



THE RAVEN



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

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No. 1

THE BIRDS OF THE NEW FOREST

My introduction to British birds came to me at the village of Lyndhurst in the center of the beautiful New Forest country. We had landed from a Channel steamer at Southampton on the first day of September. As far as birds were concerned the city might as well have been Richmond. Nothing but the cosmopolitan English Sparrows and Starlings were to be seen. Eager to see some real birds I caught a bus for the country that same afternoon. Without having the slightest idea where to go except to head for the New Forest region I was fortunate enough to pick out Lyndhurst, which turned out to be one of the best possible places for the purpose and where we two days later went for a visit of ten days. I left the bus at the edge of the village and started out across open common. A few hundred yards from the road I met my first English bird. It was a Blue Tit, a chickadee, but a much brighter chickadee than our American representative of the family. Greenish-blue, with yellow breast and black and white markings about its head, it is one of the most attractive as well as one of the commonest of the birds of England. It was flitting about a patch of the prickly furze that grows everywhere in open places in the New Forest and, in fact, all over England. Some of the lower bushes still had the yellow pea-shaped blossoms that make the furze so lovely in summer. Nearby was a tiny Catholic Church with a wooded cemetery surrounded by a stone wall. A bird was singing brilliantly in the shrubbery, and soon I caught sight of its red breast. It was an English Robin, the inspiration of all the songs about the "Robin redbreast," a small olive-brown bird with a breast on fire, only vaguely resembling the American Robin to which the homesick settlers of the new world gave its name. It is the most widely distributed of British birds, found everywhere except in the deep woods and the most lonely places. Every garden and hedgerow has its pair. To its friendliness and love of human association it adds the habit, most pleasing to the bird lover who has to make his visit to England in the songless autumn period, of singing almost the whole year through. The Robin is so tame that I have had one almost run across my foot as I sat motionless at the roadside. A few Chaffinches, with plumage now somewhat dulled by autumn but still bright enough in rosy breast and bluish head, were flitting back and forth between some weed patches and the cemetery. A couple of Blackbirds darted about under the shrubbery. The Blackbird is a black thrush with a yellow bill, very much like our Robin in size and habits and voice but rather shy, in winter at least. A Song Thrush, similar to the

Membership dues for 1935 are now payable. Much expense to the Society and much time for the Treasurer will be spared if dues are sent promptly to the Treasurer, Mr. John B. Lewis, Amelia, Va.

duller-colored varieties of thrushes in America, watched me for a moment from the stone wall of the cemetery before dropping back into the shrubbery. Here, on my first experience with English birds I formed the impression which stayed with me that, because shelter there is thicker and birds apparently a bit shyer in winter, it is more difficult to watch birds in England than in America. Later, as I walked back to the bus, Swallows, scarcely to be distinguished from our Barn Swallows, and House Martins, dull in color but with flashing white rumps, were continually hawking in the open. They were to be seen every day until they left in October for their winter home in Africa.

The New Forest, new only in name since it was set aside by William the Conqueror, covers an area some twenty miles square. While it is criss-crossed by good roads and contains many villages and private estates, two-thirds of it is government land, left in a state of nature and open to all who want to wander through it. Not all of it is forest by any means. There are tracts of grass land, heather-covered moors and great stretches of furze and bracken. The forest is more or less open, with bits of park land, patches of heather and sunny glades of bracken growing waist high. The beech is the most characteristic tree, some of them of great age and attaining immense size. Thickets of holly and other small trees grow beneath the larger trees. The birds that I saw during my ten days there may be summed up roughly in three groups, but with no intention of mentioning all of them.

There are, first, the birds of the open. One of the most interesting is the Pied Wagtail, a bird of slate and black and white, with a long black tail which it wags up and down incessantly. The Wagtail feeds on the ground, running about at this season in small flocks. There are several species in the family but only the Pied was common here. I saw a few Yellow Wagtails in damp places on the common and thought I saw a White Wagtail, but it is very difficult to distinguish it from the Pied at this season. Meadow Pipits were also abundant on the common. Three members of the Crow family were to be seen feeding in the open - a few Carrion Crows, like our common Crow; the Rook, also like our Crow but with a heavier and grayish-white bill; and the smaller Jackdaw, which has the back of the head grayish. The Yellow Hammer, a bright yellow, brown-streaked bunting, could be found on the ground near thickets. As it nests well into September I watched a pair with high hopes of finding at least one English bird's nest but without success.

Next come the birds of gardens and thickets. Robins and Chaffinches were everywhere. Blackbirds were common. Their scolding notes of alarm were to be heard from every thicket approached but the birds were too shy to remain long in sight. Occasionally a big Mistle-Thrush would drop from a thicket to feed with the Song Thrushes. Little Dunnocks, or Hedge Sparrows, fed quietly at the edge of the paths. Flocks of Greenfinches were seen occasionally, and a few bright European Goldfinches, splashed with red about the head. Wrens, looking like our House Wren but acting and singing more like the Winter Wren, hid in the golden bracken. At almost any lonely patch

of furze a Stone-chat, with brown back and buffy breast, would be perched on the topmost twig; and occasionally in similar places a brilliant Redstart had paused on its migration for a rest. It was in the low furze in small openings in the forest that I found the bird I was most interested in, the Dartford Warbler, the only English warbler that winters on the island. It is one of the uncommon English birds because so localized in its distribution but is not so rare, in the New Forest at least, as it is often reported to be.

Of the birds of the forest proper the members of the Tit family are the most abundant. I list them in the forest area because they were the most common birds among the trees, but some of them are found wherever there is a bush of any size. The Great Tit is a large edition of the Blue Tit with a black streak dripping from the throat through the yellow of the breast. The Coal Tit is somewhat like our Chickadee, gray, with a black cap and a white patch at the back of the black cap. The Marsh Tit resembles the Coal Tit but lacks the white patch. The Long-tailed Tit is the most colorful of all, adorned as it is in black and chestnut and white, and with a long, slender tail. Mixed bands of all these little Tits go trooping through the woods in search of food. Nuthatches, almost as large as our White-breasted but colored more like our Red-breasted, run up and down the trunks and branches. An occasional Tree Creeper is to be seen. The fact that the Creeper nests throughout Britain is one of the indications of the northern character of British bird life. Except for the Dartford Warbler the only warbler I saw in the New Forest was the Lesser Whitethroat. I was too late for many of the warblers as they leave early for their winter homes. They are much duller than American wood warblers, belonging, indeed, to a different group. As to woodpeckers I had the same feeling that most American visitors get, that they are very much less common than in America. I saw a few Green Woodpeckers, which are somewhat like our Flickers, and heard their strange laughing calls. But I saw only one Greater Spotted Woodpecker, the cousin of our Hairy, and not a single Lesser Spotted until I had left the New Forest and been in England for more than a month. The Ring Dove is abundant in the woods. The weird, raucous calls of the Jay are often heard but of the bird itself it is rarely possible to get more than a fleeting glimpse. It is difficult to understand how a bird so large and of such bizarre markings can so successfully hide in the forest.

The variety of bird life is not great in the New Forest and there are many better places in England for seeing birds in large numbers, but I know of no place where they can be studied so easily and in such beautiful surroundings.

---J. J. Murray.

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RECORD OF THE SHORT-EARED OWL IN VIRGINIA (*Asio
flammeus flammeus*)

On Nov. 16, 1934, about dusk a Short-eared Owl was killed on

our farm one mile south of Naruna and in the southern portion of Campbell county, while flying low over a field. This species seems to be uncommon in the East and is the only record I have of the Short-eared Owl in this section.

---Bertha Daniel,
Naruna, Virginia.

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Norfolk, Va. In a letter to Mr. A. O. English, dated September 13th, Mr. Joseph E. Gould writes, "One evening last week, about 6 o'clock, I heard an Upland Plover calling as it passed over headed toward the coast; later I heard several in a flock calling. So pleasing are their notes that I always stop until they are out of hearing and then wish they would return and repeat the performance. Their voice has that liquid quality to it that a Wood Thrush has."

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Lynchburg, Va. The Robin migration seems to be early here this year. Mrs. Freer reported the first Robin for Lynchburg Jan. 10. The bird was singing. Several birds were seen on that day. Within the next week or two great numbers of the birds were seen at several points. They occasionally winter here in small numbers, and I have found large numbers of them back in sheltered mountain ravines on several different years, but do not believe they have been so numerous around Lynchburg this early in the season before.

Red-headed Woodpeckers, which sometimes migrate, have remained in full force through the winter. Flickers, which are usually entirely absent or here in greatly reduced numbers, have been fairly abundant through the winter. Towhees wintered to some extent last year, but have not been here this winter.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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EARLY MIGRANT ROBINS

The first robins I noticed after the fall migration, except a few scattered flocks every few days during November and the first half of December, were on Dec. 22, when a flock of about 500 came over and scattered about in the woods near my home. About 8:00 A.M. they commenced coming over from some place south going northward. This has gotten to be a daily occurrence and on Saturday morning, Jan. 5, the robins had increased in numbers until I am sure there were as many as 2000 to 3000. I do not know how wide this sweep of robin flight is nor where they are feeding during the day. About four o'clock they begin coming back, going to their roost below us.

---Bertha Daniel,
Naruna, Virginia.

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A REVIEW OF A FASCINATING BOOK

AMERICAN BIRD BIOGRAPHIES. By Dr. Arthur A. Allen, 238 pages, 190 photographs by the author and 20 plates by George Miksch Sutton, the Comstock Publishing Company, Ithaca, New York, price \$3.50. This beautiful book, which was an autumn choice of the Junior Book of the Month Club, will make a welcome addition to any bird lover's library

Dr. Allen's name on the title page is sufficient recommendation of a book on birds and he is at his best when it comes to writing life history sketches. "American Bird Biographies" is a collection of twenty of the interesting and instructive stories of the life histories of birds which have appeared under his name in the School Department of "Bird-Lore." Each of the chapters tells in detail what is known of the habits and home life of one of our familiar birds and is illustrated by eight or ten of Dr. Allen's splendid photographs. The book opens with "The Screech Owl's Story," based on the author's own researches at Cornell. Then follow the stories of the Chickadee, House Wren, Scarlet Tanager, House Sparrow, Herring Gull, Baltimore Oriole, Cowbird, Duck Hawk (with one of the lovely Taughannock photographs), Canvasback, Bluebird, Kingfisher, Hummingbird, Green Heron, Ruffed Grouse, Flicker, Killdeer, Redstart, Robin and Goldfinch. Each story is accompanied by a full-page plate by George M. Sutton, ten in color and ten wash drawings, in addition to the beautiful double page drawings on the inside cover pages of a pair of Ruffed Grouse in flight. They give us Sutton at his best, a best that is not surpassed in the reviewer's opinion by any work being done in America today. The workmanship of the publisher is most satisfactory, including the attractive dust jacket with its Hummingbird paintings. It is a book that should be in every school library.

---J. J. Murray.

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THE FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

Our Society was organized in Lynchburg in December, 1929. Since then the following annual meetings have been held:

Richmond, February 13, 14, 1931
Charlottesville, February 13, 1932
Norfolk, January 20, 21, 1933
Alexandria, March 9, 10, 1934

Our next meeting will be held at Roanoke, as decided upon at the Alexandria meeting, and the dates are April 26 and 27. The later date was considered advisable by the Executive Committee so that the weather might be more favorable for a good field trip. We should also be able to get some of the warbler migration at this time.

Mr. M. G. Lewis of Salem is Chairman of the Program Committee, which is looking after local arrangements. Mr. A. O. English and Mr. Thomas L. Engleby are also on the Committee.

Since the later date for our meeting prolongs our business and fiscal year unusually, if elections and other business were deferred until the meeting, the Executive Committee has decided to conduct business by correspondence or through THE RAVEN which is usually carried on at the annual meeting. Nominating and auditing committees are therefore being appointed, and reports of the various officers will appear in THE RAVEN previous to the annual meeting. Election of officers will be conducted by mail also.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

WINTER BIRDS, SOUTH AND NORTH

(The following is an excerpt from The Rambler, nature column in the Lynchburg News, for December 30.--Ed.)

The differences in the bird population of central and southern Virginia as compared even to northern Virginia are quite marked. This fact was shown by an interesting series of bird lists which we kept on the trip to Ohio, December 20 and 21, 1934. This is the first year that I had tried this method of bringing out contrasts in numbers of birds in the north and south at the winter season. Three separate lists were kept on the north-bound trip. The first included birds seen between Lynchburg and Harrisonburg where we stopped for lunch. This section was 110 miles long and the hours were from 10 A.M. to 1:15 P.M. In the table below, this list is designated as A. The second list, designated as B, included birds seen between Harrisonburg and a point a few miles west of Winchester on U.S. 50. The time covered on this section was from 2 to 4:30 P.M. The third list, designated as C, covered the route from Cumberland, Maryland, to Cadiz, Ohio, the hours being from 8:30 A.M. to 3:50 P.M. The tabulation below makes possible a ready comparison of the three sections of the route:

BIRDS	A	B	C
Shrike	5	6	1
Bluebird	3	6	0
T. Vulture	53	21	0
Crow	500	89	15
Sparrow Hawk	9	6	3
R. S. Hawk	0	2	0
R. T. Hawk	0	1	0
Junco	0	1	0
Cooper's Hawk	0	0	2
TOTAL SPECIES	5	8	4
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	570	140	25

Probably the only fact of special significance is that the Crows and Turkey Vultures are mainly confined to central and southern Virginia. Reference has been made in the column before to the fact that the Crows of the northern states tend to congregate in a strip about 200 miles wide between Chesapeake Bay and the Mississippi River during the winter. Several large flocks of them were seen between Lynchburg and Harrisonburg up to about Newmarket. On the third section of the trip two Crows were seen on Friday morning near Centerville, Pennsylvania, and thirteen were seen in Ohio. Very few, if any Turkey Vultures were seen north of Newmarket.

There was very little snow until we were near Cumberland. There the amount of snow increased rapidly, and during Friday morning, crossing the higher mountains of Maryland and Pennsylvania, there were big, beautiful drifts of snow along the roadsides, and the roads were icy. We saw few birds on this part of the trip. Dropping off the mountains into Uniontown, we again found little snow, and this was true of the rest of the journey to Akron.

The last Bluebirds were seen just north of Strasburg, Virginia. The only Junco seen on the trip was listed a few miles west of Winchester. Doubtless many small birds were skipped over, as they could not be identified from the moving car, so the list includes

only the larger birds, or those which can be quickly and positively identified while moving.

Most of the work on this comparison was done by Mrs. Freer, as she kept the record and added most of the birds. An account of the return trip will be given later if space permits.

---Ruskin S. Freer

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VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS CENSUSES

Henrico County. (University of Richmond Campus to Byrd Park and Curles Neck Farm.) Dec. 26, 6:45 A.M. to 5:15 P.M. Raining, daybreak to 10 A.M. Cloudy rest of day, except for brief period in mid-afternoon; wind west, brisk; temp. 44° at start, 42° at return. By automobile, 25 miles, and on foot, 2 miles, but within area not more than 15 miles in diameter. Observers together.

Great Blue Heron, 2; Canada Goose, 2000 (est.); Snow Goose, 1; Mallard, 14; Black Duck, 1; Baldpate, 1; Wood Duck, 1; Ring-necked Duck, 168; Lesser Scaup, 12; American Golden-eye, 3; Bufflehead, 4; Ruddy Duck, 2; Hooded Merganser, 1; American Merganser, 1; Turkey Vulture, 38; Black Vulture, 31; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 5; Killdeer, 33; Herring Gull, 6; Mourning Dove, 62; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 5; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-headed Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 4; Phoebe, 1; Prairie Horned Lark, 20 (1 flock); Blue Jay, 11; American Crow, 69; Carolina Chickadee, 5; Tufted Titmouse, 12; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Carolina Wren, 6; Mockingbird, 7; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 24; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 31; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 4; Migrant Shrike, 5; Starling, 650 (est.); Myrtle Warbler, 1; English Sparrow, 150 (est.); Meadowlark, 1; Red-winged Blackbird, 14; Cardinal, 25; Goldfinch, 16; Towhee, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 150 (est.); White-throated Sparrow, 64 (partly est.); Song Sparrow, 10. The wind kept the smaller birds under cover and made them difficult to find. Total, 55 species, 3691 individuals.

---Mrs. Elizabeth M. Shaw,

Mrs. A. O. James,

C. O. Handley, Jr.,

C. O. Handley.

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Amelia. Dec. 24; 7:30 A.M. to 12 noon, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. A.M. Amelia to, and along Nibb's Creek and return, 7 miles on foot. P.M. by automobile to Beaver Pond and return, 16 miles, by boat on pond 3 miles, on foot about pond 3 miles. Temp. at start 37°, at return 50°. Sky clear, little wind, no snow. Observer alone. Three flocks of ducks on pond, very wild so that identification was difficult. Mallard ?, 8; Lesser Scaup (positive), 14; Teal, Sp.? 5; Killdeer, 1; Bob-white, 8; Mourning Dove, 5; Turkey Buzzard, 36; Flicker, 4; Pileated Woodpecker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3; Red-headed Woodpecker, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Prairie Horned Lark, 2; Blue Jay, 2; Crow, 16; Chickadee, 15; Tufted Titmouse, 18; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3;

Winter Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 3; Mockingbird, 3; Hermit Thrush, 4; Bluebird, 15; Golden-Crowned Kinglet, 5; Starling, 6; Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 28; Meadow Lark, 9; Cardinal Grosbeak, 11; Goldfinch, 3; Junco, 94; Field Sparrow, 10; White-throated Sparrow, 28; Song Sparrow, 10. Species, 36; individuals, 390.

---John B. Lewis.

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Sweet Briar. Birds seen on Campus in a little more than an hour on Dec. 24, 1934: 1-Sparrow Hawk, 1-Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3-Red-headed Woodpeckers, 1-Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1-Phoebe, 100-Crows, 1-Tufted Titmouse, 1-White-breasted Nuthatch, 2-Carolina Wrens, 2-Mockingbirds, 2-Bluebirds, 75-Starlings, 1-Myrtle Warbler, 1-Cardinal, 30-Slate-colored Juncos, 2-Field Sparrows, 1-White-throated Sparrow, 6-Song Sparrows.

---Florence Hague.

On January 6 about 500 Robins were seen passing eastward over Sweet Briar in much elongated flocks. About 200 were seen on Jan. 13 similarly passing eastward.

---Florence Hague.

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Naruna. December 27, 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M., 2:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. Clear; light wind from west in afternoon; temperature 25 at start, 45 at close. Observation around my home and feeding station, one mile on foot along brooks, ravines, through thickets, woods, and fields. Turkey Vulture, 17; Black Vulture, 3; Cooper's Hawk (?), 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bobwhite, 8; Mourning Dove, 30; Flicker, 2; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 3; Crow, 12; Carolina Chickadee, 5; Tufted Titmouse, 1; Brown Creeper, 1; Carolina Wren, 3; Mockingbird, 2; Robin (est.), 500; Bluebird, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Starling, 1; Meadowlark, 12; Cardinal, 5; Goldfinch, 2; Towhee, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 50; Field Sparrow, 50; White-throated Sparrow, 4; Fox Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 6. Total, 30 species, 735 individuals. Carolina Wren, Meadowlark, White-throated and Song Sparrows singing.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Harrisonburg. Dec. 27; 7:45 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.; clear, light southwest wind; temperature 26° at start, 48° at return; thin covering of ice over pools and ponds. Waterman's Wood to Tide Spring and return, diameter of 12 miles; farmland, pine-cedar, and oak-cedar woodlots, one with small shallow stream; 20 miles by auto, 6 miles on foot. Three observers working together. Turkey Vulture, 34; Black Vulture, 9; Eastern Red-tailed Hawk, 5; Eastern Sparrow Hawk, 9; Bob-white, 97 (4 coveys); Northern Flicker, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker, 9; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 15; Prairie Horned Lark, 27 (2 flocks); Blue Jay, 6; Eastern Crow, 947 (part. est.); Carolina Chickadee, 16; Tufted Titmouse, 41; Northern White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Mockingbird, 6; Eastern Robin, 5; Eastern Hermit Thrush, 7; Eastern Bluebird, 29; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Cedar Waxwing, 2; Migrant Shrike, 2; Starling, 229 (part. est.); Myrtle Warbler, 2; English Sparrow, 150 (part. est.); Eastern Meadowlark, 4; Eastern Cardinal, 29; Eastern

Goldfinch, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 209; Eastern Tree Sparrow, 12; Eastern Song Sparrow, 3. Total, 32 species; 1,926 individuals.

---John R. Mumaw
J. Mark Stauffer
D. Ralph Hostetter.

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Lexington. Dec. 24; 7:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M., 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. Light clouds and haze; ground bare and frozen, thawing before noon; no wind; temp. 28° at start, 50° at noon. About 40 miles by auto, 6 miles on foot. Observers together in morning, Carroll alone in afternoon. Ponds, open fields, cedars and oak woods, White Rock Mountain. Common Black Duck, 2; Wood Duck, 1; Turkey Vulture, 17; Sharp-shinned (?) Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Northern Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Killdeer, 1; Eastern Belted Kingfisher, 2; Northern Flicker, 1; Northern Pileated Woodpecker, 4; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 7; Prairie Horned Lark, 18; Northern Blue Jay, 5; Northern Raven, 2; Eastern Crow, 160; Carolina Chickadee, 21; Tufted Titmouse, 28; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Eastern Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 7; Eastern Mockingbird, 9; Eastern Robin, 50; Eastern Bluebird, 10; Eastern Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 33; Migrant Shrike, 1; Starling, 77; Myrtle Warbler, 34; English Sparrow, 25; Eastern Cardinal, 49; Eastern Goldfinch, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 111; Eastern Tree Sparrow, 61; White-crowned Sparrow, 3; White-throated Sparrow, 9; Eastern Song Sparrow, 8. Total 39 species, 780 individuals. Several fairly common winter birds, including Phoebe, missed. At least one of the Horned Larks was most probably the northern form, as the line over eye was definitely yellow.

