one with one egg, May 20, small young, June 10; young ready to leave nest, June 21. Bewick's Wren, nest with eight eggs, May 3. Carolina Wren, nest with five eggs, May 24. Catbird, nest completed, May 14. Robin, Nests with eggs from April 23, young out of nest by May 12. Bluebird, many nests, eggs from April 27. Mockingbird, nest finished, April 27, in rose bush. Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, seven nests, from April 29 (building) to June 4 (young), which will be written up in full in the July issue. Starling, building on March 17, young on May 10. Red-eyed Vireo, Nest with large young, June 19. Louisiana Water-thrust, nest two eggs May 26.

English Sparrow, carrying nest material on March 16th, and again on June 23rd. Meadowlark, nest, 5 eggs, May 14. Red-winged Blackbird nests with eggs, May 13 on. Cowbird, egg in blue-gray Gnatcatcher nest May 24, hatched before the Gnatcatchers. Purple Grackle, eggs on April 23, young had left nest by May 18, Scarlet Tanager, nest about finished, May 7. Summer Tanager, eggs, June 19. (Towhee, nest with young, Camp Kewanee, Apple Orchard Mountain, June 23.) Cardinal

nest with eggs, April 27 and May 11. Chipping Sparrow, eggs, May 6 and June 4. Field Sparrow, four nests with eggs, May 5 to June 4. Song Sparrow, 4 eggs, June 4.

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BLACKSBURG: Two Pipits on April 22; my first here; Dr. Smyth did not record them often. Four Bobolinks on April 27, the first I have seen in three years and the second time I have recorded them here, although a competent observer tells me that he sees them every spring in small flocks. Prairie Warbler on April 28 and on two other occasions; my first record for Montgomery County; Dr. Smyth recorded them twice. Scaup, two males and one female, April 14. Pine Siskin, May 8, Red-breasted Nuthatch, May 1. Rose-breasted Grosbeak, May 9 to 19, singing on 19th, the first time I have heard them sing in migration. Bay-breasted Warbler, May 10 to 16. Black-billed Cuckoo, May 12, Veery, May 24. Cerulean Warbler, May 13; my first record; Dr. Smyth had two records. Blackburnian Warblers were seen in greater numbers than at any time during my nine years here. Magnolia Warblers were the most plentiful warblers, Blackpolls next, and Blackburnians third. I did not see any Canada Warblers, which is very unusual. The last warbler seen was a Magnolia on June 1.

On May 26th and 27th I was on Wite Top and Mt. Rogers with Hollins and W.P.I. faculty people, and made the following list: Red-breasted Nuthatch, nesting; Robin, nesting; Junco, nest with three small young; Raven; Canada Warbler; Cairns' Warbler; Black-throated Green Warbler; Chestnut-sided Warbler; ~~Veery~~; Wood Thrush; Rose-breasted Grosbeak; Scarlet Tanager; Towhee; Mountain Vireo; Red-eyed Vireo; Yellow-throated Vireo; Swift; Hairy Woodpecker; Bluebird; Louisiana Water-thrush.

Nesting Notes: Robin, mating, April 1; white headed Robin, April 1; building second nest, May 18; second breed off, May 31. Flicker, mating, April 1, Cardinal, mating, April 1. Yellow-billed Cuckoo, building nest, May 10. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, nesting May 19; small young, June 3. Field Sparrow, four eggs, May 19. Red-eyed Vireo, building, May 19. I have seen a great many Scarlet Tanagers and heard them singing. I think they must nest here; and the same is true of the Hooded Warbler, although I have no positive evidence as to either of them. On June 3d. at about 2000 feet, I saw a male Prairie Horned Lark and listened for some ten minutes to his sweet trilling song. This is the first time to my knowledge that this bird has been seen in June in Montgomery County. On the same day, at 2000 feet on a tributary of Tom's Creek, I saw three male and one female Cairns' Warblers, also a record for Montgomery County. One of the males was very tame and investigated me for ten minutes. They were almost certainly breeding.

Ralph M. Brown.



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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

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No. 7

FURTHER ADDITIONS TO THE VIRGINIA AVIFAUNA

Since the publication of the paper in "The Auk," April, 1933, on "Additions to the Virginia Avifauna Since 1890," six other species and sub-species have come to light which should be added to our State list.

1. Larus leucepterus. Iceland Gull. In "The Auk," July, 1934, p. 375, W. T. Helmuth, 3d, reports having seen two at separate places near Cape Henry, January 11, 1934.

2. Otus asio naevius. Eastern Screech Owl. While the range of this form, as given in the 1931 A. O. U. "Check-List," includes the uplands of Virginia, I had no definite data on it at the time of the publication of my paper and so did not include it. Since then I have located several specimens of the Screech Owl from Mountain Lake in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge, which Mr. Ludlow Griscom tells me should be referred to the Eastern form, although they are not quite typical. Several Screech Owls taken by me at the Valley level near Lexington were examined by Dr. H. C. Oberholser and referred by him to the Southern Screech Owl (Otus asio asio), although these again were not quite typical. Hence the Eastern Screech Owl is probably only to be found on the highest mountains of the State.

3. Tolmatodytes palustris waynei. This is a new form of the Long-billed Marsh Wren, described by Dingle and Sprunt in "The Auk," October, 1932, pp. 454-455. No English name is suggested in the paper, although it is evidently intended that it will be known as Wayne's Marsh Wren. In the paper the authors say that "it is probable that waynei breeds well up into Virginia." Since then, in "The Auk," April, 1934, p. 250, Howell and Burleigh have reported that they found it plentiful in the marshes along Back Bay, where they collected a series in May, 1932.

4. Lanius l. ludovicianus. Loggerhead Shrike. This bird was reported from Virginia (Amelia County) for the first time by John B. Lewis, in "The Auk," October, 1933, p. 364.

5. Pipilo erythrophthalmus canaster. Alabama Towhee. At the Alexandria meeting of the V. S. O. Arthur H. Howell exhibited specimens of this form which he had collected at Pungo, on Back Bay, May 17-20, 1932.

6. Ammospiza caudacuta diversa. This form of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow, described as long ago as 1901, but newly recognized by Dr. H. C. Oberholser (The Auk, October, 1931, pp. 610-611) as a valid form, is the breeding form of the coastal marshes of Virginia. The U. S. National Museum has a specimen collected by J. H. Riley at Smith's Island, May 14, 1910. A. c. caudacuta is consequently a migrant along the Virginia coast, "See also, The Auk, April, 1932, p. 231).

This brings the total number of species and sub-species now known from Virginia to 359.

