



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

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

Vol. VIII

January, 1937

No. 1

WINTER BIRDS OF BLACKSBURG AND VICINITY

by
Charles O. Handley, Jr.¹

The following is a list of the birds seen within a radius of ten miles of Blacksburg, Montgomery County, Virginia, during the months of December and January. A large part of the records were made on the campus of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Personal observations cover the winters of 1935-36 and 1936-37 only.

1. Colymbus grisegena holboelli, Holboell's Grebe. One record, January 26, 1914 (Smyth).
2. Colymbus auritus, Horned Grebe. Three December records (Smyth); I found dead December, 1935.
3. Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos, Mallard. A regular winter visitor: recorded for December (Smyth).
4. Anas rubripes tristis, Common Black Duck. December 16, 1902, Flock of 5; and January 17, 1903, 1 seen (Smyth).
5. Nyroca valisineria, Canvas-back. December 27, 1922, one male secured (Smyth).
6. Nyroca affinis, Lesser Scaup Duck. A regular visitor in January; one flock of six (Smyth).
7. Glaucionetta clangula americana, Golden-eye. One record, January 11, 1924, three females (Smyth).
8. Charitonetta albeola, Buffle-head. Two records, December 6-9, 1936, 1 seen; January 5-8, 1937, 3 seen.
9. Erismatura jamaicensis rubida, Ruddy Duck. One record, December 4, 1920 (Smyth).

¹We are particularly glad to have this leading article from the son of the President of the V.S.O. Charles Jr. is undoubtedly one of our coming young ornithologists.--Ed.

10. Cathartes aura septentrionalis, Turkey Vulture. Common resident.
11. Coragyps atratus atratus, Black Vulture. Fairly common resident.
12. Accipiter velox velox, Sharp-shinned Hawk. A few.
13. Accipiter cooperi, Cooper's Hawk. Of consistent occurrence, although not abundant; at least 3 on college farm in 1936-37.
14. Buteo borealis borealis, Red-tailed Hawk. Winter resident. Common some winters.
15. Buteo lineatus lineatus, Red-shouldered Hawk. Resident. Tolerably common.
16. Aquila chrysaetos canadensis, Golden Eagle. An irregular winter visitor; several December records, one being an adult male (Smyth).
17. Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus, Bald Eagle. Rare, three December records; one adult (Smyth).
18. Circus hudsonius, Marsh Hawk. Common winter resident (Smyth). I have seen a few.
19. Falco sparverius sparverius, Sparrow Hawk. Common resident; abundant in 1935-36.
20. Bonasa umbellus umbellus, Ruffed Grouse. Resident on the mountain ridges only; formerly resident in the valley also.
21. Colinus virginianus virginianus, Bob-white. Common resident.
22. Phasianus colchicus torquatus, Ring-necked Pheasant. Established several years ago in the brush covered bottoms about Blacksburg. A few have persisted on the college farm.
23. Melanistic mutant Pheasant. A few released on the college farm in October, 1936.
24. Meleagris gallopavo silvestris, Wild turkey. Formerly a resident. Several specimens were taken by Dr. Smyth. Now extinct.
25. Capella delicata, Wilson's Snipe. A few to common in open marshy areas.
26. Oxyechus vociferus vociferus, Killdeer. Resident, a few spend the winter.
27. Larus delawarensis, Ring-billed Gull. One record each for December and January (Smyth).

28. Larus philadelphia, Bonaparte's Gull. One record, January 1, 1924 (Smyth).
29. Zenaidura macroura carolinensis, Mourning Dove. Abundant resident.
30. Otus asio naevius, Eastern Screech Owl. Common resident.
31. Bubo virginianus virginianus, Great-horned Owl. Resident (Smyth).
32. Strix varia varia, Barred Owl. Resident; rare in valley. One seen on campus December 22, 1936.
33. Cryptoglaux acadica acadica, Saw-whet Owl. One seen in January, 1912 (Smyth).
34. Megaceryle alcyon alcyon, Belted Kingfisher. Resident; one has been seen almost daily during December and January 1936-37.
35. Colaptes auratus luteus, Northern Flicker. Resident, from one to half a dozen can be seen most any day.
36. Geophloeus pileatus abieticola, Pileated Woodpecker. Resident, not common. A pair on college farm.
37. Centurus carolinus, Red-bellied Woodpecker. Winter resident, a few.
38. Melanerpes erythrocephalus, Red-headed Woodpecker. None seen in 1935-36; the commonest of the Woodpeckers in 1936-37.
39. Sphyrapicus varius varius, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Winter resident, a few.
40. Dryobates villosus villosus, Hairy Woodpecker. Resident, rather common.
41. Dryobates pubescens medianus, Downy Woodpecker. Common resident.
42. Otocaris alpestris praticola, Prairie-horned Lark. Resident, large flocks in winter.
43. Cyanocitta cristata cristata, Blue Jay. Resident, abundant to rare; only a few seen in 1935-36.
44. Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos, Eastern Crow. Very abundant.
45. Penthestes carolinensis carolinensis, Carolina Chickadee. Resident, an occasional group seen; not quite so numerous as next two species.

46. Baeolophus bicolor, Tufted Titmouse. Resident, common.
47. Sitta carolinensis carolinensis, White-breasted Nuthatch. Resident, common.
48. Certhia familiaris americana, Brown Creeper. Winter resident, rare.
49. Nannus hiemalis hiemalis, Eastern Winter Wren. December 24, 1935, 2 seen. December 22, 1936, 1 seen.
50. Thryomanes bewicki bewicki, Bewick's Wren. One record, January 22, 1903 (Smyth).
51. Thryothorus ludovicianus ludovicianus, Carolina Wren. Resident, rare.
52. Mimus polyglottos polyglottos, Mockingbird. Resident, rather common.
53. Turdus migratorius migratorius, Eastern Robin. Resident, a few.
54. Sialia sialis sialis, Eastern Bluebird. Resident, common to rare.
55. Regulus satrapa satrapa, Golden-crowned Kinglet. Winter resident, a few.
56. Corthylio calendula calendula, Ruby-crowned Kinglet. One record, January 30, 1902 (Smyth).
57. Anthus spinoletta rubescens, American Pipit. Occasional flocks (Smyth).
58. Bombycilla cedrorum, Cedar Waxwing. Resident, occasional wandering flocks.
59. Lanius ludovicianus migrans, Migrant Shrike. Resident, two or three may be seen in a ten-mile walk.
60. Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris, Starling. Abundant. First noted on December 17, 1917 (Smyth).
61. Dendroica palmarum palmarum, Palm Warbler. Two records: December 25, 1935, and December 15, 1936.
62. Passer domesticus domesticus, English Sparrow. Abundant resident.
63. Sturnella magna magna, Meadowlark. Common resident.
64. Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus, Red-winged Blackbird. One record, December 14, 1936. Migrants begin coming in about January 20.