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

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Roanoke. December 30. Started at 10:30 A.M., returned at 12:30 P.M. Weather cloudy. Temperature about 50°. Sparrow Hawk, 2; Flicker, 5; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Blue Jay, 5; Chickadee, 15; Tufted Titmouse, 12; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, 1; Carolina Wren, 1 (heard); Mockingbird, 1; Robin, 30; Hermit Thrush, 1; Bluebird, 18; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 11; Cardinal, 8; Goldfinch, 12; Junco, 100; Field Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 6.

---M. G. Lewis
T. L. Engleby
Mr. & Mrs. A. O. English.



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THE BIRDS OF THE BRITISH SEASHORE

When I landed in England on the first of September I realized that I was too late to see the summer birds. Even by that date most of the warblers and many of the other summer residents had already left for their winter homes. But one consolation was left to me. I knew that even though the migration of land birds is earlier in England than in America the movement of the shore birds, on the other hand, is even later than it is with us. Lyndhurst, which we chose as a center for our ramblings in the New Forest, is only a few miles from the South Coast, and I took advantage of the opportunity to see the first movements of the shore birds and to become acquainted with other water birds.

My first visit was to Christ Church Harbor where the high promontory of Hengistbury Head looks out across to the Isle of Wight and protects the bay from the rougher waters of the Channel. I had just had lunch at Southbourne at the home of Rev. Francis C. R. Jourdain, a retired minister who is one of the famous ornithologists of Britain and an authority on Palaearctic birds, and he had told me about the best spots to visit. In the marshes along the Avon River, where it flows into the harbor, I had my first introduction to the Moorhen. The Moorhen is the British counterpart of our Florida Gallinule, a chicken-like marsh bird with a queer and varied repertory of grunts and chuckles and whistles. Among the birds of Britain nothing impressed me more than the abundance of this bird, which in America is a rarity except to those who live near the Southern marshes. Along every water-course they are to be seen and heard. Later, at Oxford, I counted over sixty in a six mile ride in a little steamer down the Thames. In the Avon marshes, too, I had my first glimpse of the Kingfisher, much smaller and much more brilliant than our Kingfisher. It is a gem of flashing colors, like a Hummingbird on a large scale, with a breast of an indescribable shade compounded of orange and chestnut and a back of metallic blue with iridescent reflections of green. In Christ Church Harbor the most interesting sight was that of a flock of some 250 Mute Swans, great white birds that are half tame and that nest at Abbotsbury in the nearby County of Dorset. They, too, are to be seen in small numbers everywhere in England. Thousands of Black-headed Gulls were riding the waves or feeding on the shore. With them were Herring Gulls and a few of the more uncommon varieties. On the mud flats were flocks of small shore birds, but they were between me and the sun and too far away for identification.

A day or so later I rode a bicycle down to the village of Beaulieu, near the ruins of the famous Beaulieu Abbey. In a marsh along the Beaulieu River I saw my first ducks - Mallards and Gadwalls, exactly like those I have so often seen at Big Spring, and European Green-winged Teals, related to but different from our Teals. Coots and Moorhens and Little Grebes were common. The most pleasing sight was that of a European Cormorant on a post in the water, drying its feathers and preening itself with its long bill and snaky neck. Going on from Beaulieu down the river I made the most unusual find of my whole trip, a Whooper Swan swimming placidly about among the yachts and pleasure boats at Buckler's Hard. I knew that it was too early to expect the Whooper in south England where it is not common even in winter, and later reported this find with a good deal of diffidence to some of the ornithologists in London. But since coming home I have had a note from Mr. Jourdain saying that the same bird was seen by others and satisfactorily photographed.

I had not yet seen the shore birds which I was seeking, but still farther down the river at St. Leonard's I found them in plenty. At St. Leonard's I flushed a flock of some 250 Lapwings, with big rounded wings, slender erected crest, and a striking flicker of black and white as they fly. They, again, are abundant everywhere in England. On the mud flats of marsh and lake they feed in large flocks, and on the pastures and moorlands their wild, sad call is a common sound. Herons were stalking their prey in the marshy pools. Several Redshanks, very much like our Yellowlegs, were feeding at a pool near a barnyard. With them were four handsome Black-tailed Godwits, but I did not find the commoner Bar-tailed Godwit. From another pool a flock of big Curlews, with long, sickle-shaped bills, flew up with a mournful cry, reminiscent of our Upland Plovers.

A couple of days later I took a long walk by the Solent Estuary to Keyhaven, where Castle Hurst, the prison for a time of Charles I, stands out on a lonely spit. If Charles had been an ornithologist he would have found much of interest to occupy his weary hours. The waters are full of ducks and gulls and the flats and sand bars abound with waders. Most of the birds I had seen at St. Leonard's were here also, and still others with them. A flock of Smew ducks were resting on a pond, white males with slashes of black, and duller females with crested reddish heads. There were larger shore birds, Greenshanks as well as Redshanks; there were snipes, both Common and Jack Snipes; there were flocks of little waders, the Dunlins and Ringed Plovers common and easy to identify, but others too confusing to a stranger in their dull autumn plumage. With a flock of Curlews were some of the similar but smaller Whimbrels. All in all it made a picture in the bright September sunlight that will long stay in my memory - the wide stretches of the Solent and the marsh grass bending in the fresh breeze; the green pasture pitted with pools of shining water; the noisy gulls on the mudbanks; the screams of the Lapwings and the mournful cries of the Curlews and Whimbrels; and the wheeling flocks of little shore birds.

---J. J. Murray

WILLIAM PALMER ON THE SUMMER BIRDS OF
HANOVER AND KING WILLIAM COUNTIES, VIRGINIA

On a recent visit to the United States National Museum I was shown in the Department of Birds several folders of manuscript notes on Virginia birds left by William Palmer and was granted by Dr. Herbert Friedmann permission to use some of the material in THE RAVEN. William Palmer was born in London in 1856 and died in New York, where he had gone to a meeting, in 1921. At the time of his death he was chief taxidermist at the National Museum. From the time he came to the Museum in 1874 he was keenly interested in the birds of the District of Columbia and of Virginia, making a very complete personal collection of local species and publishing some twenty papers on the birds of Virginia, in which he reported five or more additions to the avifauna of the State. Most of his collection was left to the Museum, but at his request 500 skins were given to the University of Virginia, where they may now be seen.

Among his incompleated papers is one on "Summer Birds of Hanover and King William Counties, Virginia," which he evidently intended to publish. It is an account of two trips which he made through these counties, one with Mr. William J. Woods of Richmond, June 2-9, 1892, and another, June 23 to July 4, 1894. In the introduction, which is a description of the physical characteristics of the region, he says: "As compared with the country about Washington the flora is decidedly more southern than would be expected, quite a number of species seen and collected proving to be very rare or local...This is shown in the birds, many species common about Washington being rarely seen or wanting; or at least were not observed by us. I saw and heard in three days more hooded warblers than have ever been known to occur about the District of Columbia, and several other species were more noticeable than I have ever found them about Washington." The list of birds which he observed seems worth publishing both for its own interest and for purpose of comparison with present day conditions. Of the species marked with an x either nests, eggs or young were seen. The list follows:

Wood Duck	uncom	Sparrow Hawk	1
Great Blue Heron	3	Fish Hawk	1
Green Heron	uncom	Screech Owl x	2
Black-crowned Night Heron	1	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	f c
Woodcock	2	Kingfisher	4
Spotted Sandpiper	1	Downy Woodpecker x	f c
Killdeer	f c	Pileated Woodpecker	2
Bob-white x	c	Red-headed Woodpecker	2
Wild Turkey x	f c	Flicker	unc
Dove	c	Whip-poor-will	f c
Turkey Vulture	f c	Chimney Swift x	c
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	Hummingbird	f c
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	Kingbird x	c
Broad-winged Hawk	1	Crested Flycatcher x	c

Phoebe x	f c	White-eyed Vireo x	f c
Wood Pewee	c	Black & White Warbler x	unc
Acadian Flycatcher x	abund	Worm-eating Warbler	rare
Blue Jay	rare	Parula Warbler x	f c
Crow x	f c	Yellow Warbler	l
Red-winged Blackbird x	f c	Yellow-throated Warbler x	6
Meadowlark	unc	Pine Warbler x	c
Orchard Oriole x	unc-local	Prairie Warbler	unc
Baltimore Oriole x	unc-local	Ovenbird	unc
Grackle	rare	La. Water-thrush x	f c
Goldfinch	unc	Kentucky Warbler x	2
English Sparrow	f c	Maryland Yellow-throat x	unc
Vesper Sparrow x	unc	Yellow-breasted Chat	f c
Grasshopper Sparrow	f c	Hooded Warbler x	abund
Henslow's Sparrow	unc	Redstart x	unc
Chipping Sparrow x	abund	Mockingbird x	c
Field Sparrow x	unc	Catbird x	c
Song Sparrow	rare	Brown Thrasher x	f c
Towhee	rare	Carolina Wren x	f c
Cardinal x	abund	House Wren	rare
Blue Grosbeak x	unc	Long-billed Marsh Wren	f c
Indigo Bunting x	abund	White-breasted Nuthatch	unc
Summer Tanager x	c	Tufted Titmouse x	f c
Purple Martin x	c	Carolina Chickadee x	c
Cliff Swallow x	f c	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher x	f c
Barn Swallow	l	Wood Thrush x	unc
Cedar Waxwing x	unc	Robin x	unc
Red-eyed Vireo x	abund	Bluebird x	f c
Yellow-throated Vireo x	c	Total - 85 species	

---J. J. Murray

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FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

The Fifth Annual Meeting of the V. S. O. will be held at the Hotel Roanoke in Roanoke, April 26 and 27.

Program

Friday, April 26th

Registration and lunch (registration in Hotel lobby) 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Meeting program in Green Room - 1:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.

Annual banquet (tickets \$1.00) Hotel Ballroom - 6:30 P.M., followed by evening program probably including illustrated lecture.

Saturday, April 27th

Field trip to Bent Mountain and Poor Mountain including Bottom Creek, elevation 3500 to 4000 feet, leaving Hotel Roanoke at 8:00 A.M. Cars will be furnished for all who wish to attend. Return to Hotel at 3:30 P.M. Parties wishing to return earlier may make special arrangement with car owner.

This field trip affords an excellent opportunity to study bird life of the higher mountain ranges where comparatively little work has been done. The terraine includes wooded mountain ridges, orchards and farm lands along wide creek bottoms as well as woods of hemlock, white pine and hardwood, with abundant rhododendron and other undergrowth along the streams.

---M. G. Lewis, Chairman
A. O. English
T. L. Engleby
Program and local Arrangements
Committee

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SHORT-EARED OWL (*Asio flammeus flammeus*) IN CAMPBELL COUNTY

In the January issue of THE RAVEN Miss Bertha Daniel reports the occurrence of the Short-eared Owl for Naruna and comments: "This species seems to be uncommon in the East and is the only record I have of the Short-eared Owl in this section." Miss Cooke states that it is "a rare winter visitant" in the Washington region (Birds of the Washington, D.C., Region, Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 42:pp.1-80, 1929.) Chapman states that its breeding range is from Alaska and the Aleutian Islands to northern Indiana and the coast of New Jersey, and that its winter range extends to the Gulf Coast and even to Cuba and Guatemala. I have two positive records for it in Campbell County. Two specimens killed in the County south of Lynchburg were brought to Mr. Lawrence McWane for mounting, and I identified them December 2, 1930, and had not reported them previously.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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EARLY MIGRANT ROBINS

Dr. Florence S. Hague and Miss Daniel reported unusual numbers of Robins for Sweet Briar and Naruna during December and January in the January issue of THE RAVEN. I also had a note on them in the same issue. Since then Miss Daniel sent me a newspaper clipping from Brookneal, Campbell County, reporting a flight of Robins on Friday evening, January 4, "probably the largest flock of Robins ever seen in this country,...flying southward. The flock, flying in close formation, was estimated to be about a half mile wide and the birds came in a continuous stream out of the northern horizon over a space of about two hours, until darkness fell."

Dr. J. J. Murray writes me, "Robins have been going through Lexington in large numbers since January 28. This is very unusual. We have occasional early stragglers around the first of February but I have never seen large flocks until very late in the month or in March."

Amherst County has also been witnessing an unusual flight. A letter was received from Rev. E. E. Lamb about February 14, in which he says, "We here in Pleasant View for the past three weeks have been witnessing some wonderful flights of Robins. Every morning from day-break until after sun-up the sky is dotted with Robins going northeast by east. They go by the tens of thousands. For an hour or more before sunset they return, flying lower than they do in the morning. We cannot figure out where their feeding ground is and just what they feed on and where they roost at night. For the last few days some belated members of the gangs have deigned to spend the night here in our pines. These stragglers, however, leave at crack of dawn."

Miss Daniel believes these birds are not true migrants, but winter residents which have pushed somewhat northward of their usual winter range. I agree with her. ---Ruskin S. Freer.

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PAPERS FOR THE ROANOKE MEETING

The members of the committee in charge of the program for the Roanoke Meeting on April 26 and 27 are anxious to have as many papers by our own members as possible. Last year, meeting near Washington, we were able to have as our guests some of the foremost ornithologists of the country. This year we shall have to depend largely upon our own talent. And after all, the chief purpose of the annual meeting is the exchange of experiences among the members of our group. It would be fine if every member who comes would bring a paper. It need not be long; it might be about some single experience in the field; but let each one contribute something to the meeting. If possible, notify Mr. M. G. Lewis, Salem, Virginia, in advance of your subject. And if you cannot come, send him a paper to read for you.

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NEST ISSUE OF "THE RAVEN"

The April issue of THE RAVEN must appear early so that full announcements about the Roanoke Meeting may reach our members in plenty of time. Correspondents should send in their reports to the editor not later than March 25th.

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Lectures on "Birds" and other nature subjects form a recognized part of my work as Forester for the Mariners' Museum at Newport News,

Virginia. Recent bird talks were those given on January 14 to Scout-er's Club, Newport News; on January 18 to Newport News Boy Scouts; and on January 25 to Hilton Village Boy Scouts; also February 1 to 4-H Club at Norge, Va. Future ones are scheduled for March 1 to Hilton Village Garden Club, March 8 to Newport News Garden Club, and March 12 to Toano Garden Club. These talks are all illustrated with lantern slides. I also talked last year on our native trees before the local Rotary Club and Patron's Leagues, and the Hampton Roads Garden Club, and have another lecture on the same subject on April 6, before the Accomac Garden Club. Another lecture subject for which we have slides is "Native Ferns" and I gave a talk of this sort before the Princess Anne Garden Club on September 10, 1934, and expect to show these slides, made on our own grounds, to the Newport News Garden Club on April 26, 1935, when they are scheduled to visit the Museum Park. In order to bring to the public's attention the advantages offered by our grounds and library for nature study, I have also been giving informal talks illustrated with slides of our grounds, herbarium specimens, and native trees and birds, on the nature work of the Museum.

---George C. Mason.

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FIELD NOTES

Various Places.

Richmond.--Oct. 18, 5:30 P.M. Between four and five hundred Chimney Swifts seen in vicinity of John Marshall High School. Last date.

Shenandoah County.--Nov. 2; two Ravens seen on Paddy Mountains along the Va.-W.Va. State line; also two sizeable flocks of Robins.

Curles Neck Farm, Henrico County.--Nov. 8. One Greater Snow Goose feeding with a flock of approximately 900 Canada Geese. Carter Warriner, a guide, says that two white geese and approximately 1,500 Canada geese have been feeding at the farm daily; a female cowbird having a distinct crest, similar to that of a Cardinal but not so pointed, was observed in a flock of 800 or more cowbirds, red-winged blackbirds and starlings. Probably two-thirds of the birds of the flock were cowbirds. This observation was confirmed by Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson who was with me at this time.

Deep Creek Marsh (Bay Shore), Accomac County.--Nov. 10. Accompanied by Dr. Pearson, Harry Bunting, Game Warden of Accomac County and others, I went into the marsh soon after daybreak. A duck trapper was surprised coming from his illegally operated traps. He beat a hasty retreat into the tall marsh grass, leaving his boat, hoe, and some shelled corn. Thirteen traps were located and destroyed during the course of the morning. All had just been baited. One had evidently just been emptied of ducks. It is estimated that between thirty and forty thousand wild ducks are trapped unlawfully and bootlegged in Accomac and Northampton counties each season. This condition exists because a majority of the people of that section are apparently in sympathy with the duck trappers and would prefer to buy

ducks for their tables than to go to the expense and trouble of shooting them. (This observation was the beginning of a concerted effort this winter on the part of both State and Federal authorities to clean up a bad situation. Some arrests have been made and more than 200 traps have been destroyed, but it yet remains to be seen what support the Federal Court will give. In the past results have been most discouraging.)

Wachapreague, Accomac County.--Nov. 9. During the afternoon one live Osprey and a freshly picked skeleton of another were seen along the causeway. A flock of approximately 500 Boat-tailed Grackles was seen as we approached the causeway.

Accomac and Northampton counties.--Nov. 9 and 10. Turkey vultures were much in evidence. No Black vultures were seen.

Back Bay and lower Princess Anne county.--Nov. 11 and 12. Black vultures were common while the Turkey vulture was inclined to be scarce. On the 11th, Dr. Pearson observed a shrike along the roadside near Pungo, but not knowing of my interest in shrikes in that region he did not mention the fact until later. On the 12th we saw another shrike just after leaving Suffolk for Petersburg on Highway No. 58.

Game Warden Wallace Carmean says that a good flight of wild ducks came down but on finding little feed in Back Bay most of them soon passed on. On a trip over the Bay during the afternoon of the 11th we saw very few ducks, except in the vicinity of the club of the late Mr. W. E. Corey, where considerable feeding is being done. Two adult bald eagles were seen at one of the ponds harrassing the ducks but apparently doing them no damage. On the morning of the 12th we visited the Corey club by auto where we saw approximately 3,000 ducks, most of them pintails. On our arrival there were several hundred in the yard with the decoys. They allowed us to approach within about forty feet before taking flight. Among the pintails were counted 60 coots, 25 mallards, 1 black duck, and 38 green-winged teals. A careful count of several portions of the large flocks which were resting close in shore showed only about 7% to be adult males; the others were either young of the year or females. Mr. Garland William, manager of the Corey Estates, estimates that he is feeding 10,000 ducks this winter.

Camp Lee Game Refuge, Prince George county.--Nov. 26. Two specimens of the short-eared owl were taken. Apparently this species is fairly common in the vicinity.

Northampton county.--Dec. 6; a shrike, probably of the migrant variety was seen in the northern part of the county.

Byrd Park, Richmond.--Dec. 7. A common loon was identified on one of the park lakes. The bird was first seen there on Nov. 30, by Mr. A. O. James, and was called to my attention by Mrs. Elizabeth Shaw.

Camp Lee Refuge, Prince George county.--Dec. 17. A specimen of the Long-eared owl was taken and presented to the University of Richmond Museum.

Northern Virginia.--The deep snow accompanied by low temperatures during the latter part of January 1934 undoubtedly was responsible for heavy losses in bird life. Reports from a number of points indicate that mourning doves and starlings suffered heaviest losses. Dead quail were reported by a number of persons. Mr. Willie Craig,

proprietor of the Craig's Kennels in Louisa County, who has an exceptional opportunity for observations, says that he is finding only about half as many quail now (Feb. 19) as were found before the storm. Some coveys are as large as before but a majority are much smaller and some have disappeared entirely. Some dead quail were found after the storm.

Big Laurel, Wise county.--Jan. 18. A newspaper clipping stated that thousands of robins had gathered in a thicket of rhododendron in a bottom along the Interstate R. R. between Big Laurel and Rock Switch and that people had gone there at night and knocked down quantities of the birds with paddles and sticks. An investigation was made by County Game Warden O'Neill and a number of cases were made against those participating in the slaughter. Mr. O'Neill says that although this roost has been in existence in that region for a number of years, that the robins came in larger numbers than usual during the warm weather in early January. He says further that they were there in such numbers as to literally break down the trees on which they roosted and that they just about cleaned up the supply of wild fruit in the vicinity before passing on.

---Chas. O. Handley.

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Naruna. A flock of nine Towhees have wintered here, and on Feb. 25 they were singing lustily in a thicket below my home. One or two yellow-bellied sapsuckers stayed on until the first of February, but have not been seen since. Migrants: Feb. 16, Killdeer, 2, Purple Grackles, 21; Feb. 22, Marsh Hawk; Feb. 26, Phoebe.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Lynchburg, Va. February statistics: 17 trips, 42 species for the month, 10 migrants, largest number of species for one day, 26, on Feb. 15 and 17. Migrants: 2/3, Eastern Belted Kingfisher; 2/4, Eastern Meadowlark; 2/9, Myrtle Warbler; 2/11, Killdeer, Red-eyed Towhee; 2/22, Cedar Waxwing; 2/24, Purple Grackle, Horned Grebe; 2/26, Eastern Phoebe; 2/17, Marsh Hawk.---Ruskin S. Freer.