Two changes should be made in the Virginia list, without adding to the total number. In 'Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington,' Vol. 47, February 9, 1934, pp. 21-22, Thomas D. Burleigh has described a new form of the Yellow-throat, the Athens Yellow-throat (Geothlypis trichas typhicola), which breeds from southeastern Virginia (Dismal Swamp) south. This form replaces G. t. ignota, the Florida Yellow-throat, as the form occurring in the Dismal Swamp region. Its range in Virginia, however, is quite limited, as Howell and Burleigh found specimens of the Yellow-throat which they collected near Punge on Back Bay to be referable to G. t. trichas.

The specimen of the House Wren mentioned in my paper as taken on Smith's Island, May 13, 1910, and heretofore considered to be the Western House Wren has been re-examined by Dr. H. C. Oberholser, along with other similar specimens taken near Washington, and is considered by him to be referable to a new sub-species, Troglodytes domesticus baldwini, the Ohio House Wren, described by him in 'The Ohio Journal of Science,' Vol. XXXIV, No. 2, pp. 86-96, March 1934. He lists four other Virginia specimens of this new sub-species.

---J. J. Murray.

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THE INCUBATION PERIOD OF THE EASTERN SPARROW HAWK

Inasmuch as Forbush ("Birds of Massachusetts") and others leave in doubt the question as to whether the incubation period of the Western Sparrow-hawk (Falco s. sparverius) is 21 or 28 or more days, the following facts, although not absolutely conclusive, may be of interest. On April 23, 1934, I found a nest containing one egg in a hollow 15 feet up in a half-dead locust. On April 26 there were 3 eggs, the bird not being on the nest. On April 28 there were still 3 eggs. The female was sitting so close that I had to push her with a stick to make her leave it. Incubation had apparently begun on the 27th or even on the 26th. On May 7th there were 5 eggs. On May 21 the 5 eggs were still not hatched. I could not force the female to leave the nest without the risk of injuring her. She darted at the entrance hole several times when I touched her with a stick, finally lying on her back on the eggs with her feet up. On May 26 two of the eggs had just hatched, the shells being still in the nest. She again remained on the nest while I examined her. I judge from these facts that the incubation period was about 28 days, certainly more than 21 days.

---J. J. Murray.

SAVE THE OLD SNAGS!

My attention was recently called to the fact that in one of the lawns in the neighborhood an old White Oak snag provided nesting sites for three species of birds at the same time. The snag is approximately eighteen inches in diameter at the base, and fifty feet high, dead above, with several green branches on the lower third.

The Starlings were the first to build their nest about twelve feet from the top; the Sparrow Hawks followed about four feet from the top, on opposite side. Later the Flickers built in a hole three and one-half feet below the Sparrow Hawks. During the fore part of June all three species were either incubating or feeding young. Nesting dates are not available. The Starling were the first to leave. The Flickers left during the last week in June, followed by the Hawks ten days later. While the Hawks were occupants of the snag, Purple Grackles, like sentinels, occupied the very top. The Sparrow Hawks were obliged to enter and leave their nesting hole amid the screams and attacks of the Grackles. In spite of this inconvenience, they were true to their local name, "Mouse Hawk." Mice were carried to the hole by the adults and dropped on the inside, after which a commotion followed within.

---D. Ralph Hostetter.

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A NEW PROPOSAL FOR THE PROTECTION OF WATER BIRDS

The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has proposed the following regulation for the protection of water birds in Princess Anne County:

"That, it shall be unlawful for any person to have in his or her possession any shot gun or rifle on the salt water marshes, rivers, bays, sounds or shores of this State, or on the waters and marshes of Princess Anne county during the closed season on migratory game birds, except as otherwise provided by law. For the purpose hereof the word 'possession' shall include having a gun in one's boat or other conveyance while in the above mentioned areas."

This proposal strikes at a situation which permits much careless destruction of our marsh and shore birds and waterfowl. When a man is allowed to have a gun during the closed season on our lonely marshes which cannot be effectively patrolled by our small warden force, there is constant temptation to shoot a few birds for food or for so-called "sport." The game warden can do nothing until birds have actually been shot, and then only when he is lucky enough to catch the law-breaker. Real sportsmen will be glad to give up the pleasure of having a rifle along on their fishing trips, if thereby they can give the wardens a chance to stop the vandals who kill everything they see when there is no danger of being caught. This proposal deserves the support of the V. S. O.

MISS HAGUE TO EDIT "THE RAVEN" FOR THE NEXT
FOUR MONTHS

We are repeating this notice so that there need be no mistake on the part of our contributors. Send all your notes from now until December 1st to Miss Florence Hague, Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Virginia. Dr. Murray will be on leave of absence from his church until that time and will be studying in Oxford, England. Miss Hague will edit the issues of THE RAVEN from August through November. The August and September issues will probably be combined. Notes for this period should be sent to her by September 20. Further notices about later issues will be published in the next issue.

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FIELD NOTES

Northampton County. On a trip to the Eastern Shore on May 16 and 17, with Game Warden E. J. Doughty, Jr., I saw quantities of shore birds, but had little opportunity for careful bird work. Hudsonian curlews were common on both days. I saw 39 in one flock. Single birds and groups of from a few to six or eight were getting up almost continuously as we went through the marshes. On May 16th I estimated that we saw fully 300 birds and on May 17th about 200. Mr. Doughty says he saw many flocks the week before of a hundred or more birds. There were also many dowitchers or robin snipes, ruddy turnstones, least and semipalmated sandpipers, and semipalmated plovers, and several species that I was unable to recognize in the marshes. Many flocks of from 500 to more than 1000 were seen. I also saw numbers of black-bellied plovers and a few willets, but the plovers were not nearly so abundant as the dowitchers.

In one half-mile section of high marsh and bush-covered low islands we located a fish crow nest containing one egg; two occupied osprey's nests, which I was unable to reach; two willet's nests containing four eggs each; a colony of about 100 nests containing eggs of the little green heron; and about 40 nests containing eggs of the boat-tailed grackle. Both willet nests were in thick knee-high grass and were found accidentally by flushing the birds from under our feet. Had we searched the grassy areas between the island thickets we could probably have found several more willet nests. The remains of two eggs, which had been destroyed recently by crows, were also found. I examined a number of the grackle nests (in fact just about all of them). Some were unfinished as yet and fully two-thirds contained either no eggs or from one to two; complete sets consisted of from three to four. Most of the heron nests contained from three to four eggs (one set of 5 eggs), but a few were seen with only one or two. Most of the complete sets of both the herons and grackles were being incubated. I collected a set of the grackle eggs, the fish crow egg and two sets of heron eggs for the State Museum.

---Chas. O. Handley.