65. Euphagus carolinus, Rusty Blackbird. Two seen on December 22, 1936.
66. Quiscalus quiscula quiscula, Purple Grackle. Two records: December 29, 1904, and January 17, 1907 (Smyth).
67. Quiscalus quiscula aeneus, Bronzed Grackle. One record for January 20 (Smyth).
68. Molothrus ater ater, Cowbird. Common from about January 19 on.
69. Richmondia cardinalis cardinalis, Eastern Cardinal. Resident, fairly common.
70. Carpodacus purpureus purpureus, Purple Finch. Occasional flocks.
71. Spirus pinus pinus, Pine Siskin. Occasional in winter. A large flock was seen continuously from December 26, 1908, to May 4, 1909. (Smyth).
72. Spirus tristis tristis, Eastern Goldfinch. Roving resident, fairly common.
73. Loxia curvirostra pusilla, Red Crossbill. One record, a male, January 16 (Smyth).
74. Loxia leucoptera, White-winged Crossbill. One record, a flock of about 15 seen on January 25, 1920 (Smyth).
75. Passerculus sandwichensis savanna, Eastern Savannah Sparrow. A few.
76. Junco hyemalis hyemalis. Slate-colored Junco. Abundant in winter.
77. Spizella arborea arborea, Tree Sparrow. Abundant in winter.
78. Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys, White-crowned Sparrow. Sizeable flocks in weedy swamps, many adults.
79. Zonotrichia albicollis, White-throated Sparrow. One record, December 22, 1936, flock of 5.
80. Melospiza georgiana, Swamp Sparrow. Tolerably common in proper environment.
81. Melospiza melodia melodia, Eastern Song Sparrow. Common resident.

WHISTLING SWAN IN WYTHE COUNTY

While hunting in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Wythe county, on Thanksgiving day, Mr. W. R. DeGarmo, Graduate Student at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, heard the story of a magnificent Swan, supposedly the rare Trumpeter, having stopped on the nearby mill pond of Mr. F. B. Groseclose during a storm in 1918. The bird was caught and wing-clipped. As time went on it became quite a pet, especially of the children of the community, who took much delight in devilling the great bird to make it show off. At such times it walked about bobbing its head up and down, standing almost head tall and calling lustily, but showing no fear of anyone. Those the more bold who approached too close were often caught and flogged severely. This went on until finally a rock -- of course thrown in fun, but nevertheless just as fatal -- struck and broke the right wing close up to the body. The wing healed in time but the proud and graceful bird was never able to fly again.

On the assurance that I could see the Swan, I accompanied Mr. DeGarmo to Mr. Groseclose's place on the afternoon of December 13. When informed as to the purpose of our visit, Mr. Groseclose led us to the back of his mill, and there down a sharp incline and across the creek some thirty feet away "Bill" greeted us. Responding at once to Mr. Groseclose's call, "Come on Bill", the bird waded the shallow creek and came up the bank to us calling and bobbing its head as if ready to fight to the finish with any one or all of us.

Telltale yellow spots on either side of the otherwise jet black bill were sufficiently clear at close range, for the bird allowed itself to be taken up, were sufficient to identify it as a Whistling Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*). In so far as I am aware this is the first record for the occurrence of the species in western Virginia.

---C. O. Handley.

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A FEW RARE OCCURRENCES

Blacksburg -- June 28, 1936 -- Three American Egrets were seen at about 8:30 a.m. on the V.P.I. campus lake referred to by Dr. E. A. Smyth in his list as the college ice pond. A few days later two Egrets, presumably members of this same group, were reported to me as having been shot on the college farm near the old Smithfield residence. Both of these birds had been shot with a .22 caliber rifle--one through the wing and back and the other through the neck. They were left where they fell. This, I believe constitutes a first record of occurrence in Montgomery County of the species.

From July 24 to August 12, 1936, a Louisiana Heron, a first record for the vicinity, was seen almost daily at the campus lake. In striking contrast to the Egrets noted above and several immature Little Blue Herons which frequented the lake, the colors of the Louisiana Heron blended so well with its surroundings that the bird was often difficult to make out.

September 18, 1936, 9:30 a.m. -- While out with my ornithology class we stopped near the inlet of the upper college lake and "squeaked". Almost at once a Philadelphia Vireo, a new bird for my life list, appeared in a large willow tree some 30 feet away. On squeaking again the bird flew over to a small willow tree and sat there in plain view within six or eight feet of the group. The yellowish underparts of the bird were noted by the whole group. After watching us for fully half a minute the bird flew back to the hedgerow beneath the large willow, where it was joined by another Vireo of the same species. My son, Charles, Jr., observed one Philadelphia Vireo at the same spot on September and another on October 1. Lawrence Givens reported having seen one at the Quarry Pond (campus) on September 21.

October 1, 1936 -- During the late afternoon I stopped by the larger of the three campus lakes to see a Tern, presumably the Common. While awaiting for the Tern to alight on some nearby rocks along the north side of the lake, another long-winged bird with a plaintive whistled call made its appearance. After circling over the lake and nearby agricultural experimental grounds several times, the bird, which proved to be a Golden Plover, alighted in a small plot of newly planted wheat, within 50 feet of us -- Charles, Jr. and Prof. M. S. Kipps were with me at the time. The golden spots on the back of the bird were readily seen in good light with the aid of both 6X and 8X binoculars. After standing motionless for several minutes the wanderer took flight. The plaintive call coming back to us as the bird disappeared to the west without further ado left us tingling with that exuberance of feeling which comes to a bird student only on rare occasions--red letter days. This, I believe, is a new record for this species in the interior of the state.

November 20, 1936--An immature Herring Gull was killed by a farmer near Blacksburg. On hearing of the bird, it was secured by J. C. Oakes, one of my graduate students, and a study skin was made for the V.P.I. collection. A first record of occurrence in Montgomery County.

Mountain Lake, Giles County, October 30, 1936, about 11 a.m. -- While driving along the Mountain Lake-Kire road, about a half mile south of the point where the road crosses Little Stony Creek, an Eastern Ground Dove flushed from along the roadside, flew a short distance and alighted in a bare spot where a pile of brush had been burned recently. Having seen the bird on a number of occasions in Florida, I recognized it as a Ground Dove the instant it was first seen. However, an excellent opportunity was had for observation with binoculars at close range. The rufous coloring of the primaries was plainly visible in flight. While I have been on the lookout for the Ground Dove ever since my return to Virginia in 1929, Salt Pond Mountain at an elevation of approximately 3,640 above sea level, is just about the last place I would have expected to find this species. A strong wind which whipped the tree tops at the time was probably responsible for bird having been blown inland off its course. I was accompanied by Mr. John B. Laing of Lewisburg, West Virginia, at the time the observation was made.

---G. O. Handley.

WINTER OBSERVATIONS AT MOUNTAIN LAKE, VA.