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Blacksburg. Dec. 16, Pipits (100). They are not often seen here. Jan. 3, Pied-billed Grebe. Jan. 13, Towhee, Brown Creeper (2), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-tailed Hawk. Jan. 21, Robin (2), on campus. First appearance on campus in 1935. Hundreds in the surrounding country during the winter. Feb. 3, Cedar Waxwings, 2 flocks of fifty each; Kingfisher. I have seen no Purple Finches in 1935. Rather unusual.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Harrisonburg. Two Crows, taken near Harrisonburg, were sent to

Washington for identification. Mr. Arthur H. Howell examined them and wrote as follows: "The bird with a small bill was a female, but its long wing places it definitely with the Eastern Crow, Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos. The other was a male and its wing is slightly shorter than that of the female. This bird may be considered an intermediate between the Eastern Crow, brachyrhynchos, and the Southern Crow, Corvus b. paulus. One or both of these birds may be migrants. To settle the status of the resident birds of the Shenandoah Valley it will be necessary to obtain several specimens during the breeding season." ---D. Ralph Hostetter.

{Mr. Hostetter also writes that he has a date for a male Scarlet Tanager seen in full spring plumage near Island Ford, July 16, 1934. This is of interest as there has been some discussion as to how late the Tanager retains its black and scarlet plumage. Dr. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., states that he has seen red males as late as July 17. I saw a red male at Massanetta Springs, near Harrisonburg, July 12, 1933. Editor.)

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Lexington. The usual Great Blue Heron has wintered at Big Spring. Mallards and Black Ducks have been rather common through the winter. Six Pintails were seen at Cameron's Pond on Feb. 27. A Red-shouldered Hawk, uncommon on this side of the mountains, was seen on Dec. 17 and 24. A Duck Hawk was seen unsuccessfully chasing a small flock of Mallards and Black Ducks near Big Spring, Jan. 7. This is the first season in years that the Phoebe has not wintered. As noted elsewhere large flocks of Robins have been passing through several weeks earlier than usual. A bird collected out of one of these flocks is evidently an Eastern Robin, while breeding individuals have been identified by Dr. Oberholser as the Southern Robin.

---J. J. Murray.



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THE BIRDS OF A SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN

In the north of Scotland at the western edge of Invernesshire there stands a mountain big enough by all ordinary standards to deserve the name but so little in comparison with its mighty neighbors that the people about it only know it as Clunes Hill. Clunes Hill has not a little historic interest. At one end it slopes down to the waters of beautiful Loch Arkaig, and in this end of the mountain is the cave where Prince Charlie sought refuge from his English foes. The other end rests on the shores of Loch Lochy, a long, narrow lake forming one of the links in the Caledonian Canal that stretches from Fort William and Loch Linnhe on the west coast to Inverness and the Firth of Moray on the east coast. Between the lakes lie the lands of Lochiel, the chieftain of the Cameron Clan, whose family befriended Prince Charlie. Clunes Hill stands in a setting of magnificent Highland scenery. Across Loch Lochy rises Ben Nevis, the lord of all Scottish mountains, its summit 4800 feet from the salt water that washes its foothills. From the top of Clunes Hill stretches a wide-spread view of dark, rugged mountains and lakes and rolling pasture. During the week in late October that we spent at Clunes the first heavy snows of winter banked high on Ben Nevis and whitened the tops of even the lower hills.

One morning I set out alone to climb up into the snow on the top of Clunes Hill, starting where the waves of Loch Lochy lapped on the shingle at the foot of the mountain. In the woods were many of the more common birds. Little Robins were singing everywhere from the stone walls. Wrens called from the tangles of rock and bracken and occasionally mounted a fence to sing snatches of brilliant song. Now and then a Blackbird flew out of the edge of the woods screeching its alarm. And troops of Blue Tits flitted among the trees. A day or so before I had seen more uncommon birds in the same neighborhood: a Buzzard, not a vulture but the British cousin of our Red-tailed Hawk; a rare Hen Harrier, belonging to the Marsh Hawk group; and a big Hooded Crow, hated by the gamekeepers for its depredation and so often shot at that it is now wise and wary.

Passing through the plantations of larches set out by His Majesty's Forest Service and reaching the first high shoulder of the mountain, I came out into the open region of bracken and heather. These are the plants that give to the mountains their lovely soft

color of russet and tan and brown, the shades varying as the golden bracken or the dark green heather predominates. Soon I caught sight of a large flock of birds that reminded me in their movements of our migrating Robins at home. As they settled down on the moor I saw that they were Fieldfares, thrushes of the far north, the first that I had met, making their way to their winter home on the quiet English fields. They are about the size and general coloration of our thrushes but with a strong reddish-brown tinge on the breasts. The reddish breasts and white axillaries were much in evidence as they passed overhead. I thought then that I might find Redwings also, birds closely akin to the Fieldfares and much like them in appearance and habits, but it was not until several weeks later down in England that I saw them. Nearer the top of the mountain another flock, this time of tiny birds, came in sight and turning over and over like leaves in the air, dropped down to the heather. They rose again before I could come very close but they were apparently Twites, much like the Snowflakes of our north. Meadow Pipits were common, running about on the grass in sheltered hollows.

But the birds which I was particularly anxious to see were the game birds for which these mountains are famous. Black Cocks are occasionally seen in the woods on the lower slopes, but I had found none. I had been told that at this season the handsome Ptarmigans sometimes came down from the higher mountains to Clunes Hill to feed where the snow is thin, but neither was I lucky enough to find these interesting birds. But the Red Grouse did not fail me. At the top of the mountain are many flat, wet benches, covered with low heather where the Red Grouse hide. As I picked my way carefully through the snow and across the gullies cut deep in the peaty soil a big bird flew up at my feet with a loud whir of wings and sailed away with swift, erratic flight, calling back to me, "goback, goback, goback." It was a Red Grouse cock, as large as a small fowl. At dinner the night before we had eaten one and found it one of the sweetest game birds we had ever tasted, much better even than the Black Game. Directly another rose, and then another, until I had seen six.

About the same time, as I rounded a little ridge, I came upon another beautiful sight. Standing against a rocky promontory was a handsome Red Deer stag with a superb set of horns, and near him five or six hinds. They stood quietly for a moment watching me, harmonizing so perfectly with their background of rock and heather that it was not easy to pick them out, then suddenly springing to life dashed over the rocky bank and were gone. The Red Deer is a much larger and heavier animal than our Virginia Deer and with a much finer sweep of antlers. A few minutes later I found the skeleton of a stag that had hidden away from the hunters in one of the crevices to die. I was so much impressed by the horns that I packed them down the mountain and brought them back to Oxford and across the Atlantic to Lexington.

On the way down I stopped to sit on a rock and admire the scene spread out below me. Directly a shadow appeared high over Loch Lochy, and putting my field glasses on it I realized that I had found a bird that I had been eager to see, the noble Peregrine Falcon, the British counterpart of our Rockbridge County Duck Hawk. The Peregrine Falcon is the most powerful and graceful of all the hawks, once the companion of kings in the ancient sport of falconry, but now feared and hated by the gamekeepers on all northern estates. That sight, my only chance in Britain at this fine bird, was a fitting end to an ornithologist's day. Mile after mile I followed him as he sped with strong, steady wing-beats across the lake and on to some rocky perch high in the mountains.

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THE ANNUAL MEETING

As announced in the February-March issue, the Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology will be held at Roanoke, Virginia, on Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27, 1935. The Hotel Roanoke, where Friday's program sessions will be held, will be headquarters for the meeting. Registration will begin at 11:00 A.M., Friday, in the hotel lobby. Business and program sessions will be held in the Green Room, Friday afternoon from 1:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.; and Friday evening after the annual banquet. The local committee plans an illustrated lecture for the evening program. The hour for the annual banquet (tickets \$1.00) is 6:30 P.M., Friday.

Saturday will be given to the Field Trip to Bent Mountain, Bottom Creek and Poor Mountain, leaving Hotel Roanoke at 8:00 A.M. and returning to the hotel about 3:30 P.M. Cars will be furnished for all who wish to take the field trip. The date for the meeting this year has been set much later than for previous meetings in order that a different type of work may be done and opportunity furnished for migration studies. Previous trips have specialized on water birds. This trip, in a territory ranging from 3500 to 4000 feet in altitude, will emphasize the study of warblers and other birds of the higher Alleghanian Zone, which most of our members rarely have the opportunity of seeing.

The desirability of papers by as many of the members as possible should again be emphasized. All are invited to contribute. Titles of papers and an estimate of the amount of time needed should be sent as soon as possible to Mr. M. G. Lewis, Salem, Virginia, Chairman of the local Committee on Arrangements. The other members of the Committee are Messrs. A. O. English and T. L. Engleby, both of Roanoke.

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PROPOSED BULLETIN ON VIRGINIA BIRDS

The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has author-

ized the publication of a Bulletin on Virginia Birds at an early date. Two of our members, Dr. J. J. Murray and Mr. Charles O. Handley, have been commissioned to prepare this Bulletin. It will be printed by the Commission and distributed throughout the State. Finances may delay the publication until the next fiscal year begins. The Bulletin will contain about fifty pages. It will comprise a brief study of the geographical areas and faunal life zones of Virginia and a systematic list of all birds known to have occurred in the State, with a brief statement of the status and distribution of each bird.

In order that this Bulletin may be as complete as possible all members are requested to send to Dr. Murray any data which would be of interest. Information as to new species added to any of the local lists within the past three years is particularly desired; also changes in the relative abundance of any species. While it will not be possible to include migration dates for all localities in the Bulletin, the Editor will be glad to have them at the same time for the records of the V. S. C. We want very much all the records for the Eastern Shore and Tidewater sections.

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VIRGINIA FIELD NOTES

Woodbridge. In a late 1934 issue of THE RAVEN, Mr. Wm. McIlwaine of Alexandria contributed a note on the appearance of the Prairie Horned Lark last summer at Davis' Beach several miles south of Woodbridge. Perhaps this observation will be of interest. I identified the Horned Lark for the first time in April, 1932, although their calls and manner of flight were familiar to me during recent winters, merely as some unknown bird that was often seen passing overhead. However, on this day in April, a pair of the birds lit on the grass in a field in Woodbridge, within ten feet of a group of ball-players. I cannot account for their extreme tameness, but it afforded an excellent opportunity to study them as they walked about calmly for perhaps ten minutes. During the remainder of that spring and summer they were seen in nearby fields at frequent intervals.

Throughout the years of 1933 and 1934 this bird has been a most common permanent resident in this vicinity. In the fields of Mr. Lindsay Dawson, adjoining the land on which Mr. McIlwaine saw them, they may be seen at any time during the summer, singly or in pairs, dusting in the road or flying about. Apparently they must nest here. Later in the season they appear in small groups, and in winter gather into larger flocks. Unfortunately, I have not been able to look for nests or young birds, but hope to do so this summer.

---James Eike.

King and Queen County. March 2, a flock of twenty or more birds which I took to be Pipits feeding in a large field near Plain View. They were very shy and did not feed long at the same place but remained in the same field for several hours. March 10, a flock of geese seen

flying north-east in "V" formation. I counted 50 but the flock may have been larger. March 10, 6:00 P.M., a Whip-poor-will was heard but not seen. March 11, Henslow Sparrows seen feeding. Female Red Bird seen and heard. March 11, flock of approximately 100 crows seen near Plain View indicating roosting place was near by.

Gloucester County. March 8, first Robin seen at Gloucester Court House. Tree Sparrow and Fox Sparrow seen near Adna post office.

Sparrow Hawks have been seen often in both counties. When seen they are flying slowly near the earth over vacant fields as if searching for food.
---William Haynes

Lynchburg. March statistics, 1st-27th inclusive: 22 trips (one all-day, 3/24), 28 migrants, 72 species for month; largest number for one day, 49 on 3/24. Migrants: 3/2, E. Fox Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, American Golden-eye, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser; 3/3, N. Pine Warbler, Shoveller; 3/5, E. Redwing; 3/7, Common Black Duck; 3/8, Winter Wren; 3/11, Baldpate, Common Mallard; 3/12, Lesser Scaup Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Bufflehead; 3/15, E. Savannah Sparrow, E. Vesper Sparrow; 3/16, Swamp Sparrow; 3/17, Chipping Sparrow, American Coot; 3/20, Herring Gull, Brown Thrasher, E. Cowbird; 3/24, E. Purple Finch, Osprey; 3/25, Red-breasted Merganser; 3/27, Black and White Warbler, Rough-winged Swallow.

With Ralph M. Brown of Blacksburg I have noted absence of Purple Finches this spring. Occasionally winter residents, at least always present early in February, they did not appear this year until March 24. Goldfinches have also been scarce. I have heard Hermit Thrushes and Golden-crowned Kinglets singing several times this spring. Twelve species of waterfowl have been listed during the month.
---Ruskin S. Freer.

Naruna. March 2, Fox Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird; March 4, Pine Warbler; March 12, Red-winged Blackbird; March 16, Chipping Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow; March 19, Vesper Sparrow; March 21, Cowbird; March 22, Brown Thrasher; March 23, Bewick's Wren; March 24, Whip-poor-will; March 26, Great Blue Heron (?), 2.
---Bertha Daniel.

Lexington. While most migrants have been late this season the following records are the earliest for the species that I have ever made here: March 18, Towhee, and Vesper and Swamp Sparrows; March 18, Blue-winged Teal; March 22, Upland Plover, two weeks earlier than my previous earliest date, and only one day later than the earliest record for Washington, D. C., where detailed records have been kept for over fifty years by many workers. I have seen no Purple Finches this season, a condition that seems to be general. Flickers were beginning to mate on March 15. Ducks have been rather scarce. A

Green-winged Teal, March 15, was another slightly earlier record. A few Mallards and Black Ducks. A male Ring-necked Duck on March 27 and 29; and a Lesser Scaup on March 27. I saw a Bonaparte's Gull, fourth record for the County, in North River near East Lexington, March 28. It was still in winter plumage but the black hood was beginning to show at the back. On March 23 I saw an albino Song Sparrow, with black eye and dark bill, but no trace of dark in the white plumage. Nests: Prairie Horned Lark, 3 eggs on March 16. It had 3 eggs when found by a caddie on the 12th, and the eggs hatched probably on the 23d. Bluebird, one egg on March 25. Carolina Wren, one egg on 29th, two on 30th.

---J. J. Murray.

Blacksburg. March 4, Robins singing. March 10, Red-winged Blackbird, first. March 12, Purple Grackle, first; Phoebe, first; Lesser Scaup, 3 pairs; Ring-necked Ducks, 20; Red-head, 1; Golden-eye Duck, 2 pairs; Savannah Sparrow, last. March 13, six wild geese seen on Shadow Lake, three miles from Blacksburg. Small flocks of geese observed on this lake five times during February and March. Geese seldom seen there. March 14, Pin-tail, Lesser Yellow-legs. March 14, Robins building; Fox Sparrow, last. March 15, Tree Sparrow, 5, last. March 16, Vesper Sparrow, first. March 18, Rusty Blackbird, first; Towhee. March 24, Chipping Sparrow, first; Field Sparrow, first. March 25, seven grouse in a covey, on upper reaches of Big Stony Creek, Giles County. Unusually large number to be seen in a covey at any time in Giles County, or Montgomery County. Usually one sees one or two. I have seen no Purple Finches this winter or spring. An interesting record of Brown Creepers was reported to me. A freshman, W. J. Peters, a very good observer, tells me that he saw a great many brown creepers in Draper Valley near Pulaski about March 20. They were on practically every other tree in a wood in which he happened to be. This is rather interesting, considering the scarcity of that bird this winter and spring around here.

There have been lots of robins around here since February. Of course one can always find flocks of one hundred or more all through the winter. But a farmer friend of mine reports that there were thousands of them on the North Fork of the Roanoke River, Montgomery County, about February 1, 1935. He also says that there were hundreds of blue jays. They were all going north, he told me.

---Ralph M. Brown.

PROGRAM OF ROANOKE MEETING

Friday, April 26th

11:00 A.M. - Registration in hotel lobby.

Program in Green Room - 1:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.

- 1:00 P.M. - Welcome to Roanoke.
Bird Banding Notes. T. L. Engleby.
- 1:10 P.M. - British Birds, Men, and Societies. J. J. Murray.
- 1:30 P.M. - First Thrills from American Birds. Martin Curtler.
- 1:45 P.M. - Seven Years of Systematic Bird Study. Bertha Daniel.
- 1:50 P.M. - Interesting Bird Regions of West Virginia. Prof.
Maurice Brooks, University of West Virginia.
- 2:20 P.M. - Notes and Comments. Dr. Ellison A. Smythe, Jr.
- 2:45 P.M. - Gannetts of Bonadventure Island, Gaspe Peninsula
(illustrated). Prof. Maurice Brooks.
- 3:15 P.M. - Additional papers to be announced. Members who have
papers should notify M. G. Lewis, Salem, Va., or
Prof. Ruskin S. Freer, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg
- at once.
- 4:00 P.M. - Business session.
- 4:30 P.M. - Notes from Roanoke County. Announcements. M. G.
Lewis.
- 4:45 P.M. - Adjournment.
- 6:30 P.M. - Annual banquet in Green Room. (Plates, 75¢ instead
of \$1.00 as stated earlier in this issue, tickets
to be purchased in advance.)
Victor records of bird music made in the field.
Taming Wild Birds in West Virginia (illustrated).
Prof. Maurice Brooks.
Moving picture of bird life may be arranged by Mr.
C. O. Handley.

Saturday, April 27th - Field Trip.



THE RAVEN

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

VOL. VI

MAY, 1935

No. 5

THE FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE V. S. O.

The Fifth Annual Meeting of The Virginia Society of Ornithology was called to order by President Freer at the Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, promptly after lunch on Friday, April 26, 1935. Most of the afternoon was occupied by the reading of papers during which Mr. M. G. Lewis, Chairman of the program committee, presided. Several papers by Prof. Maurice Brooks of the University of West Virginia formed a very interesting part of the program.

In addition to welcoming the Society to Roanoke, Mr. T. L. Engleby gave some news of his bird banding. Dr. Murray in speaking of "British Bird Men and Societies" mentioned the lack of anything comparable to our Biological Survey and said that Dr. B. F. Tucker of the Oxford Museum is developing ornithological research along such lines. "Seven Years of Bird Study" by Miss Daniel showed how much can be gained by an intensive study of a small area. A wide variety of bird life was indicated by the birds which Prof. Brooks mentioned in his paper entitled "Interesting Bird Regions of West Virginia." Prof. Dean of V.P.I. gave numerous suggestions for spreading information, arousing interest in and protecting birds. The finding of the nests of Cliff Swallows in the vicinity of Harrisonburg was reported by Mr. Hostetter.

At this time the presentation of papers was interrupted for a business session. Prof. Freer appointed nominating and resolutions committees, asking that they report at the dinner. For the Nominating committee: Chairman, Mr. Engleby, Mr. Hostetter and Mrs. Shaw. For the Resolutions committee: Chairman, Mr. Brown, Miss Zimmerman and Mrs. James. Mrs. Burgess was later appointed to take the place of Miss Zimmerman. The Secretary's report was read, accepted, and is on file. In addition to the candidates for membership presented in this report, Mrs. Freer and Mr. Morgan were nominated and Miss Henderson asked to be reinstated. All were elected or reinstated. The Treasurer presented a report from March 8 to Dec. 31, 1934, and a second report from Jan. 1 to April 25, 1935. These were accepted and are filed. The accounts were not audited during the Meeting because of the lack of time. The Editor's report was read, accepted, and is on file. The minutes of the Fourth Annual Meeting were read and approved.

Mr. Handley brought to the attention of the Society instances of the slaughter of migrating robins and ducks this spring. There were

70 cases of slaughtering of robins brought to trial in Wise County and 30 individuals were fined about \$14.00 each. The postmaster at Big Laurel reported several cases and that postoffice was subsequently abolished. The question of whether there was any connection between the reporting and the abolishing of the postoffice was raised. Because it was thought that at least in some cases the slaughter was due to ignorance of the laws concerning the killing of birds, there were suggestions that articles on this topic be sent to newspapers in different sections of the state.

The reading of papers was resumed with the account of Mr. John W. Handlan, Pres. of the Brooks Bird Club, Wheeling, W. Va., of the activities of that club. This club developed in connection with the nature study work of Oglebay Institute of Oglebay Park, Wheeling.

Prof. Brooks' narrative of his trip to see the Gannets of Bonaventure Island, Gaspe Peninsula was illustrated with slides from pictures which he took. Because of the ruggedness of the mountains and the dense growth of Balsam firs, he does not share the fear of some that the highway along the peninsula will lay it open to despoilation by tourists. He recommended the highway, the little village and the boat trip to Bonaventure Island to all nature lovers.

After some announcements by Mr. Lewis the afternoon session adjourned.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee between the afternoon session and dinner the place and time for the next Annual Meeting was discussed. Richmond was named as the place and January or February as the time, with Feb. 21 and 22 as the tentative dates. It was moved, seconded, and carried that about ten copies of early numbers of THE RAVEN, which are lacking and for which there are stencils, should be run off. It was voted that the V.S.O. should take out a group membership in the Nat'l Association of Audubon Societies. This involves a fee of \$5.00 and the reporting of the activities of the V.S.O. to the National Association.

It was voted that the incoming President should appoint a committee to revise the constitution and by-laws.

President Freer presided at the dinner which was in the Hotel Roanoke and was attended by fifty or more persons. Prof. Dean played four records of wild bird songs prepared by A. R. Brand. A summary of the deliberations of the Executive Committee was given by the Secretary. Mr. Brown reported as follows for the Resolutions Committee:

Be it resolved that

The Virginia Society of Ornithology

1) tenders its appreciation to Mr. T. L. Engleby for his kindly hospitality.

2) desires to convey its sincere gratitude to its officers for their untiring and efficient service during the past year.

3) wishes to witness to the profit and honor conferred upon it by the participation in the program of Prof. Maurice Brooks and Mr. John Handlan of West Virginia.

4) inquire of the Postoffice department as to why the postoffice at Big Laurel, Virginia was abolished.