Norfolk. Song Sparrow; nest in Spirea bush; June 13, bird setting; June 19, 3 birds hatched; June 22, fourth hatched; June 26, feathers coming fast; June 29, three survivors out of nest, two clinging to bush near nest. Brown Thrasher; feeding young in nest in English laurel in May; tragedy followed for all disappeared; but back to the same nest for the second brood she came, and on June 15 was feeding young; June 22, young out of nest; June 23, I watched one survivor being put to bed in neighboring Live Oak tree; July 2, a new nest has just been constructed within a few feet of the first one. Catbird - nest in tall Privet hedge; June 15, feeding young; June 24, young out of nest; June 25, feeding one lusty survivor; a second nest has been built very near old one; bird seen on nest, July 2. Cardinal - has built two nests in Privet hedge; young ones hatched but some enemy has interfered as none brought to maturity; I am suspicious of House Wren seen lurking near, or it might have been a rat; she has chosen a Crepe Myrtle in another part of the garden for her third attempt. Robin - nest in English laurels at front door. From hall window I watched three husky youngsters take their first plunge into the ether; one created excitement by running up on roof of house, disturbing his parents no little.

---Helen T. Thompson.

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Amelia. Rough-winged Swallow. Up to the time of writing my notes for the June RAVEN no rough-winged swallows had been seen in this section. June 30th, I visited the location of their last year's nest and was delighted to find a pair and locate their nest in a last year's Kingfisher hole about 75 yards down the creek from the last year's site. Both birds were entering the hole at short intervals, evidently feeding young. A short visit was made to the nest July 1, when the pair were again entering the hole as if feeding young. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Two nests of this species have been found that were placed differently from any previously observed by the writer. One of these, to which my attention was called by a friend on May 27th, was near the top of a slender scrub pine where the trunk was about 1½ inches in diameter and was on top of a horizontal branch the size of a lead pencil, and was directly against and fastened to the trunk. It contained well developed young birds. The other I found on May 31st, 15 feet up in a small red birch, in a crotch formed by two small branches that left the two inch trunk at a 45 degree angle. The nest rests against both trunk and branches. This one was collected June 7th, soon after the young left it. It is a beautiful piece of bird architecture with the dainty, lichen covered cup resting against the loose, rose and gray birch bark and half hidden by the leaves. Kingbird. Nest on limb of half dead willow 12 feet up, with newly hatched young, June 30.

---John B. Lewis.

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Alexandria. On June 23, 1934, at Davis's Beach on Occoquan Creek, at its confluence with the Potomac River, I saw in an open field, companying with Killdeer, a smaller bird that I took to be either a Sandpiper or a Plover. Closer inspection, with 8x glasses showed me a PRAIRIE HORNED LARK. I was amazed. This point is about three miles

from Woodbridge on Highway #1, and a little more than twenty miles from Alexandria. The next day I reported this find to Dr. H. C. Oberholser. He was greatly interested, but not so surprised as I had been. He told me he had intended for some days to ask me to go down to Little Hunting Creek on the Memorial Highway and look in an open field there above the river for the nest of a Prairie Horned Lark he had seen there, a male in full song. He says he has no doubt both these birds were breeding close to where we saw them. On June 28, 1934, at the Overlook on the Memorial Highway opposite Fort Hunt I saw a pair of Least Bitterns in the marsh. One of them I watched climbing among the cattails. Not once but a number of times I saw this bird take its bill to thread a way, pushing the tall rushes aside and down and then stepping on them. This bird used its bill just as I would use my stick.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

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Naruna. Nesting notes: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, building nest April 10 at edge of Hobson's mill pond on Falling River in elm tree. Three more nests built near my home about April 19. Bluebird, building nest April 16; one egg in nest April 27. Mourning Dove, incubating eggs April 15. Swift, young in nest in chimney June 25. Mocking birds dancing in garden under apple tree in early morning April 7. Young left nest May 23. Second nest completed July 2. Brown Thrasher, nest May 1, with 3 eggs. Another nest May 5 with 4 eggs. Robin, nest May 6 with 2 eggs. Catbird, building nest May 10; young left nest June 12. Summer Tanager, nest June 6, with 2 eggs; 4 eggs June 8. Prairie Horned Lark; nest June 7, with 3 eggs; nest, a small hole in ground under a bunch of weeds in a hay field on our farm one mile below Naruna. Eggs still in nest on June 11, but they had disappeared on June 13. Downy Woodpecker, young in hollow tree, May 29-June 1. Wood Thrush, young in nest June 9; left nest June 12. Chipping Sparrow, feeding young in nest May 27. Another nest June 24, with one egg; June 27, 4 eggs in nest. Carolina Wren, one egg in nest June 25; 4 in nest June 29. Field Sparrow, 3 young and one egg in nest June 14. Prairie Warbler, young fledgeling just out of nest June 14. Maryland Yellow-throat, young fledgeling, June 17. Red-Shouldered Hawk, one circling with young hawk, June 23; pair circling with two young hawks, July 2; identified by call notes. Songs: Catbird singing like Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Brown Thrasher singing like Carolina Wren. Cardinal singing a new song more glorious than his own. Mocking bird trying out next day the new song of the cardinal.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Salem. Parula Warbler building nest on outer branch of hemlock about eight miles west of Salem, May 1. The tree is on the bank of a small stream and at the entrance to a farmhouse. The branch in which the nest was located almost overhung the public road. On May 8th the nest had eggs; the number could not be accurately determined due to difficulty of seeing into the nest. On May 13th the nest had apparently been

robbed. No eggs could be seen. Meadowlark, nest in field near Salem. Set of four eggs, June 9th. Visited June 11th and June 13th. Undoubtedly deserted by parent birds. Eggs taken on June 13th gave no indication of having been incubated when opened. Catbird, set of four eggs May 22; hatched June 3; incubation period about 13 days. Field Sparrow, young left nest when disturbed on June 24th, evidently for the first time.

---M. G. Lewis.

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Here and There. On various trips during June and July the following observations were made. Wakefield - an occupied Kingbird's nest about ten feet up on a limb of an oak on June 22. Bent Creek, on the Nelson Co. side of James River, where Highway 60 crosses the river,*two Little Blue Herons in white plumage. Crabbottom, in the northwest corner of Highland Co., July 8, one Prairie Horned Lark (and probably others) and Vesper Sparrows.

(*July 3rd.)

---J. J. Murray.