During the Christmas season several of my former students and myself spent ten days, Dec. 24 to Jan. 2, at the Mt. Lake Biological Station, Giles Co., Va. The first two days were warm and clear, causing all the snow to melt. This was followed by a week of heavy fog and frequent rains; the maximum temperature ranging from 46° to 53°F. Our observations were made at an elevation between 3100 and 4000 feet. The Christmas Census occurs elsewhere in this issue. The following birds were seen in this ten-day period: Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Raven, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Robin, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Starling, Cardinal, Goldfinch, Carolina Junco, Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

All except the Kinglets and Tree Sparrows were seen above 3800 feet. Carolina Juncos were abundant; Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches and Blue Jays were fairly common; the other species were less common and seen as solitary individuals or in groups of two. A flock of about 15 Robins was seen on Dec. 31. Two Juncos were identified as the Slate-colored, one of which was taken and the skin will be sent to Dr. Oberholser for a more complete identification.--D. Ralph Hostetter.

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NOTES FROM NARUNA

On Dec. 13, while visiting near Hat Creek, I saw a Great Horned Owl some boys had in captivity. The Owl was caught disturbing poultry. On Dec. 28 a flock of 27 Pipits was seen while crossing a field, also one Mourning Dove, the only one I had seen since early fall. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pine Warbler and Phoebe were seen on the same day. Small flocks of Robins, averaging from 50 to 75 individuals have been seen going northeast since Dec. 15. On Dec. 26 three flocks were noted. A Wild Turkey has been seen near our house on several occasions. The farm where I am spending the winter lies along Falling River, four miles east of Naruna. The bluffs here are full of partridge berries for the turkeys to feed on.--Bertha Daniel.

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NOTES FROM BEAVER POND, AMELIA COUNTY

While at Beaver Pond on January 16, 1937, a Brown Thrasher was seen at close range in the thickety growth of button-bush, swamp wild rose, alder and smilax that grows at the water's edge in many places. He was quite lively and active, appearing in fine condition. As far as I know this is the first winter record for Amelia County. I hope to keep watch of this bird through the winter. I have winter records of the Brown Thrasher in Brunswick county for November 20, 1934, and February 1, 1935. This bird was not seen between the dates given above, but as the

thicket was large and dense he may have been overlooked. On the other hand, the records may simply mean a late stay in the fall and an early arrival in spring.

Red-headed Woodpeckers, Purple Finches and Myrtle Warblers have been unusually numerous about Amelia this winter. More Brown Creepers than usual have also been seen. On the other hand, Killdeer seem to have left the country altogether. None have been seen or reported by other observers since early December.

For more than a month, a male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has had a series of sap wells in a maple near our feeding station. Recently he has visited the suet racks regularly to eat freely of the suet. I had never before seen this done by a member of the species.

Another regular visitor at both the suet racks and the feed tray is a young Red-headed Woodpecker. He was first seen early in November, when his head and neck were dull black. In the last two weeks this color has gradually changed until now there is a bright red band a half inch wide around the lower neck, the lower part of the area that will be red. The upper neck and head also show considerable red. Dr. Thomas S. Roberts, of Minnesota, writes that this change in color in the juvenile Red-head is due to a slow, gradual molt and not to the wearing off of the outer ends of the feathers to expose a different color below, as with some other birds.

On December 13, 1936, Mrs. Shaw (of Richmond), Miss Sheppard and I visited Beaver Pond and saw two Horned Grebes and two Hooded Mergansers. Both birds are new to the Amelia County list.

---John B. Lewis.

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DATES FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

The dates for the Annual Meeting, tentatively set for February, have been changed by the Executive Committee to April 23 and 24. The meeting will be held in Richmond. The feature of the meeting, as usual, will be the field trip. This year the plan is for a half day field trip to Curle's Neck, giving participants time to get home the same day without any difficulty. The chief reason for the change in date is to provide opportunity for a different kind of field trip from the winter trips heretofore taken. What we lose in the chance to see water fowl will be made up in the chance to observe migrants. At that date there should be much of interest at Curle's Neck. All V.S.O. members should begin now to make plans to be at the meeting and to go on the field trip.

Headquarters for the meetings will be at the Jefferson Hotel, where all sessions and the annual dinner will be held.

Further details regarding the meetings will be announced later.

THE CHRISTMAS CENSUS IN VIRGINIA
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Amelia, Va. Dec. 22, 7:30 A.M. to 12:20 P.M.; 1:30 P.M. to 4:45 P.M. Clear, little wind, no snow, temp. at start 22, at return 37. A.M.: Amelia village down Amelia branch, across to and along Nibb's Creek and return. P.M.: by automobile to Winterham, through pastures and meadows to and along Bark House Branch and return. About 8 miles on foot, 7 miles by automobile. Observer alone.

Turkey Vulture, 10; Black Vulture, 8; Bob White, 8; Mourning Dove, 24; Flicker, 2; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Red-headed Woodpecker, 12; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Blue Jay, 12; Crow, 10; Chickadee, 12; Tufted Titmouse, 5; White-Breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creeper, 2; Winter Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 4; Mockingbird, 6; Robin, 1; Hermit Thrush, 3; Bluebird, 10; Starling, 18; Myrtle Warbler, 2; House Sparrow, (est.), 40; Meadowlark, 1; Cardinal, 10; Purple Finch, 4; Goldfinch, 13; Towhee, 1; Junco, (partly est.) 60; Field Sparrow, 8; White-throated Sparrow, 36; Song Sparrow, 10. Number of species, 35; number of individuals, 363.

Another census was taken Dec. 24, resulting in 31 species only, but including the following that were not found the 22nd: Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Killdeer, 1; Loggerhead Shrike, 1.

The unusual number of Red-headed Woodpeckers is noteworthy. On Dec. 24th an unusual concentration of Red-headed Woodpeckers was observed in the wooded lowgrounds along Flat Creek in this county, when 15 were actually counted, and it was estimated that between 20 and 30 were present.

As usual, a number of species that are always with us in winter were not seen the day the census was taken.

---John B. Lewis.