5) extends its sincere thanks to the management of the Hotel Roanoke for the many courtesies shown the Society.

The resolutions were adopted unanimously.

The following nominations were reported by Mr. Engleby for his committee: for President, Mr. C. O. Handley; Vice-President, Mr. J. B. Lewis; Treasurer, Mr. A. O. English; Secretary, Miss Florence Hague; Members of the Executive Committee, Mr. M. G. Lewis and Mrs. C. L. Burgess. Mr. Handley asked that his name be withdrawn and nominated Mr. M. G. Lewis for President. Dr. Murray suggested that it would be advisable to keep Prof. Freer on the Executive Committee so that the Society might still profit by his experience. It was requested by Mrs. Burgess that her name be withdrawn and Prof. Freer's placed in nomination instead. The Nominating Committee accepted this withdrawal and substitution. A vote by the raising of hands elected Mr. Handley President. The other officers were elected by a vote accepting the report of the Committee. The group then moved to the Green Room for the evening program.

Prof. Brooks experiences as reported in Taming Wild Birds in West Virginia showed the ease, the difficulties and hardships, and the rewards of working with birds on an 80 acre tract over a long period. After several birdsongs by Mrs. Handley, Mr. Handley presented some moving pictures of bird banding at the Baldwin Research Laboratory, Cleveland. The formal sessions of the Fifth Annual Meeting were then declared adjourned.

After a brief period of visiting with those who tarried, the Executive Committee met and voted to reimburse Mr. M. G. Lewis for the expenses of Prof. Brooks and Mr. Handlan in coming to our Meeting in excess of the \$10.00 previously voted by the Executive Committee previous to our gathering at Roanoke.

About 8:30 on Saturday morning Mr. M. G. Lewis led the group of seven cars bound for the field trip to Bent Mountain and Poor Mountain, elevation 3500 to 4000 ft. The first stop was made along the highway beside a ravine and near a mountain top from which we had an excellent view of the valley through which we had come. After leaving the paved highway there was a brief stop along a little stream in a sparsely wooded region. The last and longest stop was in a spot where there were steep upgrades on several sides, chiefly covered with large trees and a dense undergrowth except one slope which had been burned. A list of the birds recorded is appended.

Most of the group availed themselves of Mr. Engleby's invitation to lunch at his cabin at Bennett Springs where he demonstrated bird banding and numerous devices for feeding and trapping birds. All did justice to the appetizing out-of-door lunch and enjoyed the opportunity for informal visiting with the group. Incidentally a few birds were added to the list before the members went in their various directions from Mr. Engleby's cabin.

BIRDS RECORDED ON THE FIELD TRIP

Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Bob-white, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Pileated Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Flycatcher (var.?), Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, House Wren, Bewick's Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Migrant Shrike, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Mountain Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Parula Warbler, Cairn's Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Water-Thrush, Maryland Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Hooded Warbler, Redstart, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Purple Grackle, Scarlet Tanager, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch, Towhee; Chipping, Field, White-crowned, White-throated, Song, Savannah, Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows. The following were seen only at the lower elevations: Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Flicker, Kingbird, Bluebird, Yellow Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Louisiana Water-Thrush, Cowbird, Summer Tanager. Total species, 76.

---Florence Hague.

LIST OF MEMBERS AND GUESTS WHO REGISTERED

Maurice Brooks, Morgantown, W. Va.; Ralph M. Brown, Blacksburg; Mrs. C. L. Burgess, Lynchburg; A. L. Dean, Blacksburg; James Eike, Woodbridge; T. L. Engleby, Roanoke; A. O. English, Roanoke; Mr. and Mrs. Ruskin S. Freer, Lynchburg; Florence Hague, Sweet Briar; John W. Handlan, Wheeling, W. Va.; Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Richmond; Lena B. Henderson, Lynchburg; Ralph Hostetter, Harrisonburg; Mrs. A. O. James, Richmond; Mrs. J. S. Jurgens, Bon Air; John B. Lewis, Amelia; M. G. Lewis, Salem; J. J. Murray, Lexington; Wm. J. Peters, Blacksburg; Elizabeth H. Ryland, Richmond; Mrs. Frederick W. Shaw, Richmond; G. W. Underhill, Blacksburg; Elizabeth K. Zimmerman, Hollins College.

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THE HAWKS OF NORTH AMERICA

The National Association of Audubon Societies has just published a handsome volume on "The Hawks of North America," by John Richard May. The book is in royal octave size, attractively bound in green cloth, with 140 pages of text. Following an introduction on hawks in

general, the study of feeding habits and methods of field identification, the distribution, habits and food of individual species are discussed. Small maps show for each species the general distribution and breeding range. Data are collected from many sources, and our knowledge of the food habits of these much maligned birds is brought down to date. Thirty-seven beautiful color plates by Allan Brooks illustrate every member of the hawk family known to have occurred in North America north of the Mexican line. Major Brooks, whose specialty is hawks, has never done better work. And what is possibly even more valuable to the amateur student of this interesting but sometimes puzzling order, the book has four black and white plates prepared by Roger Peterson to show the flight patterns of all species as seen from below. Not the least remarkable thing about the book is its price. Ordinarily a volume with so many colored plates must come high, but through the generosity of Mrs. Carll Tucker, a member of the Board of Directors of the Association, this book is being distributed at the nominal price of \$1.25 postpaid. Every bird student will want this book. It can be secured from the National Association of Audubon Societies, 1775 Broadway, New York City.

---J. J. Murray.

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SEVEN YEARS OF SYSTEMATIC BIRD STUDY ON ONE FARM IN VIRGINIA

Bertha Daniel

Seven years ago I became conscious of a desire to know just how many species of birds one might find on the average farm in the Virginia Piedmont. This being my initial beginning of a bird list, I started off with the names of about twenty species of common birds I had learned to know when a girl. Thus began my seven years of bird study on a ninety-one acre farm situated in the southern part of Campbell County. These years have afforded many happy hours of recreative bird study and yielded much valuable information on the interesting movement of birds. The wide breadth of the azure sky over our farm has given us splendid views of the majestic flight of the Bald Eagle, Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Osprey, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks; and the graceful skim of the Barn Swallow. Its hayfields furnish hunting grounds for the Marsh Hawk and Short-eared Owl; the nesting sites for the Meadowlark and Prairie Horned Lark, the Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows. Its brooks lure the Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe and Sora to spend days along their marshes. The Green Heron, Swamp Sparrow and Water Thrush also visit these streams. Here the Louisiana Water-thrush sings its freedom song.

The apple trees around my home bear the marks of many holes drilled in their bark by the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creepers and Warblers find these trees to be an insect paradise.

Some of the unusual warblers found here were the Wilson's, Cape May, Yellow-throated and Magnolia Warblers. The most unusual bird found in the orchard was the Spotted Sandpiper.

Down in the thickets and ravines the Towhees and White-throated Sparrows scratch among the leaves all winter. In springtime the ethereal songs of the Fox Sparrow and White-throats come from their tangled depths.

One sunny afternoon in April while sitting beside the brook a female Cardinal perched quite near me on a swaying branch and sang the Cardinal's refrain. This is the only time I have heard the female Cardinal sing.

In a small wooded glen I have found many warblers. The Wood Thrush and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers nest here each year. This place is a favorite haunt of the thrushes and it was here that I heard the sweetest of all bird songs -- the song of the Hermit Thrush.

Altogether, over one hundred and twenty species of birds have been observed in this one farm in Virginia.

(Read at the Roanoke meeting of the V.S.O.)

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V. S. O. Dues -- 1935

The Treasurer states that a number of members have failed to send in their membership fees for the current year, and that the bank balance of the Society is dangerously low. The dues are \$2.50 for Active Members and \$1.50 for Associate Members. Those who wish to continue to receive THE RAVEN should send their remittances promptly to the new Treasurer, Mr. A. O. English, 308 Westover Avenue, Roanoke, Virginia.

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HAWK BOUNTIES AGAIN

At least one Virginia county has reverted to the foolish and wasteful custom of paying bounties on hawk scalps. Beginning April 8, 1935, the Board of Supervisors of Grayson County will pay a bounty of twenty-five cents on the scalp of each "chicken hawk" killed in the county and presented to the clerk. This means that scalps will be brought in from surrounding counties which do not pay bounties. And it means that every kind of hawk, beneficial and neutral as well as harmful, will be killed. Most of these bounties will be paid on the beautiful and beneficial little Sparrow Hawks, as they are more common and much easier to kill. It is safe to say that there is not a clerk in the state that can distinguish between the different scalps presented to him. There have even been cases where the bounty has been paid on poultry scalps. Farmers can be trusted to kill hawks that are really causing damage to poultry. The bounty encourages indiscriminate killing and entails a waste of county money. Members of the V.S.O. and bird lovers everywhere should use their influence against this practice.

MIGRATION NOTES

Since so much material is becoming available for THE RAVEN it will now be necessary to curtail migration notes. For five years full migration lists have appeared each spring and fall, and the status of the more common migrants in most of our sections is well known. Contributors are requested hereafter to send in migration dates for only the more uncommon species; or dates for common species which are earlier or later than they have heretofore recorded. If this request is observed, it will save the Editor a great deal of labor. Contributors are also requested not to include notes in letters to the Editor, but to write them up in the form in which they wish them to appear in print.

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NOTES FOR THE JUNE ISSUE

Notes for the June issue should be sent in before June 15. Most of the June and July issues will be given to nesting data. Notes of the nesting of unusual birds, or detailed observations of a particular nest, should be written as a separate article. Others may be included in a list of field notes.

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WATER BIRDS OF A VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN COUNTY

Under the above title our Editor has a paper in the March, 1935, number of the Wilson Bulletin. The paper begins with a description of the geographical and ecological features of Rockbridge County, and gives an annotated list of 52 species of water birds observed there over a five-year interval, for the most part. ---R.S.F.

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FIELD NOTES

The following errors are noted in my notes appearing in the February-March, 1935 issue of THE RAVEN: on page 8, line 8 from the top, reading "Wachapreague, Accomac county.-Nov. 9", should read "Chincoteague, Accomac county.-Nov. 10"; and on page 8, line 4 from the bottom, the date reading "1934" should read "1935".

---C. O. Handley.

Shirley, Va. Shirley was first occupied in 1613 and was known as West-and-Shirley Hundred. In 1664 Edward Hill patented the place, which was left by the third Edward to his sister, Elizabeth Carter, in 1720. Here was born Anne Hill Carter, mother of Robert E. Lee, who often visited Shirley. The present house was built about 1740.

Charles City County: eighteen miles S.E. of Richmond.
(Va. Highway Historical Markers)

The original Shirley estate was divided two generations ago and left to male heirs, the divisions being Shirley (proper), Upper Shirley, Carter's Mill, and High Hill. It was my privilege, with several others, to be entertained recently (March 28-30, 1935) at High Hill. Of course this meant also the hospitality of Shirley. We breathed for two blessed days that atmosphere of Old Virginia, fast disappearing, but which lingers still about the homes of the Lower James.

High Hill is situated as the name implies, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles back from the river. Around the house, on sides and rear, are the garden and "the lot", with remains of "the quarters", now their tenants gone. In front, beyond the paved River Road, are the sheep pasture, the large cattle pasture, and the broad fields reaching over to the two Shirleys. Behind the house are extensive wood lands, recently cut over by a sawmill. Of course there is plenty of water everywhere.

Most of my bird observations were around High Hill; some around Shirley proper. I was told that most of the water birds have gone. For instance, of a wheat field out in front of High Hill I was told, "That is the field where we see so many geese." But across the river from Westover I saw a flock of possibly one hundred Black Duck. Just before dusk, out in front of Shirley I noticed a number of birds flying low over the surface of the water. I saw them only imperfectly from the window, but my idea is that they were Greater Yellowlegs.

It was the time of Sparrows. The little trim, brown-capped Chippies were numerous, and wherever there was cover enough, even up in the garden, were many, many White-throats. And I am sure I saw these latter of two distinct sizes, whatever that may mean. A normal supply of Field Sparrows. One Swamp Sparrow. I saw not one Fox Sparrow, - which was not particularly surprising. But I saw not one Song Sparrow, nor heard one, which was amazing. Here in Alexandria they are abundant.

I did not see a Red-winged Blackbird, though I have no doubt they were to be found on the river marshes, where I did not go. One Rusty Blackbird. And the big oaks around both High Hill and Shirley were alive with flocks of Purple Grackles, uproarious with their squeaks and squawks.

I had not seen a Brown Thrasher around Alexandria this season, but they were common here, singing lustily. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were common. On my second morning (30th) I saw one Black-and-White Warbler, finding him through his song, and saw one Yellow-throated Warbler and heard one or two others. And what shall I say of the riot of Cardinals and Towhees and Crested Titmice?

A small Falcon flew rapidly through a large tree in the yard, making a gesture toward a sparrow as it passed. I saw only gray, but since I had only an imperfect, fleeting sight, and since the Sparrow Hawk is so much more common than the Pigeon Hawk, I suppose I must say it was the former.

But my most interesting experience came as I was riding over Shirley farm with Mr. Hill Carter. Ahead of us in the field was a flock of eleven Black Buzzards. He exclaimed, "Ah, they have gotten a lamb!" And he was correct. A ewe has just given birth to twin lambs. Evidently one had strayed from the immediate side of its mother. One blow from that heavy beak! And there stood the mother, one little one by her side, watching the vultures eating and fighting among themselves. Mr. Carter says this is no uncommon occurrence. He remarked, "We on the farm have to be always fighting - birds, animals, insects, elements, weeds - everything."

The list of birds: Pied-billed Grebe - 1; Great Blue Heron - 2; Black Duck - 100 (est.); Turkey Vulture - c.; Black Vulture - one flock of 11; Red-tailed Hawk - one heard; Sparrow Hawk - one (if it was not a Pigeon Hawk); Herring Gull - about six; Mourning Dove - f.c.; Flicker - several; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 1; Downy Woodpecker - several; Woodpecker - (heard, either a Red-headed or a Red-bellied); Phoebe - several; Blue Jay - several, heard; Crow - c.; Carolina Chickadee - 1 or 2; Tufted Titmouse - v.c.; Carolina Wren - c.; Mockingbird - c.; Brown Thrasher - c.; Robin - c.; Bluebird - f.c.; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher - f.c.; Golden-crowned Kinglet - several; Ruby-crowned Kinglet - several; Cedar Waxwing - many; Starling - ab.; Black-and-White Warbler - 1 (30th); Myrtle Warbler - a few; Yellow-throated Warbler - 2 or 3 (30th); English Sparrow - v.c.; Red-eyed Towhee - c.; Slate-colored Junco - v.c.; Meadowlark - f.c.; Rusty Blackbird - 1; Purple Grackle - v.c.; Cardinal - v.c.; Chipping Sparrow - v.c.; Field Sparrow - c.; White-throated Sparrow - ab.; Swamp Sparrow - 1.

This is my list, manifestly not exhaustive of the species to be found; but they are what I identified on March 29 and 30, during two happy days at Shirley.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

Alexandria. April 25 - several Lesser Yellowlegs; Herring, Ring-billed and Bonaparte's Gulls, the last most common. April 27 - two Prothonotary Warblers at Dyke. May 2 - Ruby-throated Hummingbird. May 6 - Caspian Tern; scores of Bobolinks; Cliff and Tree Swallows. May 8 - Long-billed Marsh Wren; Golden-winged Warbler. May 10 - two Laughing Gulls. May 11 - Golden-winged Warbler. May 13 - Red-breasted Merganser; Mallards; Pintails; Scaups; Semi-palmated Sandpipers; Northern Water-thrush; White-crowned Sparrow.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

Woodbridge. On arriving home from the V.S.O. meeting, Sunday, April 28, I went out to check on the birds arriving during my absence. Also, because of much discussion as to the comparative advancement of the season at Roanoke and other sections, I wanted to see how the bird life compared. I went out at 11:20 A.M., returning at 12:50. The temperature at this time was in the high 80's, with a light wind. I walked perhaps two miles, through an apple orchard, open field, mixed woodland, a marsh bordering a small pond, and through a large laurel thicket. Every bird here recorded is an absolute sight identification, with the exception of the Night-hawk and the Whip-poor-will.

The species and individuals: Solitary Sandpiper, 2; Turkey Vulture, 6, Broad-winged Hawk, 2; Killdeer, 4; Bobwhite, 2; Mourning Dove, several; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Flicker, 3; Chimney Swift, 30 or 40; Kingbird, 4; Crested Flycatcher, 2; Phoebe, 1; Wood Pewee, 1; Blue Jay, 3; Crow, several; Goldfinch, 6 or 8; White-throated Sparrow, about 200, mostly in two large flocks; Chipping Sparrow, 8; Field Sparrow, 15 or 20; Towhee, about 10, mostly males; Cardinal, 2; Indigo Bunting, 2 males, another singing; Scarlet Tanager, 2 males; Red-eyed Vireo, 6; Yellow-throated Vireo, 2; Blue-headed Vireo, 1; Black-and-white Warbler, 6; Golden-winged Warbler, 1; Parula Warbler, 6; Yellow Warbler, 1; Myrtle Warbler, 3; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 1 male; Pine Warbler, 1; Prairie Warbler, 2; Ovenbird, 4; Water-thrush, 1; Louisiana Water-thrush, 2; Maryland Yellow-throat, 2; Yellow-breasted Chat, 2; Hooded Warbler, 2 males; Connecticut Warbler, 1; Yellow-throated Warbler, 1; Mockingbird, 4; Catbird, 8; Brown Thrasher, several; Carolina Wren, 1; House Wren, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Tufted Titmouse, several; Chickadee, 4 or 5; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, about 4; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 10 or 12; Wood Thrush, 8; Robins, many; Bluebird, about ten. This is a total of 56 species and about 450 individuals.

Additional species for the remainder of the day were: Yellow Palm Warbler, 1; Black-throated Green, 1 male, and Baltimore Oriole, 4; the species seen during the day were fewer than those in the morning, but the number of individuals was about the same, because of a wave of Myrtle Warblers. With them was another Golden-winged Warbler and several more Parulas. A second Connecticut Warbler hunted in an oak near the Orioles. At dusk a Whip-poor-will called and a Nighthawk called his sharp "peent" overhead. This brought the total for the day to 61 species and approximately 1000 individuals. There is nothing unusual in this list, but the day was a very interesting one nevertheless.

---James Eike.

Charlottesville. Noting the item by Prof. Freer and Dr. Murray in the AUK about the association between the sapsucker and the humming bird, it may be interesting to note that a certain maple tree in our back yard -- in full view of our apartment third-floor windows -- is almost pecked to pieces each spring by a sapsucker and that kinglets (golden-crowned?), chickadees, and titmice appear to enjoy the results of his labors, especially the kinglets, although all have been observed following him rather closely when the sap is flowing freely. Is this an accident, coincidence, or a tale with a moral?

---Arthur Bevan.

APRIL BIRDS AT LYNCHBURG

Latest recorded dates: Fox Sparrow, April 25; Rusty Blackbird, April 20. Earliest recorded dates: Great Blue Heron, March 20 (Mrs. C. W. Harris); Yellow-throated Vireo, March 31 (Mrs. C. W. Harris); Greater Yellowlegs, April 3; E. Green Heron, April 5; Blue-headed Vireo,

April 10; E. Grasshopper Sparrow, April 13, E. Kingbird, April 19; Crested Flycatcher, April 20; E. Warbling Vireo, April 22 (Mrs. C. W. Harris); Summer Tanager, April 23; Black-throated Blue Warbler, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Blackburnian Warbler, April 25; Acadian Flycatcher (Mrs. C. W. Harris), Magnolia Warbler, April 27; Nashville Warbler, April 28; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, April 29.

April was a good month with the waterfowl. Fourteen species, twelve of which were ducks, were listed during the month. On April 7 there were about 150 ducks at Timber Lake, including a flock of sixteen Common Loons, the largest number of Loons I have seen at the Lake at one time. The Wood Duck, a beautiful male, seen on April 15, was only the third occurrence I have noted for this species at the Lake. Coots and Blue-winged Teal have been more abundant than usual, the Coots being listed eight times, the Teal seven times during the month. On April 19 there were five Coots and eleven Teal on the Lake, and both species show mating behavior. The Coots were fighting and pursuing one another.

A pair of Upland Plovers has been seen twice at the Edgewood Farm. I have not seen them there since 1931 until this spring. On May 1st we heard the flight song of the male, and I am hoping that this means the birds are going to nest here, although northern Virginia is given as the southern limit of their breeding range.

On April 20th we witnessed an interesting Hawk migration. Quoting from the Rambler column of April 28th, "As we were leaving the Edgewood Farm, we noticed a few large birds circling far overhead. We watched them for awhile, first taking them to be Turkey Vultures. Closer inspection with the glasses proved them to be something else, so we hurried to the car to use the telescope. Steadying it on the car, and looking almost straight up, we decided that they were Hawks of the Buteo group, which meant they were Red-tailed, Red-shouldered or Broad-winged Hawks. We finally decided that they were the latter. At any rate, they were obviously migrating, and as we watched we noted a peculiar thing. After circling a few minutes, the birds glided off one by one to the northeast. Almost as soon as the first group was gone, another suddenly appeared out of the low-lying clouds. After circling for a few minutes, it broke up like the first, the individuals going to the northeast. Two more times this happened, until four groups, totalling seventeen birds, had appeared and flown off to the northeast. Later in the morning at Timber Lake we saw three more of the same kind of hawks, flying to the northeast. While we would like to be more positive of their identity, we were reasonably sure that they were Broad-wings because of a conspicuous single band across the tail, seen through the telescope, and because of the migration and nesting dates of the Broad-wings in more northern states, which are later than those for the other two Buteos."

---Ruskin S. Freer.