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Lexington. Nesting Notes: In the last issue of THE RAVEN I said that I would write up more fully the notes on seven nests of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher which have been found here this season. Nest No. 1 was being built on 4/28 on a small branch overhanging the water on North River. No. 2 was half-finished when found on 4/30, saddled on a small limb of an apple tree, 12 feet up, in an old orchard. Both birds were working on it, making a trip about every two minutes. When next visited on 5/5 the nest had been taken to pieces and moved to another tree in the orchard. This nest, No. 3, was in a very unusual location, being set within the three forks of an upright crotch in the manner of a Redstart's nest. On 5/24 there were four eggs and a Cowbird's egg in it. The Cowbird's egg hatched first, on 5/26, and when I removed the young bird the Gnatcatchers deserted the nest. No. 4, just completed on 5/7, was 30 feet up, set on the lower branch of a vertical fork and protected by the upper branch. No. 5, not quite finished on 5/17, was 80 feet up, saddled on a limb in the top of a large walnut. There was no fork at the nest. No. 6, half-finished on 5/18, was 40 feet up on the side of a limb running up at a sharp angle. No. 7 was 40 feet up in an ash, saddled on a limb, with another limb crossing over it and almost touching the top of the nest. The bird was incubating 4 eggs on 5/26, and still incubating on 6/4. The incubation period of the Gnatcatcher seems to be about 12 days.

On 5/22 I saw a Vesper Sparrow carrying food to young in a nest which I was not able to locate. A family of five young Screech Owls left a nest in town on 6/12. Other Notes: The male Wood Duck previously reported at Big Spring remained there until 5/29. A Lesser Scaup was seen as late as 5/11; and a male Gadwall, rare here at any time, at the very late date of 5/21, on James River; Woodcock, 5/12; Solitary Sandpiper, as late as 5/24, and again as early as 7/23; Pectoral Sandpiper in breeding plumage, 7/23; Little Blue Heron (white) from 7/28 on; Nighthawk, extremely rare here in summer, 6/9 and 6/19; Black-billed Cuckoo, 7/23; Swamp Sparrow, 5/13, latest date for Lexington; Northern Water-thrush, 5/1; Wilson's Warbler, 5/24, male.



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A UNIQUE NESTING PLACE

F. H. Honaker, of Drapers Valley, had, in the early summer of 1933, an unusual opportunity to study bird life. Two home seeking wrens ventured through the open window of his bedroom and there found the spot of their dreams. Building operations started immediately. They located their nest just under a wall clock, on a desk, anchored between some books and two sheets placed there for use on the morrow. Luckily there were other sheets, and so the construction went on undisturbed, both birds busy at the task.

Within a week the nest was ready and Mrs. Wren proceeded to fill it. She was an "early bird." By 7 A.M. her daily laying was done. It took her two weeks to hatch these four eggs. Mr. Wren showed his sympathy during this tedious time by bringing her juicy worms from the neighboring garden, and seeds. In his loneliness he took to spending the night in a hanging basket on the front porch close by the open window. But he was up with the dawn, and into the bedroom every morning with breakfast for his mate. Both birds grew gentle, though Mr. Honaker was too considerate of the little hen to wind his clock until she had flown out for an airing.

After the hatch both parents had to hunt for food, though the mother stayed on the nest at night until the little ones crowded her out!

The wrens were excellent house keepers. They not only kept the nest clean from all refuse; they either ate or carried from the room the four eggshells.

The wrenlets grew amazingly fast. Though tiny little mites at the start, in ten days they had outgrown the nest and moved to the open spaces. They left without warning, without even a test flight about the room. They must have stayed close by, however, for Mr. Wren slept in the hanging basket for about a week after the family left the nest in the upstairs room.

Although the nest was not disturbed, it was not used again. But either the same or another pair nested later in the summer in a flower stand on the front porch.

---Sarah M. Allison
from Roanoke Times.

BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG COOPER'S HAWKS

While botanizing in a large tract of lowland woods at sunset July 9, a female Cooper's Hawk swooped near me several times uttering the cack cack cack alarm note of the species. Almost at once a large nest was located about 30 feet up in a white oak, where some limbs left the trunk. A young hawk was on the edge of the nest. I threw a stick in his direction, when he fluttered to a limb about 8 feet away. When I clapped my hands he made another short flight, and soon was in another tree 30 yards from the nest.

July 12th the nest was revisited. A young hawk was in a nearby tree uttering a low, twittering note that suggested the twitter sometimes uttered by the Acadian Flycatcher. He left as I approached and I found two other young sitting on the edge of the nest. An attempt to make them fly was unsuccessful. This time the old hawks did much cack cack cacking at a distance of about 75 yards, but did not threaten attack as at my first visit.

July 13 at sunset one young hawk sat on the edge of the nest but no others were seen or heard. July 14 a sunset visit disclosed one young bird on the edge of the nest and another on a limb about 12 feet from it. No others were seen or heard. July 16 one young hawk was on a limb 10 feet above the nest. It refused to fly. July 18, no hawks were seen or heard about the nest. Since then the young hawks have been seen or heard in the woods in which the nest is located every few days.

The forest floor and undergrowth beneath the nest were conspicuously white-washed with excrement at all times. A number of feathers were found about the nest tree, a few of which could be identified as wing feathers of Rhode Island Red chickens. Others were doubtless those of the Mourning Dove. A pellet found was largely composed of fine fur, the color of which suggested either mice or flying squirrels. It also contained a toe of a young chicken and some mouse bones.

The very late date at which this nest was found probably indicates that it was a second attempt.

---John B. Lewis.

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ABOUT V. S. O MEMBERS

Mr. A. O. English, member of the Executive Committee, is now living in Roanoke, having moved there from Norfolk.

Mr. M. G. Lewis, County Agent of Roanoke County, and also a member of our Executive Committee, has begun a series of articles on nature subjects for the Roanoke World-News. The articles will appear weekly. Mr. Lewis is also writing a series of nature articles for the Baltimore Southern Methodist.

Our Editor, Dr. James J. Murray, pastor of the Lexington Presbyterian Church, sailed with his family on "The City of Norfolk" from Baltimore on August 14 for a four-month period of study at Oxford, England. As a sort of sabbatical leave, the trip is in large measure an expression of appreciation of the long and successful pastorate in Lexington, by his congregation. We of the VSO extend our congratulations to Dr. Murray and his wife, and wish for them a pleasant trip and a fruitful stay at Oxford. We may expect vivid accounts of Dr. Murray's observations of ocean bird life, and the birds of England, on his return to the States. He went amply fortified with literature on both subjects.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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PROPOSAL FOR THE PROTECTION OF WATER BIRDS

Because of unfavorable comment and criticism, the regulation proposed for the protection of water birds in this state (see July Raven, page 3) is further interpreted as follows by Chas. O. Handley of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

As drawn the proposal applies only to the possession of guns on saltwater areas, except in Princess Anne County where it applies to all waters and marshes. Even in this area, the possession of a shotgun or rifle is not prohibited in upland areas, except on saltwater beaches.