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Lynchburg, Va. (Timber Lake, Edgewood Farm, College Lake). Dec. 23; 7:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., 2:00 to 4:45 P.M. Clear; traces of sleet on north slopes; wind, S.W., light; temp. 25° at start, 39° at 12:30 P.M. Six miles on foot, 25 by car. Turkey Vulture, 11; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Bob-white, 1; Killdeer, 5; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Red-headed Woodpecker, 18; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Blue Jay, 11; Crow, 100; Chickadee, 21; Tufted Titmouse, 9; White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Brown Creeper, 2; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 7; Mockingbird, 3; Robin, 40; Hermit Thrush, 3; Bluebird, 30; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Starling, 12; English Sparrow, 13; Meadowlark, 2; Cardinal, 18; Purple Finch, 14; Goldfinch, 24; Towhee, 1; Junco, 106; Tree Sparrow, 1; Field Sparrow, 19; White-throated Sparrow, 16; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 22. Total, 37 species, 534 individuals.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

Lynchburg, Va. (Tomahawk Swamp, Timber Lake, Edgewood Farm, College Lake). Dec. 26; 7:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., 2:30 to 5:00 P.M. Partly cloudy; traces of sleet on north slopes; wind S.W., light; temp. 34° at start, 60° at 12:30 P.M. Nine miles on foot, 24 by car. Observers together. Great Blue Heron, 1; Turkey Vulture, 10; Bob-white, 16 (two coveys); Killdeer, 13; Mourning Dove, 11; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 2; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Red-headed Woodpecker, 14; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Prairie Horned Lark, 16; Blue Jay, 26; Crow, 24; Chickadee, 14; Tufted Titmouse, 10; White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 8; Mockingbird, 4; Robin, 60 (flock, est.); Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 22; Starling, 39; English Sparrow, 24; Meadowlark, 4; Cardinal, 11; Purple Finch, 18; Pine Siskin, 16; Goldfinch, 41; Towhee, 1; Junco, 62; Tree Sparrow, 10; Chipping Sparrow, 1; Field Sparrow, 30; White-throated Sparrow, 3; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 7. Total, 39 species, 547 individuals. Chipping Sparrow seen at close range in three stances, good light, 8x glasses, by both of us.

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

Seen 12/26, not seen 12/23

Chipping Sparrow
Pine Siskin
Flicker
Mourning Dove
Horned Lark
Great Blue Heron
Kingfisher

Seen 12/23, not seen 12/26

Sparrow Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Brown Creeper
Pileated Woodpecker

Total of 44 species on the two days.

Naruna, Va. Dec. 26, 7:30 to 11:00 A.M. Temp. 30° at beginning, 60° at 11:00. Birds seen along brook and around my home. Clear, wind from south. Turkey Vulture, 3; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Flicker, 1; Prairie Horned Lark, 2; Crow, 18; Carolina Chickadee, 3; Tufted Titmouse, 1; Brown Creeper, 1; Carolina Wren, 4; Mockingbird, 1; Robin, 50; Bluebird, 7; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; English Sparrow, 2; Cardinal, 1; Goldfinch, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 25; Field Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 10. 19 species, 138 individuals.

---Bertha Daniel.

Mt. Solon, Va. (North River section of George Washington National Forest, Augusta County), December 27, 1936; starting at 8 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m.--a distance of 11 miles on foot and 6 miles by car. Temperature 49° at start, 61° at finish; wind 2 miles north at 8 a.m., 6 miles north at 3 p.m. Weather cloudy. Northern exposure of mountains covered with 3 inches of snow; southern exposure bare except in the deep narrow ravines where snow varied in depth from 1 to 3 inches.

Topography of area covered varied in elevation from 2100 feet to 2800 feet, of which seven miles was along small branches in deep narrow ravines, gradually broadening toward the lower elevation, and 4 miles was along the river-bottom land. The birds seemed to be more abundant along the melted borders of snow in the lower elevation where natural wind breaks were present. All crows observed were seen feeding where a group of CCC men had had lunch several days before. Species seen: Junco, 46; Raven, 1; Crow, 7; Blue Jay, 2; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Chickadee, 28; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 4; Wild Turkey, 2. Total, 11 species; 97 individuals. ---W. W. Bailey.

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(Lexington, Va. Absence from the State during Christmas week made the taking of a census at Lexington impossible. A census taken at Red Springs, in eastern North Carolina, was only slightly better, to my surprise, in number of species, and no better in number of individuals than a normal Lexington census. The totals were: species, 47; individuals, 1240. ---J. J. M.)

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Roanoke, Va. Dec. 29. Weather, raining; temp. 40°; 20 miles in automobile, 3 miles on foot. Pied-billed Grebe, 2; Redhead Duck, 2 (male and female); Turkey Vulture, 4; Black Vulture, 18; Cooper Hawk, 1; Blue Jay, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Carolina Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 2; Starling, common; Cardinal, 6; Slate-colored Junco, 5; Eastern Tree Sparrow, 5; White-crowned Sparrow, 11. Birds are unusually scarce this year even at the traps and feeding stations. I suppose the mild weather has something to do with it. ---A. O. English.

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Blacksburg, Va. (V.P.I. Campus and down Stroubles Creek four miles covering half a mile on both sides of creek). Dec. 22; 7 A.M. to 5:50 P.M. Clear; 2 in. crusted snow and sleet; wind west until noon, strong; temp. 26° at start, 28° at return. About ten miles on foot and ten miles by automobile. Observers together most of the time. Turkey Vulture, 28; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Bob-white, 53; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Killdeer, 3; Wilson's Snipe, 5; Mourning Dove 82; Barred Owl, 1; Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 6; Pileated Woodpecker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 5; Red-headed Woodpecker, 25; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Prairie-horned Lark, 116; Blue Jay 86; Crow, 700; Chickadee, 23; Tufted Titmouse, 76; White-breasted Nuthatch, 32; Brown Creeper, 2; Winter Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 6; Bluebird, 27; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Migrant Shrike, 2; Starling, 1800; English Sparrow, 50; Meadowlark, 12; Rusty Blackbird, 2; Cardinal, 22; Slate-colored Junco, 49; Tree Sparrow, 136; White-crowned Sparrow, 27; White-throated Sparrow, 5; Swamp Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 15.

Total, 42 species, about 3503 individuals.

---J. S. Givens, H. C. Rucker,
C. O. Handley, Jr. and
C. O. Handley. Also A. B.
Massey during afternoon.

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Mountain Lake, Va. Dec. 25; 8:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M., 2:30 P.M. to 5:15 P.M.; clear; calm; snow on ground one to eight inches deep, having fallen one week before census; lake frozen over. Temp. at start 28 F, at close 37 F. Area included Biological Station, road to Hotel, lake, White Pine Lodge, and return. Ten miles on foot. Elevation, 3170 to 4000 feet. Oak-Chestnut, Beech-Chestnut-Birch, White Pine areas, and lake bordered with Rhododendron. Four observers, working together and in groups of two. Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 5; Blue Jay, 10; Tufted Titmouse, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 2; Goldfinch, 2; Carolina Junco, 20; Song Sparrow, 1. Total, 10 species, 48 individuals.

---H. A. Mumaw, O. H. Shenk, Jr.,
B. C. Hostetter, D. R. Hostetter.

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(The most noticeable feature of the Census reports this year is the abundance of Red-headed Woodpeckers. This fits in with many other reports from various parts of the State during the winter. It is interesting this year to have our first census reports from high mountain areas. While, as is to be expected, both of these mountain lists are very short, they give negative information that is important. Ed.)

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The mimeographers of THE RAVEN sincerely apologize for the bad appearance of this issue. Delay in arrival of the stencils usually used necessitated using an inferior grade. We hope it will not happen again.