Naruna. March 29 - Mallard. April 26 - Scarlet Tanager. April 28 - Rose-breasted Grosbeak. May 3 - Blue Grosbeak. May 4 - Magnolia Warbler. Brown Creepers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have been more common the past winter and spring than usual; the Creeper to April 19, and the Sapsucker to April 25. No Purple Finches have been seen this year.

---Bertha Daniel.

Alleghany Co. The following birds were seen along U. S. No. 60 between Covington and Alleghany in Alleghany County, during the afternoon of April 29th, 1935: Yellow-throated Warbler, 1; Pine Warbler, 6; Connecticut Warbler, 1 male seen in good light at about twenty-five feet; answered "squeak". Cape May Warbler, 1 male, answered "squeak" and permitted good view with 6 x glasses. Golden-winged Warbler; Purple Finch, 1.

---C. O. Handley.

Lexington. In my April notes I stated that ducks were rather scarce here early in the Spring. With the heavy rains of late March and April, ducks arrived in numbers greater than I have ever seen here. On April 3 there were 107 individuals of 9 species at Cameron's Pond - Scaups (88 - mostly males); Black (2); Green-winged Teal (2); Blue-winged Teal (4); Baldpate (5 males); Pintail (1); Canvasback (1 - my first male); Ring-necked (3); Red-breasted Merganser (1 female, my second record). On April 8 at a tiny pond I saw 77 ducks, mostly Scaups and Blue-winged Teals, with a few Green-winged Teals and Baldpates, a pair of Wood Ducks and three Buffleheads. In addition to these 11 species there have been a few Shovellers and Hooded Mergansers, the latter scarcer than usual. The high water brought in an unusual number of Gulls, some 22 Ring-billed Gulls, from April 1 to 8; and two Bonaparte's Gulls on the 6th. I heard of a flock of 120 gulls near Staunton, Va., apparently Bonaparte's, with one Ring-billed among them. During May shore-birds have been common - Solitary, Spotted, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. A Black-bellied Plover, a first record for the Valley of Virginia, spent two days at a small pool, April 25 and 26.

Earliest dates ever recorded: Coot, April 1; Spotted Sandpiper, April 19; Lesser Yellowlegs, March 27; Kingbird, April 22; Rough-winged Swallow, April 1; Blue-headed Vireo, April 4; Yellow-throated Vireo, April 20; Scarlet Tanager, April 27.

Latest dates: Baldpate, April 8; (four very late duck records, all apparently cripples, Pintail, May 9; Blue-winged Teal, May 20; Bufflehead and Ring-neck, May 27); Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, May 20; Solitary Sandpiper and Semipalmated Plover, May 27; Semipalmated Sandpiper, May 29; Olive-backed Thrush, May 25; Bay-breasted Warbler (more common than usual for spring), May 24; Magnolia Warbler, May 25; Bobolink, May 27; Savannah Sparrow, May 20. Nighthawks more common than usual in spring, May 11 to 18. Another record of the

Wilson's Warbler, May 25, singing. The only spring records for the Tennessee Warbler, May 17 to 20, a few. A pair of Blue Grosbeaks, first record for this section, at Cameron's Pond, May 20. Bird song has been unusually full, migrants singing that I have never heard here before, including Wilson's Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Gray-cheeked and Olive-backed Thrushes. Nesting notes will be reported next month.
---J. J. Murray.

Blacksburg. Ducks appeared during late March and April in the largest numbers on record for this locality. Evidently our large new pond attracted them. At one time 400 were seen on the pond. This month we hope to have wild rice, wild celery, pond weed, etc., planted in the pond, and this should lure more ducks here. My outstanding record was the sight of 120 Bonaparte's Gulls on April 11. I also saw one of these gulls on April 9 and five on April 19. Dr. Smyth had individual records for the springs of 1906, 1908, 1911, and January, 1924; and I have a single record for April 10, 1932. I also saw a Ring-billed Gull on April 13.

During April I registered my first records for Baldpates (April 16 and 30); Buffleheads (April 4 and 12); Ruddy Duck (April 8); and Duck Hawk (April 16).

Other records: March 27 to April 30, Lesser Scaup (6 to 110); April 4 to 23, Blue-winged Teal (4 to 17); April 4 and 23, Pied-billed Grebe; April 9, American Golden-eye; April 11, Great Blue Heron; April 14, Broad-winged Hawk; April 17, Osprey; April 14, Robins nesting, two eggs; April 20, Robins hatched.

---Ralph M. Brown

Botetourt County. I saw a Mockingbird at Parker's Gap, Botetourt Co., just inside the Rockbridge County line, at an elevation of about 2500 feet. It was in an abandoned clearing high on the mountain side in what is now Natural Forest land. I have never found this bird at such an elevation in the Valley. It is rarely seen anywhere above the Valley level.

---J. J. Murray.



The Raven

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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
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No. 6

A NESTING DIARY FOR AMELIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

January 6. A Great Horned Owl's nest was located in a remodeled crow's nest about forty feet up in a large tulip poplar, in a crotch where three limbs leave the side of the main trunk. This nest is in the same tract of woods that we had under observation in 1933, but is about a half mile distant from the site of that nest. One of the owls was on the nest with the tail projecting well over the edge. At this time there was much white excrement and a number of pellets under two roost trees, one about sixty yards, the other about eighty yards from the nest. Under the farther of the roost trees some blue jay feathers were scattered about. The pellets were made up principally of rabbit bones and fur, with a few mouse bones.

January 13. A visit made during a snow storm. One of the owls was on the nest.

January 19. One of the owls was on the nest with its tail toward me as I approached. It turned its head so as to look at me over its back, with horns erected. It moved noticeably when I clapped my hands but did not leave the nest. At this time some guinea-hen feathers were found under the farther of the roost trees, which is a large tulip poplar. At no time were either whitewash or pellets found under the nest tree. This was the case with the nest of 1933, until after the young had hatched.

Between January 20th and 21st a Great Horned Owl was shot about a half mile from the nest; and from that time to the present nothing has been seen of the birds at the nest nor have any fresh signs been seen in that section of the woods. It may be that both owls were shot, though I heard only of one.

April 16. Found a Loggerhead Shrike's nest in a cluster of twigs on top of a horizontal limb of an old apple tree near a farm home. Nest about ten feet up. The body of the nest is coarse and bulky, but it is neatly lined with plant fibre and white chicken feathers. There were five eggs.

May 3. Located a Pileated Woodpecker's nest in a hole two feet below the top of a dead elm stub about twenty feet tall. The stub is just forty paces from the big hackberry in which the 1934 nest described in THE RAVEN was located. During the winter the large dead limb of the hackberry in which the last year's nest hole was made, broke off at the hole and fell. This may account for the choice of another tree. Young birds in the nest chattered when the tree was struck with a club; and a half hour later the female came and fed them.

May 6. Visited the nest at 2:00 P.M. The female fed the young at 2:10.

May 8. Arrived at nest at 3:25. Female came to nest at 3:58 and remained, feeding young and going in to get feces until 4:02. She returned to a tree near the nest at 4:29, went to nest at 4:30½. Two young had their heads in the opening of the nest hole. The female inserted her bill in the throats of these young ten times, raising her head in the intervals as if to bring up more food. While the bill of the adult bird is in the throat of the young it is moved in and out very rapidly, so that the observer wonders that the young bird is not killed in the process. The female entered the nest after she finished feeding and left with feces in her bill at 4:34.

This time there was an interval of an hour and a quarter between the departure of the female and her next arrival, as she lit on a tree near the nest at 5:49. She went to the nest at 5:51, again finding the doorway full of wide open mouths. She inserted her bill thirteen times, raising her head at each interval as before; entered the nest at 5:54 and left with feces in her bill at 5:54½.

May 13. The nest was again visited and the female was still feeding young in the nest. Lack of time prevented another visit until May 25th, when the young had flown. I did not see the male woodpecker about the nest at any time, and suspect that he had been killed by some lawless hunter, as he took an active part in the care of the young last year.

About May 1st Mr. Fred Robertson and his son Donald found the nest of a pair of Turkey Vultures, and one of the Black Vulture near their home in the north part of our county. At their invitation I went with them May 6th to visit both nests. The Turkey Vulture's eggs were on the ground under the branches of a large fallen oak in a large tract of second growth mixed woods. At the time of my visit one of the two eggs was pipped. The eggs of the Black Vulture were under a dense growth of honeysuckle that climbed over some small trees at the edge of an open field. The two eggs of this pair hatched about May 20th, according to the Robertsons. The young birds in both nests disappeared soon after being hatched. Mr. Robertson credits their destruction to a pack of half starved dogs that are kept in the neighborhood. In the case of the Black Vultures they were hatched at the edge of a very large thicket of honeysuckle, under which they could easily hide beyond the possibility of finding them.

At the time of my visit the Robertsons also had under observation a Mourning Dove's nest that was built directly on the ground amid stunted sedge grass and between two small pine bushes.

May 26. Found a Hummingbird's nest on top of a horizontal beech limb, about eight feet from the trunk of the tree and ten feet from the ground. The nest was not completed, the bird coming to it and working on the rim while sitting in the cup, as if fitting it to her form.

While on the subject of Hummingbirds, the following note may be of interest. While watching the nest of the Pileated Woodpeckers described previously, I saw a Hummingbird come to a small spider web of the "orb" type that was about twenty feet from me, go to the web and appear to take a thread of it in her bill and fly back about two feet with it. Then she advanced to the web, and again retreated. This she repeated about six times; then darted off. In a few minutes she returned and went through the same performance. When examined after she left the second time the web was a wreck. Doubtless she was gathering threads with which to tie the lichens on to the outside of her nest.

May 29. Found a Mourning Dove's nest on a tangle of honeysuckle about six feet up in a dogwood. When first found the nest contained the usual two eggs, but when revisited June 1st it contained three eggs which the bird was incubating.

June 3. Located a Pileated Woodpecker's nest in a large, dead limb in the top of a big sycamore in Flat Creek lowgrounds. The hole is probably sixty feet from the ground. Well grown young were being fed in the nest.

---John B. Lewis.

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AN UPLAND PLOVER'S NEST

A generation ago the Upland Plover was common in the Valley of Virginia, but years of unrestricted hunting in this country and continued persecution in its winter home on the pampas of the Argentine brought this noble and attractive bird almost to the verge of extinction. Only infrequently is its mellow whistle heard above the pasture fields as it migrates northward in the springtime, and its nests are rarely found. Rigid protection is now giving it a chance, and it seems to be slowly increasing. Lexington is the most southern point from which its nest has been reported in recent years. In 1930 I saw a nest which had been run over by a hay rake. The young birds, just hatched, had been scattered and one had been crushed by the rake. This year I was fortunate enough to find a nest before all the eggs had been hatched. On May 27th I was driving along a lane through an alfalfa field when an Upland Plover flew up from the tall grass at the side of the road. I stopped at once to look for a nest. The mother bird

fluttered away along the ground with loud cries, trying to lure me away from the nest by the pretense of a broken wing; and then, flying to a place where the grass was short, jumped up and down with a great fluttering of wings and shrill cries. Finally, seeing that I was not to be deceived, she circled low over my head, calling with anxious but liquid voice, "t'wit - t'wit - t'wit." Five minutes' search disclosed the nest. It was a mere depression, a cup pressed into the roots of a bunch of grass, with little lining and very small for a bird of such size, the cup being not over four inches across. In the nest were two large eggs of a beautiful creamy buff, spotted with chocolate markings. Two downy young crouched in the grass near the nest, almost invisible. They were so recently from the eggs that one still had a bit of shell glued to its down. One of the eggs was slightly pipped, with no hole but showing several cracks radiating from the point where the egg would finally break. As I held it to my ear I could hear the steady taps of the young bird inside trying to break its way through to the outside world. I could even hear the faint calls of the hidden bird. The eggs were still unhatched when I visited the nest later that afternoon, but no doubt the young birds came out on the following day. And they were just in time, for in another day the hay was cut.

---J. J. Murray.

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NOTES ON SOME SUMMER BIRDS OF WISE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Wise County is one of the extreme southwestern counties of Virginia, bordering on Kentucky. It is very mountainous, heavily wooded, with few valleys of any size. On June 4, 1935, I drove across the southern part of the county; and on June 11th returned across the northern part. I was surprised at the Carolinian character of the avifauna of these high mountain valleys, even though I had been prepared by papers that have appeared in "The Auk" to find such a condition in the lower mountains over in Kentucky. Only near the top of the big Cumberland Mountain above Appalachia were any typically Alleghanian Zone birds noted. Here the Mountain Vireo and the Chestnut-sided Warbler were common, although even here the Yellow-breasted Chat was just as common. Scarlet Tanagers were common on all the higher ridges. Otherwise the bird life was purely Carolinian. A White-eyed Vireo was heard high on a mountain near Pound Gap; and, curiously enough, it was singing under a hemlock tree. Not far away I found a pair of Worm-eating Warblers. At about the same elevation Scarlet Tanagers were singing. Another White-eyed Vireo was heard in a high valley between Coeburn and St. Paul. I never stopped the car anywhere, no matter how high on the mountains, without hearing Chats. Carolina Wrens and Yellow Warblers were common in all the mountain valleys. Cardinals were seen at every clearing on the mountains. Prairie Warblers were singing near Pound Gap; and a Cerulean Warbler on Penny Creek Mountain between Pound and Wise Courthouse. I thought I heard a Kentucky Warbler near the top of the Cumberland Mountain. Robins were scarce in Wise County but common once the line was crossed into Russell County.

Starlings have invaded the towns in Wise County but were not seen in the country, although as soon as the more open country of Russell County was reached they were abundant.

---J. J. Murray.

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The July and August issues of THE RAVEN will probably be combined and appear late in August. Notes should be sent in by August 10th. Nesting notes should again be emphasized.

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DR. MURRAY AT MOUNTAIN LAKE BIOLOGICAL STATION

Our Editor spent the week of June 24-29 at the Mountain Lake Biological Station of the University of Virginia teaching a class of ten students in Ornithology. This was a part of a course on the Vertebrates. His notes on the birds at the Station, appearing in this issue, are of much interest as coming from a section from which we have had few reports, except for the good work of Mr. Brown at Blacksburg, and a paper on "The Summer Birds of Mountain Lake, Virginia", appearing in THE RAVEN, Vol. IV, Nos. 10 & 11, October and November, 1933, by Major Robert P. Carroll and D. Ralph Hostetter.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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FIELD NOTES

Newport News, Va., Mariners' Museum grounds. A pair of Crested Flycatchers built a nest in the bore of an old cannon in the Museum courtyard. In order to prevent disturbance of the nesting birds by childred "seesawing" on the cannon, an iron bar was wired to the eye-bolts on the back of the gun-carriage so that the gun could not be tilted on its trunnions; no other precaution was taken to guard the nest, and none of the hundreds of visitors who passed close by it during the nesting period ever noticed its presence. The birds were first noticed carrying building materials into the cannon about May 16, and continued to use the nest, in spite of unavoidable disturbance by visitors who happen to pass too close to the muzzle of the gun, out of which the mother bird flies as if shot by a charge of powder, whenever this occurs. By June 28th a second nest was started in the old Morro Castle cannon first used by the Tufted Titmice. The Flycatchers moved the snake skin from their first nest to the new location, but by that time not much was left of it.

April 29, Chipping Sparrow, on eggs in small hemlock tree twelve feet away from statue at entrance to building, passed by hundreds of visitors every week. Last year's nest was still closer to the same statue. May 1, Chipping Sparrow, on eggs in Pyracantha shrub on wall of Museum building. May 15, Ovenbird, on nest in woods; two young,

one egg. May 15, Summer Tanager, building in oak tree in woods. May 16, Hooded Warbler, in woods on two Cowbird eggs, one of her own. May 17, This nest abandoned with one Cowbird egg left in it. May 20, Acadian Flycatcher, seen trying out old nest in Fernery. May 20, Wood Thrush, on two eggs in Wax Myrtle bush in Fernery. May 20, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, finishing nest; another through hatching, in Deer Park. May 22, Towhee, on three eggs in nest on ground under Sweet Gum bush. May 22, Hooded Warbler, on one egg, not far from abandoned nest. May 22, Tufted Titmouse, feeding young in old bronze cannon, five feet from main entrance to Museum courtyard.

Recent additions to our check-list for the Museum grounds include the Pileated Woodpecker, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Blue Grosbeak. The Blue Grosbeak nested near our grounds last season but I had not observed it within our boundaries until this week. We hope to locate a nest near the point where it was seen feeding in the open fields, when I was able to watch it through a 40-power telescope for several minutes.

---George C. Mason.

Alexandria, Va. On May 25th I saw my first Summer Tanager in this region, a male, near the back entrance to Mt. Vernon. It is a "very rare summer resident" (Cooke) about Washington. On May 26th, a Vesper Sparrow, my latest record. It is a "rare and local summer resident" (Cooke). On June 2nd I saw eight or ten Ring-billed Gulls on the river at Four Mile Run, a day later than Miss Cooke's latest date for the Washington region.

Nests: May 20, Red-eyed Towhee, incubating four eggs in a depression under a tussock of grass; Hummingbird, twenty-five feet up on a horizontal oak limb; female sitting near; young Robins feeding in the fields with Starlings. May 27, Killdeer, incubating four eggs; Yellow Warbler, four eggs, three or four feet up in a bush; Red-eyed Towhee, four eggs, on ground under a small tree twined with honey-suckle. May 28, Long-billed Marsh Wren, several new but empty nests; Red-winged Blackbird, three or four tiny nestlings.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

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Dr. J. I. Hamaker, Head of the Biology Department of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, called the other day to report watching a male Summer Tanager busily engaged for some time in catching wasps. He said the wasps were of one of the paper-making species. At two times during the day the bird returned to his feasting. After a number of the wasps had been caught and eaten, the nest of the wasps was attacked, torn open, and the larvae also eaten. Dr. Hamaker saw a wasp fly at the Tanager on one occasion, but he inflicted no damage.

Forbush in "Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States" has this to say of this habit in the Summer Tanager: "This bird is an expert flycatcher and sometimes it may be seen darting about like a Kingbird in pursuit of flying insects, such as bees, wasps and beetles.

Its habit of taking bees has given it the name of Red Bee-bird in some parts of the South. No thorough investigation of the food of the Summer Tanager has been made. Its habit of catching bees is well-known, but whether, like the Kingbird, it catches chiefly drones when feeding about bee-hives is not known. It takes many hymenopterous insects and may destroy many useful parasitic insects."

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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The Least Flycatcher. I heard the "chebec" note of this bird on May 29, 1935, at Monterey, Highland County, and at Warm Springs, Bath County. H. H. Bailey records the finding of ten nests of this species in one day at Mountain Lake in Giles County, in his "Birds of Virginia". The Consolidated List, published in THE RAVEN, February, 1931, states that it is a common summer resident in Montgomery County, summer resident in the Bristol region, but does not mention it for Highland or Bath Counties. I heard only one bird at each place, as we were passing through.

The Warbling Vireo. I heard this bird at a point seventeen miles south of Monterey on the road to Warm Springs on May 29, 1935. This point is close to the Highland-Bath county line, and was probably in Bath County. Bailey says nothing of its range in the state. The Consolidated List gives it as a summer resident of Montgomery County and the Bristol region. I am interested in the distribution of these two birds in this state, as I have only one record for the Least Flycatcher for Lynchburg, during migration, and have only a few records for the Warbling Vireo. It is unfortunate that we do not have observers in more of the western border counties of the state, as we would get much new information on some of the birds of that section.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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Naruna, Va. Turkey Vulture, June 1, nest under an old house. Vulture had been incubating about a week on the two eggs. Flicker, excavating hollow in tree for nest, June 2. Chimney Swifts, gathering twigs for nest, June 3. Phoebe, new nest April 17; Phoebe incubating April 22. Wood Pewee, building nest May 20. Crow, young crows cawing and large enough to fly, May 29. Vesper Sparrow, nest with four eggs May 25; nest in clover field beside a bunch of weeds. Chipping Sparrow, nest in pine shrub with one egg, May 12; another nest, May 26, with three tiny birds and one egg that hatched next day. Field Sparrow, nest in bunch of broom sedge, with four eggs, May 20. Towhee, nest on ground under small pine, with four eggs, May 6; eggs hatched, May 13; and young left nest, May 23. Summer Tanager, building nest, May 18. Yellow-throated Vireo, fledgling just out of nest, June 1. Black-and-white Warbler, building nest on ground beside a white oak tree, April 20; nest completed, April 22; and first egg laid, April 26. Five eggs were laid and all five hatched by May 14. Two fledglings left nest, May 19; the other three gone on May 21. Pine Warbler, building nest in pine, April 22. Prairie Warbler, nest in fork of sapling eight feet

from ground, with two eggs, May 31. I have found several nests of Prairie Warbler in former years, but all others were built about three feet from the ground. Mockingbird, nest in rose trellis with one egg, May 11; young in nest, May 27. Catbird, nest with two eggs, May 9. Brown Thrasher, nest, May 6, bird incubating. Young birds in nest, May 19. House Wren, building nest in tin bucket under eaves of smoke house, May 4. Carolina Chickadee, building nest in tree stub, April 13. Seven eggs were laid; and five young birds were in nest, May 10, probably several days old. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, building nest, April 19. Another nest found, June 3, bird on nest. Robin, building first nest, April 21. Bluebird, nest in cavity in apple tree with three eggs, May 17. ---Bertha Daniel.