Generally when one is accosted as to why he has his gun with him during the closed season, the answer given is "to kill vermin". A plausible excuse in the upland areas, but on the areas affected by the proposed regulation, a hawk, or owl, or turtle, or snake or other species generally classed as vermin, excepting the crow, is rarely ever met with. How many take their guns upon the waters and marshes of our State to shoot crows? It just isn't done except in going to and from one's residence or camp to the upland point where the shooting is to be conducted. To take care of such cases provision is made in the proposal whereby anyone who shows just cause why he should have the privilege may be granted a permit to carry a gun at any time.

The only real hardships which will be brought about by the proposal will fall upon the fisherman who desires to take a rifle along to while away dull hours, and the property owner who wishes to take his gun along in his boat while on his own lands. To the fishermen, I would suggest that they resort to pistol practice when on saltwater. The pistol is not so dangerous to either birds or human beings. A ricocheting rifle ball is a dangerous missile over water. I have known of more than one man either killed or seriously wounded by such. So far as the property owner is concerned, I would suggest that the proposal be amended so as to allow a property owner, tenant or lessee to take his shotgun or rifle with him at any time upon the waters within the boundary of his own property.

Some have misinterpreted the words, "during the closed season

on migratory waterfowl." There is a vast difference between the two - the hunting season on waterfowl will be set by Federal Proclamation this year for thirty days only, while the hunting season on migratory game birds (mourning dove, gallinules, snipe, woodcock, coot, sora and waterfowl) will extend from September 1 to January 15. As far as I am aware, there is very little squirrel hunting from a boat in saltwater areas, therefore, the proposal will work no great hardship on the squirrel hunter.

Unless I am mightily mistaken, the real sportsmen and conservationist will willingly give up the pleasure of taking a rifle along on saltwater fishing trips and get behind their Game Commission in this move for better protection of waterfowl and shorebirds during spring and summer months. As I have endeavored to show, the proposal is worded so as to restrict the true sportsman just as little as possible and yet cut to the quick those vandals who persist in riding up and down our saltwater beaches and marshes slaughtering shorebirds for the mere pleasure of killing, often never stopping to pick up the birds killed.

---Chas. O. Handley,

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FIELD NOTES

Alexandria, August 20, 1934. Back home again after an absence of five weeks. And out this morning for the first time. A couple of hours' walking along the shores of the Memorial Highway fill across Hunting Creek. Lots and lots of Little Blue Herons. The American Egrets are not scarce, but are much fewer than of last season. Great Blue Herons here and there; and they are stately. You think twice when you see a Great Blue Heron flapping slowly along. Two or three, possibly four, Green Herons. And one Least Bittern. This last flushed and flew into a little cattail thicket. As I approached he was up and away. I was sorry, as I had hoped he would "freeze" for me. A pair, or three, Spotted Sandpipers, and with two of them one Semi-palmated Plover. The early fall date for this latter species, according to Miss Cooke, is August 14. I am six days behind. Not so bad.

August 23, 1934. This morning my quest was for wading birds - and I found them. A couple of hours by the pond at Four Mile Run (along the Highway). The tide was receding. This was Heron Day. Five or six Great Blues. One of them I saw flying with his neck straight as an arrow. Of course it was only for a matter of a few rods, and close to the water. The American Egrets in the ascendency here, possibly twenty-five or more. About a dozen Little Blues, two of them in adult plumage, the others in white. A couple of Black-crowned Night Herons. A third I was not sure of, seen in the distance and for only a moment. It may have been an immature Night Heron; it may have been an American Bittern. I cannot say. Two Least Bitterns, one of them standing like a snag up out from the lily pads. But the find of the day was for me a new species. I believe I had seen it in North Carolina, though at the time I had failed to recognize it. Two white birds were feeding out in the run where the falling tide made

shallow water. One was certainly an American Egret. The smaller bird attracted my attention particularly by "not looking just right." And he was rushing here and there after his quarry. At a distance of possibly two hundred feet my 8x30 binoculars placed him right before me perfectly. His bill was yellow at the base and black toward the tip, indeed black three-fourths of its length. As he pulled his feet out of the water many times I saw plainly that they were bright yellow. Here then are three marks of identification -- feet, bill, and feeding habits. And as for size, he stood with the American Egret, and I got the comparison. This was clearly manifested to be the SNOWY EGRET!

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Naruna. Nesting Notes: The Blue Grosbeaks began their nest in the early morning of July 12, the female doing almost all the work. The nest was completed just before twilight and was built in a peach tree near the edge of our yard about seven feet from the ground. It was made of leaves, grasses, cotton strings and lined with hair. On July 20th there were three eggs in the nest. There were young birds in the nest July 30 and they left the nest August 10. On July 13th a nest of the Indigo Bunting was found in an alder bush that hung over a small brook that flows through our farm. The nest contained two fledgelings and one sterile egg. The fledgelings left the nest July 15.

---Bertha Daniel.

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THE RAVEN IN THE BLUE RIDGE

It has long been one of my ambitions to find the Raven in the Blue Ridge mountains near Lynchburg, but in eight or nine years of rather frequent hikes into these mountains I have seen none, or at least have recognized none until recently. Dr. Murray has frequently found them in the Alleghenies near Lexington. During the summer of 1933 Major Robert P. Carroll and I saw several Ravens at different places in western West Virginia, and saw one on Hawksbill mountain along the Skyline Drive, in Madison County, Va., and two in Highland County near Monterey, Va. The latter two records have been reported in THE RAVEN (July 1933).

On May 13, 1934, I saw two Ravens far back in outlying ridges of the Blue Ridge, along the St. Mary's River in Augusta County. This was getting closer home, but was still outside the region covered by my list of birds for Lynchburg and vicinity. On Saturday, September 22, 1934, while conducting Dr. J. J. Turner and a group of his students from Hiram College in northern Ohio, over Sharp Top mountain at the Peaks of Otter, I heard a Raven note distinctly. This point is in Bedford County, so the Raven could be added to the Lynchburg list. On Wednesday, September 26, the same party was walking over Cold mountain, the Hog Camp and the Cardinal to Mt. Pleasant, all in Amherst County, when we saw and heard Ravens several times. We

saw at least two Ravens at one time, and felt sure that at one time there were three flying about the summit of Mt. Pleasant. Again on September 30 the same party was ascending Rocky Row mountain, also in Amherst County, when a Raven was seen and heard several times. We were told by a mountaineer who lives at the foot of the mountain, that a pair of Ravens had been nesting in the rocky ledge along the top of Rocky Row for many years. I have often hiked on this mountain, but had somehow missed these rare and interesting birds on previous trips.

---Ruskin S. Freer.