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

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

Vol. VIII

February-March, 1937

Nos. 2 & 3

MIGRATION TIME

by

Ralph M. Brown
Blacksburg, Virginia

The bird lover gets much pleasure out of his hobby at every season of the year, but it is in spring, in migration time, when the migrants fly up from South and Central America and the Gulf States, that he knows his greatest joys. He has the records of when the different species have first appeared in the spring, for from one to sometimes 50 years. Here in Blacksburg we have such records for 47 years--Dr. Ellison A. Smythe, Jr., 35 years; Ralph M. Brown, 10 years; C. O. Handley and Ralph M. Brown, two years. From these records, the bird man knows when to expect certain birds for the first time in the year. Of course, the birds sometimes appear earlier or later than usual, but the first Robins, Catbirds, Brown Thrashers, Indigo Buntings, Scarlet Tanagers and Baltimore Orioles, to mention only a few of the birds, will arrive on approximately the same date year after year.

The first migrating breeding bird that we see around Blacksburg is the Robin. He usually turns up, in flocks of males, in the last week of February. Large flocks of Robins are to be seen in our sheltered mountain ravines all through the winter, and occasionally we will spy a Robin in town, but these birds come from farther north and are not our breeding Robins. Then along comes the Purple Grackle, commonly known as the "black bird", which he is not. He is a handsome bird, with his glossy purple-black plumage, and a noisy one as well. Right on the grackle's heels flies a real blackbird, the Red-winged Blackbird, who likes to build his nest along swampy streams. His red epaulettes show up splendidly on his black shoulders. Mrs. Red-winged Blackbird dresses in sober brown. These three birds, the Robin, the Purple Grackle and the Red-winged Blackbird, come to us before winter goes, in the latter part of February.

March has seven first-comers on its list. The Kingfisher first, that azure-plumaged haunter of our streams. Who has not heard him rattling out his call as he flies up or down our creeks and rivers? I have seen Kingfishers in Montgomery County every month of the year, which proves that some of these birds stay with us all year long. The friendly little chestnut-crowned Chipping Sparrow favors March 11 as his debut date, small

flocks of these sparrows being seen in the open country on or near that day. The Phoebe, lively little bridge- and stream-loving Phoebe--next appears. One of the flycatchers he is, and he certainly works havoc on the flying insects. The Field Sparrow beats out the Vesper Sparrow, the one coming on March 13, the other on March 17. The first of the wrens, Bewick's Wren, starts scolding, chipping and occasionally singing, on March 17. And the last of the March-appearing birds, the Least Flycatcher commonly called the "Chebec" from his vigorous song, makes his presence known on March 19.

April has a long list of birds--here they are in order--Green Heron, Barn Swallow, Towhee, Louisiana Water-thrush, Brown Thrasher, Black and White Warbler, Spotted Sandpiper, Whip-poor-will(I know only one place near Blacksburg where I hear this bird, at Coal Bank Hollow), Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Chimney Swift(that bird you hear chittering in the sky), Red-eyed Vireo, Hummingbird, Kingbird(he will fight hawks, crows and eagles), Baltimore Oriole, Warbling Vireo, Crested Flycatcher(a pair nested in the central part of the campus for the past seven years), Bobolink(usually stays in our alfalfa fields for a week or so), the Wood Thrush(have you heard his flute-sweet morning and evening concerts?), Nighthawk or "bull-bat"(a wonderful flyer), Orchard Oriole (brown where the Baltimore Oriole is orange), the Indigo Bunting(he sings like a Goldfinch), the Ovenbird(his nest, on the ground, resembles an oven), the Catbird, the Hooded Warbler, the Scarlet Tanager(a joy to the eye in his scarlet and black), the Yellow-breasted Chat(a bird which can make more queer sounds and perform more comical antics than any other bird), the Redstart(singing his lively song and flashing the vivid red of his fan-shaped tail), the Pewee(mournful in song but cheerful in action--did you know that pewees usually build a trial nest, abandon it, then a week or two later build their final nest?), and the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Isn't this a long list for one month? Thirty-four birds come to us in April--the majority of the breeding birds.

Note how May drops off in numbers: the Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, the Broad-winged Hawk, the Cliff Swallow(who builds in barns where he can't find a cliff), the Maryland Yellowthroat and the Acadian Flycatcher. Only six birds in May. Of these migrants, we have thirty-two nesting on the college campus.

I shall take you in imagination out on one of my migration bird hunts. We shall have to get up early for most of the birds stop moving around and eating after seven o'clock. Our alarm goes off at five o'clock and up we jump, turn off the alarm, wash our faces and hands, swallow a glass of milk and a few crackers and start out, heading for a favorite warbler haunt, a hillside facing the East, and thickly grown with dogwood and young maples and oaks. We do not see any unusual birds until we get into the road that runs alongside the golf course toward Trillium Vale. It is May 9, in the height of the migration. What is that bird singing in the sky? We look and look and finally catch sight of a small bird soaring up into the air singing like a chime of jangled silver bells. It is a Prairie Horned Lark, few of which greet the eye of a bird lover around here in migration. The Prairie Larks are not supposed to nest in

Montgomery County, yet I have seen a pair of them in early June. They must have been nesting. As we approach the head of Trillium Vale we begin to hear a regular bird chorus, and listening intently we pick out several of the singers by their songs. Scarlet Tanager, a rollicking, carolling song. Towhee, with his non-towhee song. A Black and White Warbler, slowly "chip-chip-chipping" as he works up the branch of a tree. A lazy, drawling song, the Black-throated Green Warbler. A shrill, sweet, vigorous melody, a Hooded Warbler, yellow-breasted and throated, with a black hood on his head and neck. Now the Ovenbird: "Ssta! Ssta! Ssta! Ssta!", as fast as he can utter it. We are on the wood road along the west crest of Trillium Vale. We hear and see three more Scarlet Tanagers, beautiful scarlet birds, with black wings! One is singing just above our heads. His green-feathered mate is with him. No more now birds until we come to the sunny hillside facing the East, the one for which, I told you, we were heading.

As we come out on the hillside the air seems to be full of song. In quick succession we identify the Cairn's, Blackburnian (the most beautiful of all the warblers, orange-breasted and throated, with black and white wings and back), Cape May, Chestnut-sided, Blackpoll, Parula (sings like a sweet-toned little clock being wound up), Myrtle, Yellow and Magnolia Warblers. Thirteen warblers! Seldom is a bird-lover blessed with such a seeing of warblers. If he spies four or five he is lucky. We stay on the hillside for an hour or so, hoping to see more warblers, but we do not, so we start back home, knowing that in a little while the warblers will stop singing and eating and will go back into the trees and shrubs. We have our warbler harvest, a marvellous one, for this morning. We retrace our steps over the wood road and are almost through the wood, when in a tree right ahead we thrill to the sight of three pairs of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (white-breasted, rose-throated) in a tree, with four Scarlet Tanagers. Two of the most beautiful of all birds, ten individuals, in one tree. We joy and joy in them. This is the first time in 45 years that six Rose-breasted Grosbeaks have been seen together in Montgomery County. We pass out of the wood, the Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers, Towhees, Mockingbirds, Robins and warblers singing us farewell. Hasn't this been a glorious morning?