Harrisonburg, Va. The following spring migrants were first observed on the dates indicated: Cowbird, Bewick Wren, 3/21; Spotted Sandpiper, 4/14; Yellow Warbler, 4/16; Osprey, Nighthawk, 4/20; Belted Kingfisher, 4/23; Grasshopper Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, 4/26; Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Redstart, Wood Thrush, 4/27; Whip-poor-will, Crested Flycatcher, 5/1; Worm-eating Warbler, 5/4; Chestnut-sided Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Hooded Warbler, 5/11; Baltimore Oriole, Magnolia Warbler, 5/18; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 6/1. The following "unusuals" were observed on the dates indicated. American Egret, 4/10; Prairie Warbler, 4/28; Immature Herring Gull (caught by several boys along roadside), 4/29; Immature Bald (?) Eagle, 5/4; Bobolink, 5/8; Lark Sparrow, 5/12. A crow sent to Dr. Oberholser on May 10th was identified by him to be the Fish Crow, Corvus ossifragus. ---D. Ralph Hostetter.

Lexington, Va. Nest Notes (the more common ones not being listed): Killdeer; June 17, four eggs apparently about ready to hatch. The nest had been plowed through but the bird had gathered the eggs together again. Yellow-billed Cuckoo; two nests; May 22, two eggs, ten feet up on vines on a leaning tree; June 17, bird incubating, fifteen feet up on branch of pine. Screech Owl; June 30, family group of adults and young just from the nest. Kingbird; May 13, nest almost finished, fifteen feet up in sycamore tree at edge of pond; Mourning Dove and Baltimore Oriole nests in same tree. Pewee; two nests: May 28, eggs, in gap between Thunder Hill and Apple Orchard mountains; July 1, Big Spring Pond, half grown young. Prairie Horned Lark; March 20, three eggs, on golf course. Barn Swallow; May 7, four nests, two with five eggs, one with one egg, one with three eggs and a naked nestling; July 3, nest with three fresh eggs; another with large young leaving; others from which young had flown. Rough-winged Swallow; May 13, carrying nest material. Crow; two nests; April 15, four eggs; another, April 17, five eggs, one of them almost white and lightly marked. Red-eyed Vireo; June 17, three well-feathered young. Prairie Warbler; July 4, empty nest, apparently not long deserted. Louisiana Water-thrush; June 17, four eggs, bird incubating and very shy; nest above a spring where a ram was working. Rose-breasted Grosbeak; June 17, four eggs; nest in tangle of grape vines over a path; at 2000 feet elevation; male on nest. A crippled female Bufflehead and male Ring-necked Duck still present at Cameron's Pond to June 17. Another pair of Blue

Grosbeaks seen at Cameron's Pond on June 2, the male a mottled first year bird.

---J. J. Murray

Blacksburg, Va. Baltimore Orioles seem to be increasing in number here. I have seen more than at any time in my experience. I saw a Hairy Woodpecker on May 11 and 19, in the same locality. Dr. Smyth's latest for this bird is February 18. Probably a breeder. Scarlet Tanagers in large numbers. Seen as late as May 26. Undoubtedly nesting. Never recorded here as breeding. The Hooded Warbler I saw and heard on May 26, in five different localities. Many Crested Flycatchers, at least one pair to every half mile in the woods. A Brown Creeper on May 13, latest record. Three pairs of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks seen at one time. Greatest number ever seen together in migration by me. There were ten Scarlet Tanagers with the grosbeaks. A wonderful color picture. Horned Lark singing on May 9. Saw sixteen different kinds of warblers on May 9. Heights of warbler migration, May 9, 15, 16 and 19. Chipping Sparrow nesting, May 13; Hummingbird, May 13; Red-eyed Vireo, May 13; Yellow-throated Vireo, May 14. Fledgling Grackle, May 18; fledgling Juncos, Mountain Lake, May 26.

---Ralph M. Brown.

Mountain Lake, Giles County, Va. The following nests were found by members of my class in ornithology at the University of Virginia Biological Station at Mountain Lake, Va., at an elevation of 3800 feet, during the week of June 24-29: Swift, June 25, nest with four eggs in a clean chimney at the isolated club-house on the Hotel golf links. Flicker, June 24, young in knot hole in living oak on campus of the Biological Station. Hummingbird, June 27, a juvenal bird which had just left nest and had fallen into a stream was brought to the laboratory, and died the next day. Robin, nests common about the campus. One Robin was collected for later determination of sub-species. Veery, June 26, nest with two eggs, bird incubating, 20 inches up on top of bent-over blackberry vines in deep woods. Bluebird, June 27, nest 40 feet up in dead chestnut in a field down the mountain at about 3000 feet. Cedar Waxwing, June 26, nest with five fresh eggs, 20 feet up on a large branch of a Table Mountain pine, on the campus. Mountain Vireo, June 26, two nests, one unfinished, along a road in woods; the other with three fresh eggs in an oak sapling near the campus. Parula Warbler, June 26, nest being built in Usnea moss on a branch of a half-dead chestnut. Cairns' Warbler, June 26, nest with four naked young, two feet up in a blackberry vine in deep woods; another nest with young on July 1. Chestnut-sided Warbler, June 27, nest with two fresh eggs, 20 inches up in a small oak bush near the campus. Carolina Junco, June 24, nest with four eggs, two feet up in rhododendron bush on the campus; another unfinished nest, June 25, two feet up in rhododendron bush in a pasture. Red-eyed Towhee, June 27, two nests, one two feet up on bent over branches of a small oak bush, with three half-grown young; the other with four fresh eggs, two feet up in a hemlock bush. Barred Owls were heard calling both during the day and at night. Ruffed Grouse were still drumming. A Whip-poor-will was heard early in the morning on several days. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Chestnut-sided Warblers were feeding young already out of the nest. A pair of Least Flycatchers were nesting somewhere about the campus of the Biological Station. We could not locate the nest but heard the noisy

"chebec" notes every day. We also heard a pair a little way down the mountain at White Pine Lodge. Two pairs of Bewick's Wrens were nesting at the edge of the campus but we were unsuccessful in our search for the nests.

---J. J. Murray.



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
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Nos. 7 & 8

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RUFFED GROUSE IN VIRGINIA

Information contributed by the regular game wardens and sportsmen, supplemented by personal observations of the writer, indicate the following present distribution of the Ruffed Grouse in Virginia. In all of the extensive wooded areas of the counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Ruffed Grouse is said to be tolerably common, approaching a certain degree of abundance in the more inaccessible areas too rare or totally absent in the smaller and easily accessible areas of woodland, apparently less common in Lee County than elsewhere; also, tolerably common in the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Counties of Bedford, Amherst, Nelson, Albemarle, Greene, Madison and Rappahannock and along the Appomattox River in Appomattox and Buckingham Counties. A few (rare still occur in most of the foothills east of the Blue Ridge Mountains throughout its length and, in the big woods of southern Albemarle, north and central Buckingham and northern Cumberland Counties. It is said to be very rare in the mountains of northwestern Pittsylvania County, and in the big woods of northern Charlotte, eastern Appomattox, western Prince Edward, southern Cumberland, northern Amelia, western Chesterfield, Powhatan, Goochland, Louisa, western Hanover, western Caroline, Spotsylvania, northeastern Orange, eastern Culpeper, southern Fauquier, southeastern Prince William and southern Fairfax counties. Over most of the area it is said that only one or two birds are seen during the course of a hunting season by an active hunter. Apparently in some of the counties only a few dozen birds yet remain. Throughout this region of extreme rarity, the Ruffed Grouse shows a tendency to follow down the river courses for it is here that better and more extensive cover is offered and along the river bluffs conditions approaching the mountainous habitat are to be found.

---Chas. O. Handley.

(Mr. Handley will welcome criticisms of or additions to the distribution in Virginia of the Ruffed Grouse as outlined in this paper. Editor)

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NOTES ON BIRDS OF THE BLUE RIDGE

I have been much interested this summer in the bird life of a

section of the George Washington National Forest, Natural Bridge division, in Augusta County. This section extends from Bald Mountain, in the main Blue Ridge, across Flint Mountain to Kennedy Mountain on what is known as the Big Levels. The altitude ranges from 3600 to 3300 feet. Trips have been made every week or two in connection with a study of fossil and atmospheric pollens of a bog known as Green Pond, on Kennedy Mountain.

The plant life of the area is unusual, constituting a typical chaparral, or association dominated by shrubs. The dominant shrub is the bear or scrub oak, *Quercus ilicifolia*. There is also much laurel and rhododendron, with scattering, stunted Table Mountain pines. Of the smaller vegetation the most common plants are the huckleberries, blueberries, sweet fern (*Myrica*) and bracken fern (*Pteris*). The bear oak typically grows to a height of about four feet, forming a well-nigh impenetrable growth. It is known locally as "kick-shins". In the parlance of plant ecology this whole area is a "bald". Whether the result of fire or lumbering operations, or whether it is a natural condition that has existed for a long time, would be hard to say. Some "natives" believe the latter to be the case, but evidences of fires long ago point to the former as the more probable explanation of the absence of larger trees.

This is the land of the Towhee. There are hundreds and thousands of them in the scrub oak. One is always hearing several of them singing at any time of day, and the song seems different from that of the Towhee of the Piedmont, being more abbreviated and abortive. It would be desirable to collect some of these birds for the purpose of looking for possible varietal differences.

During June the songs of the Prairie Warbler were heard frequently in the scrub oak on Flint Mountain and throughout the Big Levels area, at an elevation of around 3500 feet and less. In several years' observations of the birds of the Blue Ridge I have never found the Prairie Warbler at this altitude. It is considered to be a bird of the Austroriparian and Carolinian life-zones, although the northernmost limits of its breeding range extend to central Michigan and southern New Hampshire. Except for altitude this area is a typical habitat for the Prairie Warbler, and is a good illustration of the fact that at times and for some species, habitat seems to be more important than altitude as a factor in bird distribution.

The Maryland Yellowthroat is also a common bird on Flint Mountain. I have found it however at 3500 feet on Apple Orchard Mountain in Bedford County and at 3600 feet in the vicinity of Cold Mountain in Amherst County.

The Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Ovenbird are to be found at the heads of valleys of little mountain streams where the ridge trail encircles them, and where there is larger timber and more mesophytic vegetation.

In two or three low gaps along the ridge there are small clumps of larger trees, mainly chestnut oaks. Each of these contains at least one pair of Crested Flycatchers. The altitudes where these birds are found range from 3500 to 3300 feet. A pair of Catbirds has been nesting at Green Pond, and a few Blue Jays occur in this vicinity.

A covey of Quail has been seen several times on the summit of Bald Mountain, and Ruffed Grouse are abundant. On July 12 two Black Vultures and a small flock of Chimney Swifts were seen on Bald Mountain, far from any human habitation. On the same date we saw a Hawk, doubtless a Cooper's, on the same mountain, but the Hawks are rarely seen here.

This whole area is soon to become a Wild Life Sanctuary, under protection of the Federal government. It will include about 30,000 acres.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

(At Prof. Freer's request I would add that the Prairie Warbler occurs regularly at 3500 feet in the scrub of the outlying Alleghanies on the western side of the valley. Editor.)

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HANDLEY TO HEAD GAME RESEARCH

State Game Propagation Superintendent to
Go to Blacksburg September 1

Richmond, Aug. 8 (AP)--Chas. O. Handley, state game propagation superintendent, will head the new game management research project in Virginia, it was announced today at the offices of the game and inland fisheries commission here. He has been granted a year's leave of absence by the commission.

Mr. Handley will leave Richmond September 1 for Blacksburg to take over his new duties. Headquarters of the research program will be set up at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

The Virginia project is one of nine planned throughout the United States. It is sponsored jointly by the state game commission, the federal bureau of biological survey, and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Objectives of the program, outlined by Mr. Handley, include:

Investigation and correlation of production and conservation of wild life and a study of local and regional problems; demonstration of the feasibility in land use of practical game management in obtaining a maximum population of game; a plan to make available to game officials, landowners and others the facts and methods best suited to local and state conditions; and provision of comprehensive and inclusive sources of technical information for public, private and scientific use through exchange of data with other regional laboratories coordinated through the bureau of biological survey.

(From the 'Lynchburg Advance,' Aug. 8, 1935.)

HERONS ALONG THE POTOMAC NEAR ALEXANDRIA, VA.

Great Blue Herons are to be found here during every month of the year. They are scarce in winter. During the terrible freeze of February, 1934, I was on my way one morning to a round of feeding stations when, crossing a marsh, I saw gathered at a little pool of open water a melancholy trio, a Crow, a Black Duck, and a Great Blue Heron. In mid-summer it would be no uncommon thing to find fifty of these great birds in a hunt from Alexandria to Washington. But I do not know of any nests.

Of the American Egret it is said that we have no local record between 1894 and 1912. Be that as it may, this species is now very common. The birds begin in early June, and soon are numerous. My own records of "first arrivals" for the last three seasons are as follows: 1933, June 9; 1934, June 14; 1935, June 7. In a limited field trip on July 11 I saw about forty. My late date for an American Egret last fall was the third week of October (a date between Oct. 15 and Oct. 25).

The Snowy Egret is not the rarity it is commonly supposed to be. On one occasion last year I saw two together, and possibly a third one. I have a number of records of this bird. My latest was October 8, 1934. (Of this record there is a bare chance of error, though I believe it to be correct.)

The Little Blue Heron comes to us about July 15. Two years ago adults and immatures were common on July 22. Of course the white plumage is more common by many times. My idea is that the Little Blues are not quite so common as are the American Egrets; but the bird is common.

The Green Heron comes early in April, and while not in flocks like the larger birds is still quite common all during the summer. He can be seen walking around on the lily pads, or standing like a little "knee" waiting the unfortunates that happen within a neck's length.

The Black-crowned Night Heron is with us in considerable numbers. It is no uncommon thing to see six or eight just out in front of you on Four Mile Run, or on a river marsh. This bird is here all the winter, - though I am not so sure but that most of those wintering with us do their foraging, and their roosting, around the cages of the Washington Zoo.

A rare experience for me is an American Bittern. But the Least Bittern can be met in almost any rush-grown marsh. And my friend was right a few days ago when, hearing the creaks and squeaks of a special vocal effort, she answered, "Get him the Three-in-one Oil".

--Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

BACHMAN'S SPARROW IN BRUNSWICK AND AMELIA COUNTIES, VIRGINIA

At my boyhood home in south-central Kentucky, Bachman's Sparrow was a regular, but not abundant breeder in abandoned old fields and along woods' borders. Its remarkably sweet and plaintive song, heard mostly at dusk or following a summer thunder shower, is one of the finest bird songs I know, and once heard is unmistakable.

During seventeen years' residence in Brunswick County, Bachman's Sparrow was recorded only three times, on the following dates: April 9, 1924, April 24, 1925, and April 26, 1927.

Since coming to Amelia in March, 1930, the following records have been made of its occurrence: May 1, 7, 13 and 27, 1930; May 14, 1931; July 12, 1932; May 9 and 16, 1933; June 14, 1935. Four of these birds were found on the west side of the county, one in the east end, one near the south border and three in the central part. If time had been available for making an intensive search, probably more birds would have been found, as in all cases attention was attracted to the birds by the songs of the males. In the Consolidated List published in THE RAVEN in February, 1931, I note that only two other stations reported this sparrow, namely Lynchburg and Montgomery county. The occurrence of nine singing males in the normal nesting season suggests the probability that they are breeding here.

---John B. Lewis.

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THE SCARLET TANAGER IN AMELIA COUNTY

Until recently I had considered the Scarlet Tanager a rather rare spring migrant in both Brunswick and Amelia counties, but their occurrence in June and July in recent summers has suggested that they may sometimes nest in Amelia. The records given below were all made in the heavily wooded low grounds along Flat Creek in a distance of less than three miles. The dates are as follows: June 14, 1932; June 19, 1933; June 28, and July 16, 20, and 28, 1935. In two of the six records the birds were not actually seen, but the song, and especially the very diagnostic "chick-chirr" call notes are unmistakable. The four birds that were seen were all males in full plumage.

---John B. Lewis.

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NEST OF THE OVENBIRD

On the morning of June 15, 1935, I entered the dim cool woods near my home at a place I had a few days previously seen a Hummingbird disappear. The leaf mold was damp from a recent shower and I made no noise as I walked on the forest carpet. Raindrops fell from the trees and bushes at the slightest touch. Looking up into trees for the possible nest of the Hummingbird, I would have walked into the nest of

the Ovenbird, if the very much startled mother had not come out of the nest in such wild alarm. There at my feet beneath a small pine branch was the oven-shaped nest. Four tiny downy babies were in the nest. I made several visits to see them, but on the 21st they had left the nest.

---Bertha Daniel.

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"WHAT ABOUT HAWKS?"

Under the above title the National Association of Audubon Societies has issued a very useful bulletin on hawks. It consists of a reprint (twelve pages) of the introduction to the recently issued book, "The Hawks of North America," by Dr. John B. May. On the cover is an attractive set of drawings by Roger Peterson showing the flight patterns of fifteen hawks and eagles. This pamphlet, which is one of the most helpful bulletins available on the birds of prey, may be secured from the National Association of Audubon Societies, 1775 Broadway, New York, for five cents per copy (three cents each in lots of 100 or more). Our members can do useful work by securing and distributing some of these bulletins. It should be in the hands of all teachers, sportsmen and farmers.

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WILL THE V.S.O. BE FORCED TO DISBAND?

We have come to the point where this question must be faced. It is not due to the lack of interest on the part of the small group which has supported the Society from the time of its organization. Nor is it due to the fact that the work of studying the birds of our State has been completed. Our work has but begun. It is no trouble to get articles enough to fill THE RAVEN. Inquiries about the birds of the State are constantly coming in to the Editor and the other officers. A prominent ornithologist in another southern state said recently that he would give a great deal if there were such an organization in his state. The whole trouble is that our income at present is not sufficient to finance the work of the Society and to publish THE RAVEN. Too many 1934 members have failed to renew for 1935, and we are not securing new members rapidly enough. If all or most of the old members will renew, we can continue. If each member will secure a new member, we can increase our work. Will the V.S.O. be forced to disband? That danger can be avoided only by the renewed interest and support of those who have at one time been members.

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FIELD NOTES

Alexandria. On June 11 I saw a single Lesser Yellowlegs near the mouth of Four Mile Run. Dr. Oberholser writes: "As you say, this is an unusual record." Of four nests of the Long-billed Marsh Wren found on July 11, two were empty, one held tiny birds, and one held eggs.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

Lynnhaven, Princess Anne County. My home is on the bank of the Lynnhaven River, Princess Anne County, about twenty feet above the river, where numerous waterfowl feed. The nesting of the herons, both white and dark, has interested me greatly. The nests are built in tall pines on the river banks, too high to be investigated; but now in August I see white young at our landing every morning, waiting for the fish which the old birds bring. Land birds are also abundant. During April a pair of birds, strange to me, nested in a box in a wild cherry tree. They were black, with short tails; and did much damage to the nearby nests in the bushes. I shall be glad if any member of the Society can tell me what they were.

---Lucy. P. Kearns.

(Miss Kearns' birds were probably Starlings. - Editor.)

Sweet Briar. 101 species of birds were seen on Sweet Briar College grounds from October, 1934, through June, 1935. Of these two Gadwalls on March 27 and a Worm-eating Warbler on May 4 seem to be unusual records. The Pileated Woodpecker was seen March 20 and not again until July 3. They are rather regular winter residents but I had not previously recorded them in summer. A pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers were apparently excavating a hole in a dead locust tree on April 22. On several dates thereafter they were seen driving Starlings or Bluebirds from the hole but after May 11 they were not seen. Three Hairy Woodpeckers, of which at least one must have been a bird of this season, were together by a piece of suet on the house on June 7. A Whip-poor-will when flushed from her nest near Sweet Briar on June 19 revealed one downy young and one egg. Several Rough-winged Swallows were flying over the Lake on July 7; and presently two young ones perched in a bush were being fed. Three Bluebird nests were found within about a mile, two of them in fence posts. One of the latter had 5 eggs on May 6; 3 young on May 17; and later had another set of 5 eggs. On July 13 a warbler, apparently foraging alone, was identified as an immature female Redstart. Young Red-winged Blackbirds were seen at one edge of the Lake on July 7; and at another edge a female was flushed from a nest which contained 3 eggs. Four days later there were three downy young in the nest. Both male and female Orchard Oriole were seen feeding one or two well feathered young in their nest on June 7. Kingbirds have been noticed regularly at one end of our Lake for several weeks. On Aug. 4 there were estimated to be 10 or 12 and they were making life miserable for two Green Herons and a Solitary Sandpiper. Usually only one Kingbird darted after a Heron or Sandpiper but sometimes a second Kingbird took up the chase and the first one retired.

---Florence Hague.

Augusta County. On August 7, Major Robert P. Carroll of Lexington, Walton C. Gregory, and I saw and heard a Raven on rock cliffs at the site of former Camp Tuckahoe on Cole's Run at the foot of Kennedy Mountain near Stuart's Draft.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

Roanoke. March 28, first Robin nest. Young birds left nest following day. Eighteen or twenty nests found - last nest found July 2nd. Young birds left nest on this date. May 1, Brown Thrasher nest with 5 eggs. May 2, Brown Thrasher nest with 2 eggs; Mourning Dove, 3 nests with 2 eggs each. Nine nests found - last one on June 5th. Cardinal nest with 3 eggs; another on May 14, with 3 eggs. May 5, Hairy Woodpecker nest with young birds. May 9, Catbird nest with 4 eggs. May 19, 30, and June 2, Chipping Sparrow; nests with eggs and young birds. May 19-25, Wood Thrush; nests with 2 eggs each. May 19, Field Sparrow nest with 4 young birds. May 22, Towhee nest with 2 young birds. May 25, Yellow-breasted Chat nest with 4 eggs. Indigo Bunting nest with 4 eggs. May 28, Mountain Vireo nest with young birds. June 15, Red-eyed Vireo nest with 1 egg; Warbling Vireo nest with 3 eggs; Barn Swallow nest with young birds; Baltimore Oriole nest about 40 feet high in sycamore tree; Phoebe nest with 4 young birds; Hooded Warbler nest - 2 eggs found later in nest. June 18, Orchard Oriole nest with young birds; Kingbird nest with young birds. Orchard Oriole and Kingbird nesting in same sycamore tree about forty feet high. June 21, Orchard Oriole nest with three young birds, one dead in nest; Kingbird nest with young birds. Orchard Oriole and Kingbird using same apple tree for nesting. June 29, Hummingbird nest with 2 young.