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

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No. 9

MORE EXPERIENCES WITH NESTING WRENS

While living at Amherst, Va., I discovered the nest of a pair of Carolina Wrens in a tin can of nails in an old carriage house. The frightened mother flew out of a knot hole in the wall but she returned and completed the set of five eggs, beginning incubation after the fourth egg was laid. I visited her every day, sometimes several times. She became less and less afraid, until I could pick up the can and stroke her on the nest. In due time five young wrens, never having shown fear of me, left the nest carefully guarded by both parents.

Twelve days later, I went to my bedroom about 11 A.M. to find a mass of sticks and straw on a bracket on the wall. Soon a Carolina Wren flew in with dried grass and showed small alarm at my presence. When it deposited the straw and left, I closed the window, went downstairs and sat on the porch. Soon I heard both birds scolding loudly as they ran noisily over the tin porch-roof. However the next morning, Carolinas, no doubt the same ones, were busy building in a nail box in the well house, where they raised four young.

In Glen Rock, Pa. I watched intimately a pair of House Wrens which raised two broods, one of 7 and the other of 6 birdlings, in a pint tin oyster can, under the eave of a henhouse. These birds, while they never allowed me to come in touch with them, became rather tame for such excitable creatures. The mother would always fly off when I picked up the can, and often the father would light on a nearby post and sing his bubbling song, while I held the can. The young birds also began to show fear at five days old, and the last of the brood of seven, when I picked up the can, flew out in great alarm, striking near the comb of a neighboring garage with wide steep roof reaching within three feet of the ground. The birdling somersaulted down the roof, fell to the ground, and picked itself up, flying to the adjacent tree where its parent was calling excitedly. The other youngsters had trouble, at intervals during two days. This pair of Wrens produced 13 young birds that season, 1931, all of which left the nest on their own wing-power. Also every egg laid, hatched.

---Mary D. Dise.

TERNS AT SALEM AND AMELIA

On August 17 a Black Tern, Chlidonias nigra surinamensis, was seen at the small lake near Hollins Station in Roanoke County. The bird was observed both on the wing and perched on a post at rather close range with the field glass. Therefore there is no doubt that the bird was an immature Black Tern. The writer conferred with Dr. Ellison A. Smythe, Jr., who verified the identification. We know of but one previous record of this species in this section of Virginia, viz., that made by Doctor Smyth at Blacksburg, July 5, 1905.

On September 16 a common tern, Sterna hirundo, was seen at the same place, and watched for some time in his graceful maneuvers over the pond.

---Merriam G. Lewis, Salem.

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The afternoon of September 3rd, following a day and night of rain, a visit was made to Beaver Pond, a mill pond that is said to be two miles long, and is probably 300 yards wide in some places. In the upper end where the water is shallow there are many acres covered with pondweed, Potamogeton natans, or yellow water lily, Nymphaea advena. Little Blue Herons in the white plumage, and Wood Ducks frequent this part of the pond, and on this occasion a small tern was circling low over the water. Most of the time it bobbed up and down just above the surface, touching the pondweed or the water with its bill at each downward swoop as if taking food. Remaining motionless in the boat I watched this bird for more than half an hour, during which time it came quite near, once passing almost over the prow of the boat. It was the size of a Sparrow Hawk, tail forked, wings long and their beats rather slow; color of upper parts mottled slate gray, under parts white. Forehead and sides of head white, a black patch on back of head and one behind eye, bill black. The black patches on the back and sides of head may have been confluent. I believe it to have been a Black Tern, Chlidonias nigra surinamensis, in juvenile plumage. During the hour or more that I was on the pond the tern did not alight or utter a sound.

---John B. Lewis, Amelia.

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DR. MURRAY RETURNING SOON

Dr. Murray's return is anticipated in time for the preparation of the December issue of THE RAVEN. Consequently all notes for THE RAVEN should be addressed to Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington.

FIELD NOTES

Naruna.--Last dates, September 8, Prairie Warbler; 9, Blue-gray Gnat-catcher, Black and White Warbler; 12, Crested Flycatcher, Hummingbird; 13, Wood Thrush; 19, Blue Grosbeak, White-eyed Vireo; 20, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Wood Pewee; 21, Summer Tanager; 22, Whip-poor-will; 25, Bewick's Wren; 26, Red-eyed Vireo; 28, Maryland Yellow-throat, Brown Thrasher; 30, Nighthawk. October 2, Catbird; 8, Indigo Bunting; 11, Swift; November 3, Chipping Sparrow.

First dates, October 2, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; 3, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 7, Yellow Palm Warbler; 9, Black-throated Green Warbler; 10, Song and White-throated Sparrows; 14, Junco, Golden-crowned Kinglet; 16, Brown Creeper; 18, Mountain Solitary Vireo (?); 22, Hermit Thrush; 29, Canada Geese, estimated 75; 30, Purple Grackle.
---Bertha Daniel.

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Craig Healing Springs. 1933, July 20, Least Flycatcher, with young out of nest; July 23, Phoebe feeding fledglings; 26, one young Chewink, many Chipping Sparrows with young, also Bob-whites; chorus of Whip-poor-wills at night; 30, Hairy Woodpecker.

August 2, Springs guest shooting in the woods after which I heard and saw a covey of very young Bob-whites crying and wandering about for half an hour while the male sat high in a tree calling excitedly; 17, numerous Nuthatches, including young, Wood Pewees, Phoebe, Black-and-White Warblers, and Humming birds; 18, Screech Owls calling at night, flock of Nighthawks in clear sky at 10 A.M., flock of Blue-birds; 23, Yellow-throated Vireo, Alder Flycatcher in the swamp, molting Robins and Catbirds; 25, molting Carolina Wren, wet and singing; Flickers numerous; 26, flock of 100 or more Nighthawks feeding at 5 P.M.; 27, about 15 baby Bob-whites crossing road with their mother.

September 6, large flock of Goldfinches, many young; Scarlet Tanager heard; 8, flushed about 100 Bob-whites; 13, Northern Water Thrush, Wilson's Warbler, Scarlet Tanager; 14, 2 male Wilson's Warblers, several Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, male Pileated Woodpecker; 23, spent night at Snowden where I saw Little Blue Heron and heard reports of shooting Great Blue Heron and Woodpeckers for sport.

1934, August 2, Chipping and Song Sparrows, Flickers, Robins, Phoebe, Wood Pewees, Goldfinches and Bob-whites, all scarcer than in 1933; only one Bluebird in six weeks; Swifts numerous for several days, then disappeared; 22, large flock of Nighthawks; 25, Black-and-White Warblers, and an Acadian Flycatcher whining "Tre-e-al"; 29, an Ovenbird had been calling "Teacher" for several days and at 7 P.M. we saw the parents with three young just out of the nest.