(This paper was given by Ralph M. Brown as one of his radio talks. --Ed.)

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THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Seventh Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology will be held in Richmond, Virginia, Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24. The Jefferson Hotel will be the headquarters and all meetings will be held there. There will be two program sessions on Friday, at 2:00 and 8:00 P. M., with the annual dinner in between. The Field Trip, to which only the morning on Saturday will be given this year, will cover the Curle's Neck region along the James River, where we had such an interesting trip during the former Richmond meeting. Migrants should then be moving in full force through that part of the State. The starting time

for the Field Trip will be announced at the Friday evening session. Mrs. Jurgens, Mrs. F. W. Shaw and Miss Sara Snook have graciously invited the members going on the Field Trip to be their guests at a picnic field lunch at the close of the trip.

Reservations for rooms at the Jefferson Hotel may be made in advance. The Hotel offers the following rates: Rooms without bath, single, \$2.00 and \$2.50; double, \$3.00 and \$3.50; rooms with bath, single, \$2.50 up; double, \$4.50 up. The Jefferson is out of the congested district, and it will not be difficult to find convenient parking space.

It is hoped that many of the members of the VSO will prepare papers for this meeting. Those who expect to present papers should send the titles, with an estimate of the time needed for presentation, to Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Virginia, as soon as possible. If the author cannot be present, the paper may be sent to Dr. Murray so that it may be read by someone else.

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A NEW STATE SOCIETY

North Carolina now has a State ornithological society. The new group, which will be known as The North Carolina Bird Club, was organized at Raleigh, N.C., on March 6th. The writer had the privilege of being the guest speaker at the organization meeting, speaking at the morning meeting on "The Work of the Virginia Society of Ornithology", and at the luncheon on the theme, "Wild Wings". The meeting was an enthusiastic one, bird students coming from all parts of the State and over sixty people sitting down to the luncheon. Mr. C. S. Brimley, veteran North Carolina naturalist and co-author of "The Birds of North Carolina", was elected President. Three Vice-Presidents were chosen: Miss Ethel Finster (Asheville), Rev. Francis H. Craighill (Rocky Mount), and Mrs. Nellie F. Sandford (Southern Pines). Rev. John H. Grey, who received his training in the VSO and who was very active in the starting of the new organization, was made Secretary-Treasurer and Editor of the Club's projected bulletin The Chat. In form The Chat will be very much like THE RAVEN. Prospects are good for a strong and active State organization. The VSO extends greetings and good wishes to the new Club.--J. J. Murray.

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SWEET BRIAR, A NATURE SANCTUARY

On Founders' Day, October 30, 1936, announcement was made of a gift from Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Carry of Chicago by the terms of which Sweet Briar College grounds are to be developed as a Nature Sanctuary. The aim is to preserve a section of the best primeval woods to remain without subsequent change by man and to foster the preservation and increase of wildlife, both plant and animal. Miss Margaret Carry of the Class of '35 who is planning and supervising the Sanctuary is starting a wild flower garden, providing additional food and nesting sites for birds and making preparations for bird banding. It is expected that the Sanc-

tuary will furnish increased opportunity for observation and study of wild life by Sweet Briar students and by individuals or groups not associated with the College.--Florence Hague.

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NEW PAGINATION FOR THE RAVEN

Readers are requested to note that with Volume VIII, 1937, page numbers will run continuously through successive issues of each volume.

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THE STORY OF CONSERVATION IN AMERICA

Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson has just published his autobiography ("Adventures in Bird Protection", D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1937, xiv, 459 pages, price \$3.50). This book is an event of first magnitude in American ornithological literature. Those who love birds and those who have any zeal for their protection will be delighted with it.

As the story of an adventurous life it is fascinating. Boyhood days in Florida, struggling against many handicaps to learn about birds; early manhood, teaching in North Carolina at the Quaker Guilford College and at the State Normal and Industrial College (now the woman's branch of the University); pioneer efforts at bird protection, organizing the North Carolina Audubon Society and fighting in that and other southern states for laws for bird protection; small but important beginnings in the National Association of Audubon Societies, battling for nation-wide bird protection; days of success, when the Association grew strong, when the Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada laid a firm foundation for bird protection, and when sanctuaries were founded for vanishing species; and, finally, trips to Europe and to other American countries, building the international bird work--the whole story is here, fully and attractively told, with feeling and humor.

The book is not only the story of an interesting and forceful personality but the history of the Audubon movement in America. Dr. Pearson was one of the founders of the National Association, its second President and its active head for twenty-five years, and is now its President-Emeritus. No one else could have written this story. It is, in fact, the only complete history of conservation in America yet published. It will have permanent value as a source book for that history and as a guide in the principles of protective legislation. Dr. Pearson's book can be commended with enthusiasm.

J. J. Murray.

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The price of "Florida Bird Life" by A. H. Howell, published in 1932, has been reduced from \$6 to \$3 postpaid. The book contains 579 pages and 37 color plates from original paintings by F. L. Jaques. Copies may be obtained from the National Association of Audubon Societies, 1775 Broadway, New York City, or the Commission of Game and Fresh Water Fish, Tallahassee, Florida.--The Survey, January, 1937.

SAW-WHET OWL IN ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

On February 22, 1937, while in company with another Washington & Lee student, I saw a Common Saw-whet Owl (Cryptoglaux acadica acadica) in the Wood's Creek Glen on the Washington & Lee University campus. It was late in the afternoon when the bird was first seen, and we did not get a very good view, except that we realized that the bird was too small for a Screech Owl. Going back later with a flashlight we observed the owl at close range. The very small size, the absence of ear-tufts, the streaks along the head and the heavy streaks below were all noted. We did not think to look for white spots on the back and did not note them. We made our notes separately and found that they agreed; then looked at a colored picture of the bird; and then saw the bird again. Three days later, on February 25, I surprised the owl where it was sitting in the opening of a drain at the Chemical Laboratory and drinking water.

Southgate Hoyt, Lexington, Virginia.

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THE BANDING OF HAWKS AND OWLS

A request for cooperators in a hawk and owl banding project has come to us from Mr. Richard H. Pough of the National Association of Audubon Societies. He writes: "The ordinary bird bander practically never has an opportunity to band hawks...If hawks and owls are to be banded in significant numbers, it must be done by hundreds of field observers, each of whom knows the location of a few nests and will get someone with tree climbers to go up and band the nestlings. Handicapped as it is by lack of funds, the bird-banding division of the Biological Survey cannot possibly issue regular banding permits to the number of people who might be in a position to assist with this valuable work. To overcome this difficulty, I have been issued a permit and bands for all sizes of hawks. Won't you urge your readers to send to me for any quantity from one up, that they can place on birds this spring, specifying species so that I can send correct sizes. A card will go with each band and will be returned to me when the band is placed on a bird, and I will clear all records, both with the Survey and the bander, when a return is recorded. Breeding grounds, wintering grounds, spring and fall migration, length of life, average yearly mortality--all these questions are awaiting more hawk banding to furnish the answers...This will be a good test of the willingness of the amateur bird man to make the effort necessary to help advance a branch of ornithological knowledge through cooperative effort."