A brief history of a Mourning Dove's nest is as follows: Nest found on June 5th with one egg; on the following day the second egg was laid. Young birds hatched either June 18 or 19. Nest visited on June 17th and again on the 20th. Both birds left nest morning July 2nd while I was at the nest. Incubation either 12 or 13 days. Of the nine nests found, the lowest one was found in a honeysuckle vine four feet from the ground. The highest one was about twenty feet in the crotch of a tree. Eight of the nine nests were found in an area less than a block square. At one site a Dove and a Cardinal used the same honeysuckle thicket; less than ten feet away a Brown Thrasher had a nest and later a Towhee nest was found about fifteen feet away.

Of particular interest was the finding of the Orchard Oriole and the Kingbird using the same trees for nesting sites. In one instance the two birds used a sycamore tree, building the nests about forty feet high, but on opposite sides of the tree, and again in an apple tree. At the latter site the Oriole's nest was at the end of a limb about nine feet from the ground while the nest of the Kingbird was near the top. At both sites parent birds were observed carrying food to the young, and at no time was there any interference on the part of either species. We observed closely the actions of the birds at both sites and were quite surprised to find such perfect harmony.

A pair of Upland Plovers was twice observed, but the nest was not located (Engleby). At Bennett Springs, near the Engleby cabin, a young Louisiana Water-thrush was seen with a black snake in pursuit and the old bird following in distress. A Hooded Warbler's nest, with the bird incubating on August 20th (Engleby). A Nighthawk was observed on several evenings, beginning June 29 (English). It is apparently

nesting on the roof of one of the office buildings, but we have had no time for a search. An Egret was seen near the city on July 18 (English).

---A. O. English and T. L. Engleby.

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Mountain Lake, Giles County. The following notes contain further observations on nests reported by Dr. Murray in the last issue, and observations on other nests and birds seen during the first term of the Mountain Lake Summer School of Biology. The eggs in the Carolina Junco nest on the campus hatched on June 30; and the young left the nest on July 11. The nearby nests of the Mountain Vireo and Cedar Waxwing were unsuccessful, the eggs not hatching in either nest. Another Mountain Vireo nest was located on July 2. We found it by hearing the male singing on the nest. When frightened away he continued singing, and in about two minutes was back on the nest, still singing. The nest was about 12 feet from the ground. On July 6, Dr. I. F. Lewis reported seeing a Brown Creeper on one of the trees on the campus. An adult male and several young Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were seen on the campus on July 14, and for the week following. The Ruffed Grouse were still drumming on July 10. A hawk, probably Cooper's, flew at a flock of chickens on July 7; and the same day three Ravens were seen near the campus. On July 17 we heard and saw three Barred Owls.

---D. Ralph Hostetter.



The Raven

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Nos. 9 & 10

AUTUMN DAYS ON WHITE TOP

The two highest mountains in Virginia are the twin peaks of Mt. Rogers (5719 feet) and White Top (5520 feet). Since there is so little difference in the altitude of the two peaks and since White Top is so accessible it is the mountain usually visited by those who wish to see the bird life of our highest regions. One of the earliest papers on Virginia ornithology treated of this mountain - "Notes on the Birds of White Top Mountain, Virginia," (Auk, January 1889), by Dr. William C. Rives. I am ashamed to say that while I have passed within thirty miles of White Top every summer since I have been in Virginia I had never been on the mountain until this autumn. But when Dr. Alexander Wetmore of the United States National Museum, whom I had long been trying to induce to come to western Virginia for a field trip, wrote me that he had a few free days and asked me to suggest a place for a trip, my mind at once turned to White Top. This was quickly agreed upon and early on the morning of September 26th we set out from Lexington. On the way we collected a few Song Sparrows around Pulaski and Marion in order to get a sub-specific identification of the Song Sparrows of the Mississippi drainage system in Virginia. A report will be made on these birds later. Early that afternoon we drove out into the open grassland near the top of the mountain in plenty of time to make camp in one of the comfortable cabins and to have a ramble in the woods before it was time to cook supper.

Surely there are few spots in Virginia as attractive as White Top. On one side of the mountain top is a great open field of a hundred or more acres, now standing almost knee high in waving yellow grass. This is the place where hundreds of people gather in August and where native musicians from all the mountain country come to the White Top Folk Festival to show their skill with ballad and fiddle and dulcimer. On the other side is a dense forest of spruce where it is dark even at midday, where the Golden-crowned Kinglets and Red-breasted Nuthatches abound and where Brown Creepers and Winter Wrens are said to nest. Near the camping place is an open forest of maple and oak and horse-chestnut, with luxuriant grass under the trees. It is like a western "park". Dr. Wetmore commented on the similarity of this spot to many places in the canons of New Mexico and Arizona, and I have seen places much like it in the foothills of the San Juan range in central California. The view is fine in every direction whether it be toward Mt. Rogers with its rocky cliffs and dark belts of spruce, or down into the valley dotted with cabins and cornfields, or far away to Grandfather and the great mountains of North Carolina. At daybreak the

peaks stand up out of the milk-filled valleys like islands along a rugged coast. And at sunrise and again at sunset the whole world is afire below.

We found no great variety of birds on the mountain. My list totalled but 37 species. The most abundant bird, as everywhere in the higher mountains, was the Carolina Junco. Dr. Wetmore collected half a dozen of them, some for skins and some for skeletons to fill a gap in the skeleton collection of the Museum. It was a great pleasure to me to watch an expert at work collecting specimens and making them into skins, to see the speed and deftness with which he worked and the beauty of the resulting skins. During the two days he collected twenty-five or thirty of the more common birds. At night we heard Great Horned Owls and Barred Owls. Dr. Wetmore enjoyed scattering the Juncos out of the hawthorns at daylight by imitating the call of the Barred Owl. We saw one Red-tailed Hawk and small flights of Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks. I have one of the latter which came too near us in the woods and was collected. Twice we saw and heard a single Raven. Ruffed Grouse were still drumming, and there seemed to be plenty of them on the mountain. I was surprised to find a Red-headed Woodpecker in the grove around the pavilion as I had not previously met this species very high up. During the two nights that we stayed on the mountain there was a heavy migration of thrushes, mostly Olive-backed Thrushes with a few Gray-cheeked Thrushes and Robins. By nine o'clock at night their sharp calls were to be heard overhead and at daylight they were still passing over. In the morning the treetops were full of thrushes which had settled down to rest and to spread their feathers to the warm sunshine. It made one wonder how many millions of these birds must cross southwest Virginia each September. Jays were always in the woods but, in great contrast to the birds down in the valleys, they were exceedingly wild. In the spruces Golden-crowned Kinglets and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were abundant, and the tiny, nasal call of the Red-breasted Nuthatch was constantly heard. One Mountain Vireo, a highly colored male, was collected. Occasionally small bands of warblers were encountered, including the Black and White Tennessee, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue (or Cairns's) and Redstart. One Blackpoll and one Cape May were seen. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were fairly common. No sparrows, except the Juncos, were seen; and most surprising of all not a single Towhee was seen or heard on the mountain top although we found them lower down on the mountain.

On the way down the mountain on our last day we stopped at an altitude of about 4000 feet to walk along a shoulder of White Top that reaches out toward Mt. Rogers. Most of this ridge is open grassland and is used for a sheep ranch. Only a lone Meadowlark was met here. But in the woods at the point of the ridge birds were abundant. Here we found the Towhee that had been missed on top, and here we found several species new to our list although nothing of special interest except that Black-billed Cuckoos were common. We collected an adult and a young bird not completely feathered and just able to fly at this late date (Sept. 28). It was still attended by one of the parents.

As we reached the foot of the mountain it began to rain. We had had two perfect days for our trip and we did not mind that now as we were riding away the clouds were hanging dark and heavy about our camping place on White Top.

---J. J. Murray.

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COASTAL VIRGINIA BIRD NOTES

Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Eight seen at Cobb's Island, August 24 and 25, 1934. These were all immature birds and were scattered over the marshes from the mainland to the island. Strangely enough, I did not see a single Black-crowned Night Heron. Rough-legged Hawk. One at Knott's Island, Va., Nov. 16, 1931. Rough-legs are uncommon in winter south of New Jersey. Sora Rail and King Rail (2), Knott's Island, Nov. 14, 1931. Dowitcher, Knott's Island, Dec. 28, 1928. Western Sandpiper. Wreck Island, Va., 150 seen. Several small flocks were composed entirely of Western Sandpipers. Royal Tern. Bred again this year on Cobb's Island after an absence of many years. I saw five birds on June 17, and found a nest with one egg on June 18, 1935. Caspian Tern. One seen at Cobb's Island, August 25, 1934. The date may be of interest. Great Black-backed Gull. Deal Island, Va., two seen, Dec. 30, 1934. Arkansas Kingbird. Two at Knott's Island, Nov. 16, 1931. These birds flew around a great deal and apparently crossed to the Virginia side of the State line north of the causeway. Raven. Four at Knott's Island, Nov. 14, 1931. Boat-tailed Grackle. Apparently several pairs breed at Wreck Island. Ipswich Sparrow. One at Deal Island Beach, Dec. 31, 1934.

---Lester L. Walsh, National
Association of Audubon
Societies, New York.

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Mr. Leonard K. Beyer, of Mifflintown, Pennsylvania, who has come to the Biology staff of Randolph-Macon Woman's College this fall, is a welcome addition to our group of active field ornithologists. Mr. Beyer is especially familiar with the birds of southwestern Pennsylvania. He has done considerable work in bird photography, both with still and motion pictures. He did the work for his master's degree at Cornell, under Dr. A. A. Allen, in ornithology.

AN ALBINO KILLDEER

On October 20, while watching a group of Killdeers at Timber Lake, near Lynchburg, we noted one very light-colored bird in a small company flying in to join a larger number. When the bird came to rest, we looked at it closely through a 30x telescope, and saw that while the breast and throat markings, in fact all underparts, were normally colored, the back, from crown to tail and wings, was almost pure white, being only faintly tinged with brownish markings.

---Ruskin S. Freer and
Leonard K. Beyer.

NOTES FOR THE REDSTART

A letter has come from Mr. John W. Handlan, the new Editor of THE REDSTART, mimeographed journal of the Brooks Bird Club (West Virginia), inviting V.S.O. members to send in Virginia notes to THE REDSTART. Notes from the Virginia - West Virginia border are particularly desired. All who attended the Roanoke Meeting will remember Mr. Handlan who came with Prof. Brooks as a fraternal delegate from the Brooks Bird Club. Such interchange of notes as he suggests should be helpful to both societies. Notes should be sent to Mr. John W. Handlan, Oglebay Institute, Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia.

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THE V. S. O. MUST NOT DISBAND

The question asked in the last issue of THE RAVEN, "Will the V.S.O. be forced to disband?" has been answered temporarily at least. We have had a few renewals and a number of new members, mostly from outside the State. The treasury seems safe for the rest of this year. But with the new year the question will come up again. All of us who are interested must work toward the building up of a membership large enough to carry THE RAVEN and the other activities of the Society. To show what some others think of the value of the organization, one member living outside the State and having no personal ties to Virginia wrote in offering to send his dues for several years ahead in order to keep the organization going.

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- *Engleby, Thomas L. -- 1002 Patterson Ave., Roanoke, Va.
- *English, A. O. -- 308 Westover Ave., Roanoke, Va.
- *Ferneyhough, J. Bowie -- P. O. Box 1458, Richmond, Va.
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- *Freer, Mrs. Ruskin S. -- 200 Langhorne Lane, Lynchburg, Va.
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- *Gordon, Miss Eva -- Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.
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- *Guion, George Seth -- 1716 American Bank Bldg., New Orleans, La.
- *Hague, Dr. Florence S. -- Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Va.
- *Handlan, J. W. -- Oglebay Institute, Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va.
- *Handley, Chas. O. -- Blacksburg, Va.
- *Harris, Mrs. C. W. -- R.D. #2, Madison Heights, Va.
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- *Lewis, Dr. Ivey F. -- Biological Laboratory, University, Va.
- *Lewis, John B. -- P.O. Box 86, Amelia, Va.
- *Lewis, M. G. -- 144 Broad St., Salem, Va.
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Woodring, George B. -- 2801 Natchez Trace, Nashville, Tenn.
Wright, George M. -- 213 Hilgard Hall, University of California, Berkeley, Calif.
*Zimmerman, Miss Elizabeth K. -- Hollins College, Hollins, Va.

*Paid membership. The rest either hold honorary membership, or receive THE RAVEN gratis or through exchange of publications.

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Richmond, Va. -- Aug. 17, banded a ju. Song Sparrow just out of nest and located an empty nest about four feet above ground in tangle of honeysuckle covering alley fence at my residence. A tail-less adult showed much concern. Aug. 21, brood of Cardinals (third, possibly fourth nesting attempt for season -- male banded) left nest in myrtle, one ju. banded Aug. 23.

Blacksburg, Va. -- Cuckoos, apparently several individuals, were seen or heard in the vicinity on Sept. 2, 3, 4, 15 and 25. Single birds seen on the first and last dates were identified as the Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Possibly blown inland by the hurricane which held sway along the coast for several days previous, 4 Black Terns (1 ad. and 3 im.) and 5 larger Terns - either Forster's or Common, were seen feeding over the V.P.I. campus ponds during the afternoon of Sept 6; at noon, Sept. 7, one im. Black Tern; and at 5 P.M., Sept. 8, four im. and one ad. Black Tern (ad. same individual as seen on Sept. 6, as determined

by peculiarity in plumage). Nighthawks migrating in numbers during afternoon of Sept. 8. First appearances: 1 Coot on V.P.I. ponds, Oct. 9; 1 Brown Creeper and 8 or more Purple Finches, the latter feeding in tops of tall willow trees, Oct. 27; 1 White-crowned Sparrow, at my residence, Sept. 28. Taking this handsome sparrow in my banding traps at its next and subsequent appearance was a pleasant surprise, as follows: 1 on Oct. 12, 1 Oct. 22; 10 Oct. 24; 7 Oct. 25; 2 Oct. 26; and 4 Oct. 27. On Oct 23 four additional White Crowns were seen in a thicket area about a mile away, and incidentally one was observed at Lewisburg, W. Va., on Oct. 20, my first fall record for that region. Of the 25 birds trapped, 22 were immatures and 3 were adults. I have made special mention of this bird because it is entirely new to me as a fall migrant and none too common as a spring migrant in Virginia. Last appearances: several Chimney Swifts at Blacksburg on Oct. 10 and a number at the Camp Lee Refuge, Prince George County, Va., on Oct. 12.

---Chas. O. Handley.

Late Nesting of the Mourning Dove. In response to a circular letter to members of the V.S.O. and a radio announcement over the V.P.I. program broadcast over WDBJ, Roanoke, the following information was obtained relative to the September nesting of the Mourning Dove: Wm. Davidson, Beltsville, Md., states: "About Sept. 1st I observed a Mourning Dove either setting, or brooding young." Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va.: "My only September nesting of the Mourning Dove in Rockbridge county is that of an adult feeding a well grown young bird (out of the nest) on Sept. 14, 1935." J. B. Lewis, Amelia, Va., in a letter to Prof. Freer: "Your letter of the 6th, relative to the nesting of Doves in September, is at hand. I delayed replying a few days until I could see a friend in the eastern part of the county who is both a sportsman and a close observer, and who had told me last year of finding Doves' nests in September. In conversation with him yesterday (Sept. 9, 1935) he said that in 1933 he found three Doves' nests in September, and in 1934 he found four, making seven altogether. He also showed me a nest that was deserted by the young birds last Thursday, Sept. 5. His statement is vouched for by his brother-in-law, and both are reliable men.

"A 4-H Club boy and his father, both of whom are interested in birds, told me yesterday that they had a Dove's nest in their orchard last year, the young leaving the nest about Sept. 10.

"Personally I have no record of Doves' nests in September in Amelia county, though I have found several late in August."

Miss Bertha Daniel, Naruna, Va.: "I have no records of the Mourning Dove nesting later than July 20, when the young birds left the nest on that date. However, my brother, S. C. Daniel, saw a young Dove this morning, Sept. 9, that could not fly well, it was so young." Miss Daniel wrote again later: "I went into the woods in search for records this afternoon, Sept. 19. Knowing that Mourning Doves use the same nest several times during one season, I looked up a nest in a sapling and there I found a fledgling about eight or ten days old."

Prof. Ruskin S. Freer, Lynchburg, Va., states that although he has no personal record of nesting, he saw a young Dove in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Nelson county, on Sept. 11, 1935. Dr. C. R. Woolwine, college physician, Blacksburg, Va., told me of having seen two late nests of the Mourning Dove this fall. The nests were on opposite sides of his house in his yard. One nest, seen to contain two eggs, was robbed of its contents during the first week in September, while, in the second, two young Doves developed normally and left the nest on September 17. The following informed me that they had no nesting records: Dr. Florence S. Hague, Sweet Briar, Va.; Mr. M. G. Lewis, Salem, Va.; Mr. Ralph Hostetter, Harrisonburg, Va.; and Dr. Wm. P. Caton, Alexandria, Va.

Although I have several records, made previous to 1920, of having found Doves with eggs in their nests early in September at Lewisburg, Greenbrier county, W. Va., I have no records for Virginia. I do not think this strange, however, for had I given any attention to the matter, there is no doubt in my mind that I would have found some nests, especially had I followed the procedure mentioned by Miss Daniel. My Virginia records consist of having seen two young Doves this past September, apparently not long out of the nest. One of these was seen at Blacksburg on Sept. 16 and the other at Catawba Sanatorium Station, Roanoke county, on Sept. 22. ---Chas. O. Handley.

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FIELD NOTES

Amelia. I have always considered the Prairie Horned Lark as strictly a fall and winter bird in this section and consequently was greatly surprised at finding a flock of ten, at least two of which were adult males, in a freshly disked field in the southeastern part of Amelia county on August 27, 1935. Two of these birds, one of which was an adult male, allowed me to approach within about forty feet, giving me a chance to get the color markings and to observe the characteristic "horns" of the adult. ---J. B. Lewis.

Bedford County, Peaks of Otter. A group of us had a close view of three Ravens and heard their calls, near Hotel Mons at the Peaks, on Sunday, September 29. ---Ruskin S. Freer,

Lynchburg. The Red-headed Woodpecker, usually a permanent resident with us, has apparently migrated this year, as I have seen none since early in September. The only other winter when they migrated that I have positive record of is that of 1929-30. I should like to know of the observations of others on the winter status of this bird in Virginia. ---Ruskin S. Freer.

Naruna. On the afternoon of the last day of September, we took a winding country road that leads from Brookneal down to Red Hill, the old estate of the Henrys. Many Phoebees were noticed migrating.

Several friends among the group were from Duluth, Minnesota, and had not seen a Turkey Vulture until I pointed one out along the way. As we went up the flagstone walk to the old office of the famous lawyer and orator of historical times, a covey of quail hustled out of the barberries that grew along the walk. A cat on the veranda wore tinkling bells, and I knew that the great-great-granddaughter of Patrick Henry who met us at the door was a bird lover. While we were sitting before the fireplace of this famous Virginian, a Mockingbird began singing outside, a mockingbird with such rich melody that one rarely ever hears. This old estate of the Henrys' has been recently taken over by the Government and will soon become a national shrine. It is already a wild life sanctuary. It is a standing joke that all the foxes in this section of country know that if they can get to Red Hill, the hounds will be called off.

A young Mourning Dove was found in an old nest that the Doves had used early in summer on Sept. 19, 1935. The young Dove was probably a week old. The old Dove was seen on the nest in early morning on the next two succeeding days, brooding the young Dove. The young Dove was last seen in nest, Sept. 24.

A Ruffed Grouse was flushed on the bluffs along Falling River October 2, and one was killed on our farm October 11 by one of the tenants. The man thought the Grouse was a hawk as it came up to the poultry yard to feed with his chickens. It has been many years since Grouse has been seen here, and we are glad to know it is to be found here once more.

Oct. 18, Black-billed Cuckoo.

---Bertha Daniel.

Botetourt County. On June 11, 1935, while on a trip from Nashville, Tenn., to Staunton, Va., I saw a pair of Upland Plovers perched on neighboring telephone poles at a point about halfway between Salem and Natural Bridge. The time of day was dusk.

---John B. Calhoun,
University of Virginia.

Roanoke. The following notes were made on short visits to Carvin's Cove: August 27: Great Blue Heron; Little Blue Heron (3 immature); Green Heron (2); Osprey. Sept. 10: Great Blue Heron; Green Heron (3); Black Duck; Black Tern. A large flock of Bobolinks were seen at Bennett Springs on Sept. 11. Mr. Engleby says they spent several days there feeding in a millet field.

---A. O. English.