September 2, Hairy Woodpecker and Baltimore Oriole; Pileated Woodpecker heard; 6, Goldfinch mother feeding a persistent youngster; many Nighthawks; 9, a Red-tailed Hawk and Hummingbirds. Above a sunlit bog covered by gorgeous wild touch-me-nots, on rapid whirring wings, with intricate motion and challenging notes, a hundred Hummingbirds fed, played, and fought, their resplendent plumage gleaming like jeweled mail, their long, sharp bills clicking with the sound of tiny rapiers -- a sound never to be forgotten.

---Mary D. Dise.



THE RAVEN

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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

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Nos. 10-12

THE BIRDS OF AN OCEAN CROSSING

To a bird lover one of the most fascinating features of an ocean voyage is the opportunity that it affords of studying the new and strange birds of the sea. On my recent trip to Europe full advantage was taken of this opportunity. In good weather most of the time was spent on deck braced against a stanchion with field glasses and note book in hand. I was fortified with several good books that treat of ocean birds - Roger Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds," which has excellent pictures of wing patterns of birds in flight; the water bird volume of Coward's series on "The Birds of the British Isles;" and "Birds of the Ocean," by W. B. Alexander, a splendid book which deals specifically with the birds to be seen at sea. With these it was not difficult to identify every bird of which a good view was obtained, although one of the tantalizing features of studying birds from shipboard is the large number of birds of which one gets only a distant and fleeting glimpse and which cannot be followed up.

We left Norfolk on August 16th, 1934, and landed at Havre, France, on the 25th; and returning sailed from London on December 1st and landed at New York on the 12th. The eastbound voyage was comparatively calm, but on the return trip we were in a severe storm for three days. Even during the storm birds were in sight most of the time, and one compensation for the storm was that we were blown northward off our course and passed over the central parts of the Grand Banks within 150 miles of Cape Race and into a region where great flocks of northern birds were encountered. This, for instance, was the only place where we saw or were likely to have seen the great Glaucous Gulls of the far north.

Most of the birds seen were entirely new to me. Some of them were northern species, not unfamiliar to bird students on the New England coast but rarely coming as far south as Virginia. Others were birds of the open sea which are not seen even on the northern coast except as stragglers are driven landward by storms. On the round trip some twenty-five species in all were identified.

I was much interested in the Shearwaters, three species of which were seen on the eastbound voyage, and the Fulmar, a closely related species, which was common on both trips. The Shearwaters are strictly ocean birds, rarely coming near land except for a brief nesting period. They nest on sea islands and most of them in southern latitudes. The Greater Shearwater, for example, nests only on

Inaccessible Island in the Tristan da Cunha group, half way between Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope. The Shearwaters spend most of their waking hours on the wing and sleep on the water. They resemble gulls but have small wings in proportion to the size of their bodies. They have a strong, swift flight, scaling much of the time just above the waves on stiff, set wings, and having no difficulty in flying round and round a ship which is going at full speed. We saw Greater Shearwaters in mid-ocean, sighting the first pair over 2000 miles out from Norfolk. Then we saw a large flock of Sooty Shearwaters and a few Mediterranean Shearwaters some 400 miles off the French coast. The Fulmar, even more beautiful and graceful than the Shearwaters, was always in sight in mid-ocean on both trips. In its most common plumage it is white with gray back and wings. As it scuds on stiff wings back and forth across the wake of the vessel, like a white torpedo hung under a little gray plane, utterly indifferent to wind and spume, it is the most attractive sight of an ocean voyage.

By the time we were 1200 miles from land the little "Mother Carey's Chickens" began to appear. The first we saw were Wilson's Petrels, little black birds with white rumps, no larger than swallows and with the same grace and power of flight. All one day they followed us. Nearer the European coast another variety, the British Storm Petrel, followed us in small flocks for three days, feeding on the small forms of sea life stirred up by the screw of the vessel. The name Petrel means "Little Peter" and comes from the bird's habit of pattering along on the water as Peter walked in the story of old. The sailors say that they are harbingers of storms, but they are apt to be seen at any time in mid-ocean. In fact, we did not see them before or during the storm that we went through.

One of the finest birds of the ocean is the Gannet, a great white bird with black-tipped wings. They sail along, sometimes in strung out flocks, just over the waves, occasionally rising to dive into the water with terrific force when they sight a fish. We saw one when we passed out through the Virginia Capes, an early arrival on the southern coast from its northern home. On the return trip they were common on both sides of the ocean, but were not seen in mid-ocean.

On the Banks little Dovekies were abundant, flying by the ship on swiftly whirring wings. They are small members of the Alcidae or diving sea birds, about the size of a Robin, black above and white below, and perfectly at home in the wildest sea. Razor-billed Auks, large editions of the Dovekie, were also seen; and in the English Channel in sight of the chalk cliffs of Dover a few Atlantic Murres. Occasionally we saw Jaegers, both the Parasitic and Pomarine forms. These are large dark birds, akin to the gulls but stronger and fiercer. They look and act like hawks and from the way in which they prey on the gulls are known as the "robbers of the sea". A few Skuas, a larger brown form of the same family, were seen near the European coast.

The most common birds seen were the gulls - most of them, except the Kittiwakes, Great Black-backed Gulls and Glaucous Gulls, near the land. To my mind the most graceful of all the birds seen at sea are the Kittiwake gulls. We were rarely out of sight of them. Flocks apparently follow the ship all the way across the ocean, turning back to more congenial territory on the deep when within a few hundred miles of land. Immense flocks surrounded the ship while we were on the Banks. Three to five hundred were in sight at times. Although they are small and slender gulls storms seem to make no difference to them. With wings set they rode without apparent effort in the teeth of a gale blowing 75 miles an hour, and they seemed much more at home with the salt spray dashing over them than we felt inside in the warmth of the tossing ship. With them on the Grand Banks were always a dozen or more Great Black-backed Gulls, with snowy head and tail and underparts and coal-black back and wings, the largest of all the gulls, flying with grace and power and scaring without a wing beat as fast as the ship. There we also saw a few Glaucous Gulls, great white birds almost as large as the Black-backs. Other gulls were seen nearer land - Herring Gulls, a different variety on each side of the ocean; Lesser Black-backed and Black-headed Gulls on the European side; Laughing Gulls at the entrance to Hampton Roads; and Bonaparte's Gulls in New York Harbor.

On the last day of the eastbound voyage, about 100 miles off the French Coast, a land bird circled about the ship and finally lit on a hatchway long enough for me to see that it was a Turtle Dove on its southern migration to Africa.

---J. J. Murray.