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We are informed that a Starling banded on February 24, 1934, at Nashville, Tenn., by Mrs. F. C. Laskey, and carrying band No. 34-200139, was killed in Wise County, Va., in July, 1935, by Mr. J. B. Killburn, Essersville, Va.

VIRGINIA FIELD NOTES

Woodbridge. On the afternoon of January 31 I was out looking for birds, although there was a slight drizzling rain. A small flock of about 15 Prairie Horned Larks settled down in the field nearby. I noticed one bird which appeared almost white, and this proved to be a partial albino. The birds were extremely tame, letting me repeatedly walk within about 15 yards of them as they hopped along through the very sparse grass. The albino was a light creamy-buff, with the dark markings a brownish-black, lighter than that of the other birds. There was the appearance of an almost white rump and upper tail coverts, but this may have been the folded primaries of lighter color. I watched the bird for about ten minutes or perhaps longer, and finally walked a little too close, the albino leading the others into the air and into the adjoining field. I used 8x binoculars and had a fine opportunity for observation.

Killdeers have been unusually numerous this winter, especially since Christmas, probably because of the mild weather. They fly about, calling, as in Spring. Flocks of Robins, numbering about 200 to 300, have been in the vicinity for the last few weeks, feeding in the fields and in the woods, eating the dried wild grapes and honeysuckle berries. Bluebirds are singing frequently. On several occasions a pair of Black Vultures have been here, and on February 14 five of them circled about for twenty minutes, soaring on a strong breeze. Myrtle Warblers were here as late as Christmas, but I have not seen any since. A pair of Hermit Thrushes have been in the woods near a small pond all winter. Bob-whites have been scarce; and for the first time that I can remember, I have not seen a single bird during the fall and winter, although my brother reports seeing one small flock about three months ago.

Mr. Hodge, warden of the Roach's Run Sanctuary, took one reel of motion pictures of the Ankinga before it left the Sanctuary. It was shown at the Biological Survey in Washington. Mr. Hodge said the bird could be identified, although the pictures were not especially good because of distance. The Ankinga was first seen on August 2, and for the last time on August 31.--James Eike.

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Amelia County. Beginning about November 20, Red-headed Woodpeckers were unusually numerous until about February 1, when they began to decline in numbers, until now, March 19, they are hardly more numerous than the average. All winter Purple Finches have been unusually common in the Amelia area. On February 17 a small flock was seen on the ground under a large cedar tree that stands in an open field, apparently feeding on the cedar berries that had fallen to the ground. This is the first time I have seen them feeding on the ground. Myrtle Warblers have been abundant here this winter, while Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers have been scarce. The first Pine Warbler's song was heard on February 9, and the second on February 13. At the present time they are heard singing almost daily. Robins were with us in unusually large flocks from January 24 to March 2. Since that time small migratory groups have been seen daily. Now the summer residents are arriving. No Killdeers were seen

from about December 10 until February 2. Since that date they have been seen or heard daily. I have no explanation for their absence through most of December and all of January, as the weather was unusually mild. On account of the mild weather one would have expected Phoebes to winter here in larger numbers than usual, but such was not the case. None were seen from about the middle of December until February 3. By March 4 they began singing; and by March 16 were here in full numbers and seem to be mated. A Towhee that wintered in a large thicket near my home began singing March 7, and had a mate March 16.

On March 17 a visit was made to Rowlett's Pond, a very old mill pond, nearly a half mile long and probably 200 yards wide in the widest place. It is surrounded by woods and near the upper end is bordered by extensive flats in which are several shallow lagoons. Immediately on reaching the pond we located three Horned Grebes, Colymbus auritus, one of which seemed to be a male in spring plumage, while the other two were either females or immature. They at once swam to the middle of the pond where they remained closely huddled together during our stay. They did not dive. Near the upper end of the pond a larger bird, either a loon or a larger grebe was seen at a distance too great to permit of positive identification. It dived soon after being located and probably entered one of the brush-bordered lagoons, as it was seen no more. While searching for this bird three large ducks were flushed from a lagoon. They circled, passing almost directly over us twice. They were certainly Black Ducks. As seen from below with 6x glasses the whole under surface of the body was black, the neck lighter, with the under surface of the wings nearest the body white.--John B. Lewis.

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Naruna. Since October my bird watching has been confined chiefly to the bluffs and adjoining fields along Falling River, near the mouth of Hat Creek. This place is about four miles east of Naruna. Black Vultures have been seen occasionally. A flock of 50 was seen on January 11.

Red-tailed Hawks, two seen on January 4 and two on February 17; Marsh Hawk, February 23 and 27; Killdeer, January 22, February 9 and 14; Pileated Woodpecker, January 9; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, January 22, February 19; Phoebe, January 29, 30 and February 13; Prairie Horned Lark, 21 on January 3 and 50 on January 22; Brown Creeper, January 11 and 22; Winter Wren, January 22; Robin, 50 on January 5, common all winter; Bluebird, common all winter, 25 on February 6 in one flock; Golden-crowned Kinglets fairly common all winter; Cedar Waxwings, 20 on January 18; fairly common during February; Pine Warbler, two on February 8, 13 and 19; Purple Finch, four on February 17.

Pine Siskin, a new one for my list, 25 on February 7. On February 15 and 18 a flock was seen estimated at about 100. On February 20, two Pine Siskins were seen feeding on alder buds along a brook. I watched them from within a few feet. The yellow patch on wing was plainly noticeable.--Bertha Daniel.

Lexington. The mild winter has apparently had very little effect on either the species or the numbers of birds present. In fact, some wintering birds, such as Phoebes, Purple Finches and White-throated Sparrows, have been less common than usual. Red-headed Woodpeckers have been decidedly more common, and Myrtle Warblers somewhat more common. A Fox Sparrow, seen on January 4, is the first mid-winter record here for that species. Nor has the mild spring had much effect. Only the Vesper Sparrow has come any earlier. The Savannah Sparrow seems to have been held in the South by the mild weather and has arrived here much later than usual. A few Black Ducks, Green-winged Teals and Hooded Mergansers and one female Baldpate have been at Big Spring since November. March has been a good month for ducks--Mallards, Black Ducks, Baldpates, Pintails and Green- and Blue-winged Teals have been present in considerable number with a few Wood Ducks, Ring-necks, Scaups and Hooded Mergansers. I was shown a Common Loon that had been captured in a small stream on January 7. It was released on the river the following day. A Red-shouldered Hawk, uncommon here at any season, was seen on March 24.--J. J. Murray.