Lexington. Late summer Nesting records: July 22, a single Cliff Swallow nest in the barn where I found a colony two years ago. This nest had two young. A boy on the place tells me that there was only one other nest there this season. July 20, young Screech Owls left nest. September 3, young Barn Owls still about nesting cavity in a

hollow tree. New Species added to the Rockbridge County list this fall: Common Tern (10) on Sept. 6; Bank Swallow on Sept. 14 and 15 (2); Connecticut Warbler, one taken on Oct. 8. Records of species rare here: Sept. 5 & 8, Black-crowned Night Heron, immature, second record; Sept. 23, Bald Eagle, immature, brought to me alive but died that night; Oct. 14, Broad-winged Hawk; Sept. 6, Black Tern (2), third record; Oct. 14, Greater Yellowlegs, first fall record; August 31, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher; Oct. 14, Short-billed Marsh Wren, first fall record. The Little Blue Heron was seen on July 4, 9, 14 (5), and 22, Aug. 23 and 24, Sept. 5. The American Egret was seen on July 22 (3) and 25 (2), Aug. 23 and 24, Sept. 13. Two Black Ducks on Oct. 8, an early date. A Black Duck at Big Spring has become quite tame, going into the barnyard to feed with the domestic ducks, just as a Mallard did there a year or so ago. Sora have been seen at Cameron's Pond during September, the first since 1933. A small flock of four immature Prairie Horned Larks were feeding near Cameron's Pond on August 23. Cape May Warblers have been abundant in my yard from Sept. 18 to Oct. 20. The warbler migration was decidedly earlier than usual this fall.

---J. J. Murray.

Blacksburg. July 26, Little Blue Heron (6) on John's Creek, Craig Co. July 28, Garden Mountain (overlooking Burk's Garden), 4000 ft. alt., Raven (2), Cairns's Warbler (2 pairs), Carolina Juncos with full grown young. Aug. 4, Gap Mountain, Montgomery Co., 2200 ft., Hooded Warbler, male, two females. Aug. 18, Singing Creek Mtn., Giles Co., 3000 ft., Prairie Warbler. Sept. 2, Cowpasture River, Bath Co., Tern (sp.?); Lesser Scaup Duck (3). Sept. 9, V.P.I. Lake, 5 Bonaparte's Gulls. Warblers: Black-throated Green, Sept. 15 - Oct. 22; Black-throated Blue, Oct. 9 - 17; Blackburnian, Sept. 16 - Oct. 15; Tennessee, Oct. 9 - 17; Magnolia, Oct. 1 - 17; Blackpoll, Oct. 4 - 21; Bay-breasted, Oct. 9 - 20; Cape May, Oct. 9 - 22; Myrtle, Oct. 1 to date. Firsts: Oct. 10, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Oct. 14, White-throated Sparrow, Brown Creeper; Oct. 18, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

---Ralph M. Brown.

CPS BROWN





The Raven

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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
LEXINGTON, VA.

VOL. VI

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Nos. 11 & 12

SOME NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF HIGHLAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA

During the past several years I have made a number of trips into Highland County, Virginia, in connection with some ornithological work in Pocahontas and Pendleton Counties, West Virginia. On these trips I have kept notes on the birds seen in Virginia, and some of them may be of interest to readers of The Raven. At the risk of "carrying coals to Newcastle", I might venture to point out some features of the Highland County topography. Having its western boundary atop the main range of the Alleghany Mountains, here known as "Alleghany Backbone", the entire county consists of steep mountain ridges with narrow valleys between. Drainage is mainly through the waters of the James River, but a smaller portion of the county is drained by the headwaters of the South Branch of the Potomac.

Near the village of Crabbottom is an outstanding natural feature which, I believe, has been missed by most Virginians. Just north of the town a huge mountain of rock rises, the strata turned on edge, and giving a veritable knife-blade effect. Known locally as the "Devil's Backbone", this, to me at least, is one of the most interesting rock outcrops in Eastern United States. I have wondered for years why some enterprising photographer did not include it among the views shown on the State Highways maps. That this rock mountain also has distinct ornithological possibilities will presently appear.

Highland County is of a piece with some of the eastern mountain counties in West Virginia, and since it has elevations up to 4,000 feet, it can claim a large number of the birds of northern association which are to be found in the higher counties in my own state. Below are some of the notes which I have made from time to time.

Aquila chrysaetos canadensis. Golden Eagle. Two of these birds were seen flying about the "Devil's Backbone" mentioned above on May 30, 1930. This rock formation is at the south end of the range known in West Virginia as North Fork Mountain, where, as I have recorded elsewhere (Auk, July, 1934), we have seen Golden Eagles many times. If there is a spot in the Virginias where these birds nest, I am sure it must be in this general locality. At least the possibilities for work are highly fascinating.

Pandion haliaetus carolinensis. Osprey. On May 4, 1935 there seems to have been an unusual flight of these birds into the mountain sections. Mrs. Brooks and I saw a number of them, two just north of Monterey, and another near Crabbottom.

Meleagris gallopavo silvestris. Eastern Turkey. Undoubtedly there are many resident Wild Turkeys along the high wooded ridges of Highland County, but I was interested to scare up one individual, a gobbler, on Alleghany Backbone on July 27, 1929.

Tringa solitaria. Solitary Sandpiper. One was carefully observed along the Bullpasture River on May 4, 1935.

Ceophloeus pileatus. Pileated Woodpecker. We have seen many individuals along Alleghany Backbone, Monterey Mountain, and near Hightown. The race here is presumably the northern one (*C. p. abieticola*), but some work on the possible meeting point of the northern and southern races is certainly called for.

Sphyrapicus varius varius. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. This species is common in the small Red Spruce areas that are to be found on Alleghany Backbone. These areas of spruce, scattered somewhat along the mountain plateau, are of special interest, for here the northern birds find their most congenial home.

Iridoprocne bicolor. Tree Swallow. Fairly common summer resident at the higher elevations at least.

Petrochelidon albifrons albifrons. Northern Cliff Swallow. I have seen these birds in some numbers in the valley between Crabbottom and Hightown. They were noted at three different points in May, 1935.

Corvus corax principalis. Northern Raven. Two individuals were seen on June 11, 1931, the first on Alleghany Backbone, and the second near "Devil's Backbone".

Penthestes atricapillus atricapillus. Black-capped Chickadee. The northern species is resident in the spruce belt of the western edge of the county. Its two-note song is distinctive, and we have noted it frequently. It would be interesting to find out just how high the Carolina species climbs here.

Sitta canadensis. Red-breasted Nuthatch. Occurs on Alleghany Backbone in the breeding season wherever there is good sized standing spruce.

Nannus hiemalis hiemalis. Eastern Winter Wren. I remember following down a small stream that crosses the Alleghany Plateau until I reached a spruce and rhododendron thicket. Here, in June, 1931, I heard the fine song of the Winter Wren. I do not doubt that it may be found in many such places on the Virginia side; I know that it is so found on the western slope of the same range.

Vireo solitarius alticola. Mountain Vireo. Common breeding species on the higher ridges, particularly where there is some ever-green forest.

Dendroica magnolia. Magnolia Warbler. This species may be found in all the spruce sections. I found it common on Alleghany Backbone in June, 1931.

Dendroica caerulescens. Black-throated Blue Warbler. One or both the races occur in the spruce areas. At similar areas in West Virginia we find difficulty in making distinctions, even with specimens in hand, and some local collecting in Highland County would be interesting.

Dendroica fusca. Blackburnian Warbler. This species particularly likes to sing from the tops of the dead Chestnuts that abound along the mountain ridges. It is much more apt to be found in deciduous associations than in the spruces.

Oporornis philadelphia. Mourning Warbler. Birds of this species were heard and seen on the Virginia side of Alleghany in June, 1931, and again in June, 1933. They are common to abundant on the West Virginia side, and I have no doubt that they breed in this section of Virginia. They frequent the edges of cleared fields and the blackberry thickets rather more than the heavily wooded areas.

Wilsonia canadensis. Canada Warbler. Found on Alleghany Backbone, and in the George Washington National Forest.

Hedymeles ludovicianus. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Common summer resident along the higher ridges.

This list includes only the more interesting observations that have come my way, and it may be that some of the questions I have raised as to races have already been answered. I do not doubt, however, that further work in the spruce belt of Highland County will show that most of the birds of northern association found in West Virginia also occur in Virginia, for our two best centers for these birds, Cheat Mountain and Cranberry Glades, are both in counties that adjoin Highland.

---Maurice Brooks,
Dept. of Biology,
West Virginia University,
Morgantown, W. Va.

(Note.- This article by one of our out-of-the-State members is particularly welcome as it helps to fill in one of the biggest gaps in our knowledge of the bird life of Virginia. Our Canadian Zone areas in Southwest Virginia have been fairly well worked, but we know very little about the region on which Prof. Brooks reports. We hope for further reports from him and also for work in this region by others in our Society. Editor.)

THE ANNUAL MEETING

The place for the Annual Meeting of the V.S.O. has been changed, but the date remains as formerly set. The Annual Meeting will be held at Lynchburg, Virginia, on Friday and Saturday, February 21 and 22. The Virginian Hotel, where Friday's program sessions will be held, will be headquarters for the meeting. Registration will begin at noon on Friday. Program and business sessions will be held from 2:00 to 5:30 P.M., and again after the annual banquet, which will take place at 6:30. Prof. Ruskin S. Freer is Chairman of the committee on local arrangements. Further information may be secured from Prof. Freer (Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Va.). Saturday will be given to a Field Trip to Timberlake and to some interesting points along the James River.

The National Association of Audubon Societies has promised to send Mr. Lester L. Walsh, Assistant Secretary of the Association, to the meeting to show moving pictures of the breeding birds of Cobb's Island and to deliver an address on changes in the bird life of the island. While other very interesting special features will be provided by the program committee, the chief interest as well as value will be in papers presented by the members. Informal and popular papers are desired just as much as those that present material of more permanent importance. No member need hesitate to present a paper. Titles of all papers, with an estimate of the time needed for their presentation, should be sent to Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va., by February 10th. Even if the author cannot be present the paper may be sent to Dr. Murray to be read by someone else.

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THE 1935 CHRISTMAS CENSUS

Last year in the hundreds of Christmas Censuses published in Bird-Lore, there were only six from Virginia. This year we hope that this number will be at least doubled. Directions for conducting the census will be found on pages 415, 416 of the November-December issue of Bird-Lore. The same rules will hold for census lists to be published in The Raven, and those rules are here summarized for the benefit of those who may not see Bird-Lore. The census may be taken on any day from December 21 to 27 inclusive. Only the birds seen in any one day may be included. The territory covered must come within a circle of fifteen miles in diameter. The trip should take at least four hours, and an all-day trip is preferable. The list should be typewritten and should follow the order of the A. O. U. Check-List. Only common names are to be used, and sub-specific names are not to be used this year. The census lists in the January issue of The Raven may be used as a guide.

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MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 1936

As soon as this issue of The Raven appears, membership dues in the

V.S.O. for 1936 are in order. Sustaining membership is \$5.00; Active membership, \$2.50; Associate membership, \$1.50. The dues in each class cover the subscription to The Raven. If members will mail their dues at once to Mr. A. O. English, 308 Westover Avenue, Roanoke, Va., it will save the Treasurer much trouble and the Society some expense.

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NEW MEMBERS

The following members have been added to our roll since the list was last published:

Leonard K. Beyer, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Va.
F. B. Sellers, 215 Boulevard, Salem, Va.
C. A. Brubeck, Jr., 215 Boulevard, Salem, Va.
Lester L. Walsh, 1775 Broadway, New York City.
W. Catesby Jones, 1121 State Office Bldg., Richmond, Va.

Our members will be interested to know that one of the newest members, Mr. W. Catesby Jones, of the State Chemistry Service, is a direct descendant of Elizabeth Catesby, sister of the famous ornithologist, Mark Catesby, who labored in Virginia in the early Eighteenth Century. Elizabeth Catesby married Dr. William Cocke, Secretary of the Commonwealth, and lived at Williamsburg, where her brother came to visit her.

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EVILS THAT LURK IN THE BOUNTY SYSTEM

About five years ago the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, realizing the waste and the fraud connected with the payment of bounties on hawks and owls, had the State bounty bill repealed, and left it optional in each county as to whether a bounty was to be paid. This threw the financial burden of the bounty on the county treasuries, and consequently none of the counties continued the payment of bounties. Now, however, the bounty is beginning to creep in again. There has been so much pressure brought to bear upon Boards of Supervisors by sportsmen and by those who want a chance to earn bounty money that three or four boards have succumbed and are paying bounties. It is possible that a State-wide Bounty Bill may be introduced into the Assembly this winter. All intelligent bird students know that this system is wasteful and iniquitous, that good hawks and owls will be killed off while most of the bad ones escape. To help the members of the V.S.O. in the fight against the bounty a copy of a bulletin, "Evils that Lurk in the Bounty System," is being mailed out with each copy of this issue of The Raven. These were supplied free of charge by the Hawk and Owl Committee of the National Association of Audubon Societies.

A PLEA FOR HAWK MOUNTAIN

It is a pleasure to transmit to our readers a plea which comes from the Emergency Conservation Committee for aid in the purchase of Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania. This mountain is a concentration point along the line of migration of the hawks. In the past hunters have gathered here to slaughter hawks by the thousands. The Emergency Conservation Committee has an option on this mountain and proposes to establish a sanctuary for all birds but primarily for the birds of prey. About \$450 is needed to complete the purchase price. Any gift sent to the Committee at 734 Lexington Avenue, New York City, will count toward this goal.

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Dr. Arthur A. Allen, of Cornell University, is to lecture on Birds at Randolph-Macon Woman's College on February 7, 1936, and show his sound-motion pictures of birds. This is said by all who have seen it to be the most remarkable series of bird films ever shown. For instance, Dr. Allen has been able to get moving pictures of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers at a range of about six feet. All bird lovers within driving reach of Lynchburg will want to see these pictures.

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FIELD NOTES

Mountain Lake. A Robin collected at the Biological Station at Mountain Lake on June 24, 1935, has been identified by Dr. Herbert Friedmann as the Southern Robin (*Turdus migratorius achrusterus*). We had expected this bird, taken at 3800 feet to be the Eastern form.

Alexandria.THE SEASON ALONG THE POTOMAC
September - November, 1935

The month of September was cool, with much dark weather and rain. The first killing frost came on October 5. After that the Fall has been moderate in temperature, and mostly sunny, until the last week of November, when the thermometer fell to 18 degrees, F.

The Grebes have been scarce. On November 4th I saw one Horned Grebe, the first since the season of '33-'34. The Pied-billed is usually common; but this Fall I have seen very few. Two Double-crested Cormorants were seen sitting on posts (or poles) in the river at Little Hunting Creek, on November 8, and one on November 9. Herons and Egrets were still quite common on September 23. On October 1, a number of Great Blues and American Egrets, and one Black-crowned Night Heron, on Four Mile Run. October 5, first killing frost. Still a few American Egrets on both Four Mile Run and Hunting Creek. Great Blues are common. October 10, Great Blue Herons, one American Egret, one immature Black-crowned Night Heron.

Canada Geese I heard going over in the early morning of Nov. 3; though others had heard them some days before. I have not seen one this Fall. The Ducks are just not here. On Roach's Run is a Government Sanctuary, where we find Mallards, a few Black Duck, many Pintail, a few score Scaup Duck, and possibly a dozen Ring-necks. Beyond its bounds the only species common is the Black Duck, both Common and Red-legged. But these are by hundreds, where before they were by thousands. Pintails are fairly common on, or around, Four Mile Run. I have seen very few below that point. Mallards are fairly common on the Roach's Run flats, but scarce elsewhere. Baldpates are seen occasionally, as on October 19, ten off Fort Hunt. An occasional small flock of Scaup Duck. Nov. 14, one female Shoveller on Four Mile Run. Oct. 22, a pair of Wood Ducks. Nov. 6, one female Canvasback. Nov. 4, four immature Buffleheads, on Four Mile Run. Ruddy Ducks now and then, but very scarce. Nov. 4, two Hooded Mergansers. Nov. 9, four American Golden-eyes on the river below Collingwood. Nov. 25, American Mergansers (?), 5. And the tale is told.

Turkey Vultures were quite common around Sept. 30. Evidently a shifting for the season. A migration of Hawks, seen at Floris in Fairfax County, on September 16. In several groups totaling around 150 birds. Very high, but most seemed to be Broad-winged, certainly Buteos, though a few were Accipiters.

Wilson's Snipe, last seen on Nov. 14. Lesser Yellowlegs, two on Four Mile Run on November 4, and in the same place two on Nov. 6. On the latter day the birds seemed tired. October 9, Laughing Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls. *November 6, possibly 200 Bonaparte's Gulls, not the first seen, but the most. September 20, certainly Forster's Tern, and probably the Common Tern. November 6, Forster's Tern, 1. Between these dates a few terns on the river.

On October 24 a Winter Wren and I played hide-and-seek on the lawn of Garfield Hospital, high up in the City of Washington. In the same shrubbery were five or six Hermit Thrushes, English Sparrows, quite a little flock of Field Sparrows, a few Chipping Sparrows, one or two Swamp Sparrows, several Song Sparrows. In the trees were Starlings and Blue Jays. The Nation's Capital!

*Oct. 10, Herring Gulls
and Ring-billed Gulls.

---Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr.

Amelia. Twice this autumn the writer has had the privilege of watching the buoyant flight of a Marsh Hawk as it coursed low over the open fields. The first one, a male, was seen on Sept. 1st, an early record in my experience. The second, a female, was observed on the afternoon of Dec. 5th, four miles north of the village of Amelia. The flight of these fine hawks when hunting always reminds me of a puff of thistle-down riding on the wind. The bird seems to rise and fall, swing this way and that without regard to the slow, regular strokes of the long wings. It is deplorable that it is almost certain death to these birds to come within range of the guns of hunters.

Our bird feeding tray is on top of a post about 20 feet from a dining room window. Fifteen feet farther away is a dense old Forsythia. Recently while we were at lunch a dozen or more House Sparrows that were on the tray exploded into the air and darted into the Forsythia as a dark shadow passed over. The shadow swerved quickly and a Cooper's Hawk lit on the ground between the tray and the shrub, eyeing the sparrows that were cowering among the dense stems and twigs. I ran out and frightened the hawk away without his dinner, but Mrs. Lewis says that it was nearly sunset before any birds ventured back to the tray. The hawk was doubtless a young male of the year, as it was hardly large enough to have been a female, while the rounded tail and the size showed that it was not a Sharp-shin.

Purple Finches are here in about their usual numbers, in marked contrast to their entire absence last winter. The first were seen on November 4. They are never abundant with us. To date they have been recorded on Nov. 4, 6, 19, and 21, and Dec. 5. Other first arrivals are - Song Sparrow, Oct. 5; Hermit Thrush, Oct. 6; White-throated Sparrow, Oct. 7; Junco, Oct. 9; Golden-crowned Kinglet, Oct. 17. As but little time could be spent a-field, these may not be actual firsts.

---J. B. Lewis.

Giles County. Since there are only a few authentic records of the Golden Eagle having been taken in Virginia, a newspaper report from Poplar Hill in the southwest corner of Giles County on November 17 attracted our attention. In company with T. L. Engleby and Miss Sallie McLain, I went to locate the bird. A mature Golden Eagle had been caught in a trap by Calude Caldwell, who lives back in a mountain cove some distance from the main highway. Calude stated that the eagle had been seen taking turkeys on several occasions, and that a large number of turkeys had disappeared in recent months, which he attributed to the eagle. He assured us also that at least one other eagle had been seen for several months past. This bird has been mounted by M. B. Newman and is now in possession of Mr. Engleby in Roanoke.

---M. G. Lewis.

Farmville. (from letter addressed to Mr. Freer) - Your note in the September-October copy of The Raven concerning the migration of the Red-headed Woodpecker was of considerable interest to me, as I did not know this bird migrated. I live in Farmville during the college year and in previous years Red-headed Woodpeckers have been very common from September to June. This year I returned to Farmville on September 17th and I have not seen a single one of these birds since my return.

The house in which I live is on the edge of a grove of large oak trees and I have observed that acorns are very scarce this year. I also noticed the scarcity of acorns at my home in Hanover County, Va. Do you think the migration of the Red-headed Woodpecker may be related to the acorn shortage (if there really is a shortage)? It would be interesting to hear from other parts of the State about this matter.

---Mrs. G. W. Jeffers.

(From Mr. Freer's reply to Mrs. Jeffers): I was much interested in your observations on the migration of Red-headed Woodpeckers this last autumn, and your explanation for it, which seems to be correct. We live in a grove of White Oak trees. During the autumn of 1934 we were much annoyed by the constant dropping and pounding of acorns on the roof of our house, which has a metal roof. This past autumn there were no acorns, and the Red-heads disappeared early in the autumn. Without a doubt there is some connection between the two observations.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

Sweet Briar. While frequent records have not been made this fall, I recall that Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen daily in early September but have not been seen for some time, perhaps for two months. Myrtle Warblers are numerous now and seem to be making the Boxwood bushes of Sweet Briar Garden their night retreat. Finding a Great Blue Heron at the Lake on Nov. 8 was rather unexpected.

---Florence Hague.

Naruna.

RED-TAILED HAWKS MIGRATING AT NARUNA

It was shortly after noon on November 11 that I noticed a large Hawk circling rather low. As it would turn it would dip just enough for me to see the rust red color of its tail feathers. There was no doubt about it -- it was the Red-tailed Hawk. Letting my gaze drift on to the northeast I saw many more hawks coming into view. These were flying at a much higher altitude and seemed to be in an air current that was drifting them southward. However, I could see them well enough to know they were the same species as the first one mentioned. It took about fifteen minutes for them to pass over and during that time I counted sixteen Red-tailed Hawks. Three more Red-tailed Hawks were seen on Nov. 23 going in the same direction. More Marsh Hawks have passed this way this fall than usual.

---Bertha Daniel.

Lynchburg. At Timber Lake, November 3 and 6, one Greater Yellow-legs; November 17, one male Canvas-back, one Horned Grebe in winter plumage, one male Ruddy Duck; November 20, one male and one female Ruddy.

---Ruskin S. Freer.