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"UNCLE REMUS" ON PROTECTIVE COLORATION

"Uncle Remus," that classic of Southern childhood by Joel Chandler Harris, is full of shrewd bits of animal lore. One of the stories is of particular interest to students of natural history. The story is "Why the Guinea-Fowls are Speckled" and it is to be found in the volume entitled "Nights with Uncle Remus." "Ole Sis Cow" is in difficulties with a Lion who has cast a longing eye upon her calf. She is facing the Lion bravely and pawing up the earth as he prepares for his charge. A flock of Guineas who had been engaged in conversation with the old lady take a hand in the fray by dashing out one by one and scratching up so much dust in front of the Lion that he misses his lunge and is impaled on Sis Cow's sharp horns. In gratitude Sis Cow wishes to do something for the helpful Guinea-hens. They go into a consultation. "Bimeby one er de guinnies step out fum de huddlement, en make a bow, en low dat dey all 'ud be mighty proud ef Sis Cow kin fix it some way so dey can't be seed so fur thoo de woods, kaze dey look blue in de sun, en dey look blue in de shade, en dey can't hide deyse'f nohow." After a little thought Sis Cow calls for a pail and lets down her milk, and then dipping her tail in the milk she sprinkles each of the Guineas in turn. "En de Guinnies dey sot in de sun twell dey git dry, en fum dat time out dey got dem

little speckles on um." The roots of this, as of so many of Uncle Remus' stories, probably go back to African folk lore and indicate how early some of the principles of A. H. Thayer's "Concealing Coloration" were recognized. ---J. J. Murray.

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AN ADDITION TO THE VIRGINIA LIST

In the October, 1934, issue of THE AUK, Vol. LI, No. 4, p. 507, Mr. Paul Bartsch, of the U. S. National Museum, reports the finding of a dead dried specimen of the Greater Shearwater (Puffinus gravis) on the beach at Cobb's Island, Virginia, on July 2, 1934. The skeleton was preserved and is now No. 322,008 in the skeleton collection of the National Museum. This is the only record for this species in the State and represents, therefore, an addition to the Virginia Avifauna, thus bringing the total number of birds known from the State to 360.

In the same number of THE AUK on page 525 J. J. Murray reports an addition to the breeding birds of the State, the newly-described Ohio House Wren (Troglodytes aedon baldwini, or T. domesticus baldwini). A specimen found at Lexington on June 5, 1934, was so identified by Dr. H. C. Oberholser.

Other Virginia notes in the same issue are as follows: "Albinism in the Phoebe," by D. Ralph Hostetter; "Prairie Horned Lark Breeding at Naruna, Virginia," by Bertha Daniel, the southernmost record at present; "A Colony of Little Blue Herons in Norfolk County, Virginia," by J. J. Murray; "Nesting of the Eastern Vesper Sparrow in South-eastern Virginia," by John B. Lewis; and an obituary by Dr. T. S. Palmer of Percy Evans Freke, who died at Folkestone, England, March 20, 1931, and who had published a paper on the birds of Amelia County, Virginia, based on seven years residence in that county in 1872-1879.

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In order to keep the records straight this issue of THE RAVEN is given the Nos. 10-12, since the double issues of August-September and October-November were given only a single number each.

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CHRISTMAS CENSUS

The Christmas census should be taken according to the directions published in the December, 1933, issue of THE RAVEN; and results sent to the editor early in January.

FIELD NOTES

Amelia. I am writing to add the Bald Eagle, Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus, to my list of Amelia county birds. I did not see this bird myself, but the men who reported it to me are entirely reliable. Mr. J. C. Badgett and his son, Byron Badgett, of Mattoax, were hunting rabbits on December 3rd, about a quarter of a mile from Appomattox river on the N.E. side of the county. They "jumped" a rabbit that ran into a gully before they got a shot at it and started down the gully. An eagle swooped down on the rabbit, and as it arose Byron Badgett shot it. They took it to Richmond intending to have it mounted, but the charges were so high that they gave it away to a merchant who planned to have it prepared for exhibit in his store. The bird was evidently just assuming the full adult plumage, as both head and tail were partly white. They did not measure its length, but the wing spread was six feet, four inches.

---John B. Lewis.

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Blacksburg. July 29, Scarlet Tanager, in scarlet and black plumage, singing, Brush Mountain, near Tom's Creek. Myrtle Warbler, October 9-25; Black-poll Warbler, October 10; Black-throated Blue Warbler, October 9-13; Black-throated Green Warbler, October 10-19; Blackburnian Warbler, October 9-13; Cape May Warbler, October 10-23; Bay-breasted Warbler, October 12-18; Magnolia Warbler, October 13-19. Usually I see a great number of the Black-poll warblers. This year I recorded only three.

Other birds: Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, October 21, Peter's Mountain, Giles County; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, November 4; Scaup, November 8-December 10; American Coot, November 8-December 10; Cedar Waxwing (40), November 18; Winter Wren (2), November 8, Tree Sparrow (5), November 8; Cuckoo calling, November 8.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Lexington. I have only been able to get out for a few hours on one day since getting back home, but on that trip I saw a Red-shouldered Hawk, which is an uncommon fall, winter and spring visitor here, at Cameron's Pond. The usual wintering Great Blue Heron was present at Big Spring Pond; a flock of 11 Mallards were swinging over the pond; and two Ravens were passing high overhead in the direction of Hogback Mountain, croaking as they went.

---J. J. Murray.

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THE BALD EAGLE NEAR LYNCHBURG

The Bald Eagle was added to the Lynchburg list recently (about November 8, 1934) when one was shot along the James River somewhere near Reusens or Abert by George J. Price. The bird had a wing-spread of seven feet and eight inches. It was turned over to a local

taxidermist, Lawrence McWane, for mounting, where I saw it and identified it as an immature bird. No white showed on head or tail. Chapman's key was used in the identification.

I have had frequent reports of Eagles for the section where this bird was taken, and we have several times sighted what we were sure were Eagles, in the Blue Ridge a few miles from this spot, but we have never been able to make any certain identifications.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMMENDS MR. HANDLEY'S CENSUS

The Lynchburg "Daily Advance", an evening paper, for January 1, had a long leading editorial commenting very favorably on the Christmas census taken in the Richmond area by Mr. Chas. O. Handley, Vice President of the V.S.O., Mrs. Elizabeth M. Shaw and Mrs. A. O. James, two of our Richmond members, and Chas. O. Handley, Jr. In addition to giving the census data, comments of some length are added on the large number of birds listed (55 species, 3691 individuals), and on the knowledge of the average person regarding our native birds when compared with the results of this fine record. Mr. Handley's census will appear in the January issue of THE RAVEN with others taken at Christmas.

---R.S.F.

* The Treasurer would be glad to receive member- *
* ship dues for 1935 at any time now. Promptness in *
* attending to this will save him much labor, and will *
* save the V.S.O. much postage. THE RAVEN goes to all *
* classes of members. Dues are as follows: Associate *
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* Lewis, Treasurer, Virginia Society of Ornithology, *
* Amelia, Va. *
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