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Blacksburg. I have Blacksburg winter records for the following birds not noted in the list by Charles O. Handley, Jr., in the last issue of THE RAVEN: Pied-billed Grebe, Pigeon Hawk, Myrtle Warbler, Towhee, Field Sparrow, and Fox Sparrow. Two Buffleheads were seen on January 8, and a Redhead on February 13. The first Purple Finch was seen on January 10; and what was apparently the first summer resident Robin on February 17.--Ralph M. Brown.

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Lynchburg. Ye Mimeographer takes the liberty of slipping in his notes without Ye Editor's perusal, and with the advantage of having read over all other local notes. I have been much interested over a period of years in watching the numbers of irregular migrants, birds which spend the winter here in greatly reduced numbers. I should be very glad to see comments in THE RAVEN on the species mentioned, and would also welcome criticism of my observations or deductions, as I believe that there is an interesting angle of the migration problem involved.

Meadowlarks, Flickers, Mourning Doves and Towhees in particular show variable amounts of migration. Each may be looked upon as a permanent resident for this section, yet the four are of very infrequent occurrence during the winter months. The Towhee, for instance, is said to winter more regularly in the Ohio Valley than in Virginia, and my observations in Ohio and Virginia confirm this. I have frequently found Towhees in numbers in Ohio on the Christmas census, and around Lynchburg find only one or two in certain protected places regularly, or rarely find a dozen or so in similar sheltered places. Doubtless one factor to be considered is the flocking habit of these species during the winter. The probability of finding one large flock is less than that of finding the individuals of the flock when more widely scattered over an area. We have seen flocks of each of the species mentioned during the winter on a few occasions. In any given field or woods however, individual birds are scarce during the winter, and their numbers pick up decidedly in March.

Phoebes and Kingfishers are in the same category. Of the winter residents, variability in numbers from year to year is marked in the Purple Finches, Pine Siskins and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Weather conditions account for fluctuating numbers of the last three, but in the case of the first six, which are permanent residents to some extent, their numbers for any given winter do not always reflect the sort of winter weather we are having, as is noted by several observers in this issue.

Red-headed Woodpeckers have been abundant and constant in number through the winter, while Red-bellied Woodpeckers, never abundant, have been unusually scarce. I have seen the Red-breasted Nuthatch only twice, January 1 and 10, each time in the mountains. Occasionally they are abundant through the winter near the city. The Ruby-crowned Kinglet which is sometimes fairly plentiful through the winter, has been seen only once, January 10, in the mountains. There have been more Pine Siskins than usual this winter, also more Purple Finches, which would seem to indicate more severe winter weather to the north, which does not seem to be the case. No Phoebes were seen until February 20, and no Kingfishers between December 26 and February 7. The Hermit Thrush usually winters here in some numbers, but this year none were seen between December 26 and March 26. A Savannah Sparrow seen on February 7 by Leonard K. Beyer and myself and a Purple Grackle seen on February 4 by Mrs. Frear were doubtless stragglers remaining through the winter rather than early migrants. I believe that Bewick's Wrens are regular winter residents here whose presence is overlooked because of their habits and lack of singing. I have heard one singing here as early as January 9. This year singing began on February 7. Because of their interest in connection with irregular winter residence, I refer again to the finding of a Great Blue Heron and a Chipping Sparrow on the Christmas census on December 26, by Mr. Bayer and myself.

Other records: Golden-crowned Kinglets, singing, March 5, the second time I have heard this here; Marsh Hawk, Feb. 11; Horned Grebe, winter plumage, Timber Lake from February 6 to March 4. The most unusual record of the winter has been the presence of Old Squaw ducks at the Lake almost continuously from January 23 up to at least April 10. At first a male and female were there for over six weeks, then a pair of males has been there for almost three weeks. Canvasbacks, Ring-necks, Ruddies, Baldpates, Hooded Mergansers, Lesser Scaups and Blue-winged Teal have been coming and going, but in much reduced numbers as compared with six or seven years ago. Then it was a regular thing to find 200 or 300 ducks on the Lake about April 1, but now the maximum numbers rarely exceed 50 or 75. Mallards and Black Ducks used to be frequent and numerous visitors, but are very rare now. A male and female Mallard were seen March 4.--Ruskin S. Freer.



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LEXINGTON, VA.

Vol. VIII

April-May, 1937

Nos. 4 & 5

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

Dr. Florence S. Hague, Secretary
Sweet Briar, Va.

The Seventh Annual Meeting of the V.S.O. was convened at the Jefferson Hotel, Richmond, on Friday, April 23, 1937 at 2 P.M. by the President, Professor Chas. O. Handley. Professor Bailey of the University of Richmond welcomed the Society to this the second meeting to be held in Richmond. Professor Handley made a brief response and then called for the first paper, A Prairie Horned Lark's Nest, by J. B. Lewis. Because of this being the farthest southeast of any nest reported, it aroused considerable interest. The nest reported earlier by Miss Daniel near Naruna is about the same distance southward. Nests have also been found at Sweet Briar and Lynchburg. Southgate Hoyt told of some of the bird banding which he has been doing at Lexington since the first of the year. In giving Notes on the Breeding Birds of White Top Mountain, Dr. Wetmore mentioned the abundance of the Red-breasted Nuthatch; the singing of the Veery and the very striking fact that both the Eastern and Southern subspecies of Robins are nesting in close proximity at an altitude of 5,200 feet.

The Bird Life of Roanoke Swamp, as reported by Professor Handley gave some of his observations and some of a resident of that vicinity. This swamp is in Charlotte County and was drained for agricultural purposes probably in slave times, but the dykes were not kept up and the swamp has gradually returned. Nests of the Black Duck, Wood Duck, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron and Black-throated Green Warbler have been found and there are indications that the American Bittern, the Least Bittern and the King Rail also nest there.

In discussing the Extension of the Range of the Black Vulture, Dr. Murray pointed out that in general at the present time the extension of range is more on the part of southern species moving northward than of a southward extension of range. Between 1895 and 1931, the dates of the second and fourth check lists, the Black Vulture had extended its range through Virginia and southern Maryland. House Mountain with an elevation of 3400 feet is its highest nesting ground recorded in Virginia. It was suggested that the reduction of its food supply through the burying of

dead animals in the south may have been a factor in its spread.

After a brief recess the program was continued by Prof. A. Lawrence Dean of V.P.I. who presented Virginia's Junior Wildlife Instructional Program. M. G. Lewis in a brief discussion of Soil Conservation and Bird Life pointed out that bird life is distinctly benefitted by soil conservation. D. R. Mast of Charlottesville expressed agreement with Mr. Lewis.

It was announced that the Annual Dinner would be at 6:30 in the Hotel dining room. After discussion as to the time of starting on the field trip it was decided that one group would start from the Hotel at 7 A.M. and another at 8 A.M. The President told of the tense discussion in which he and Dr. Murray took part when the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries had a hearing on the question of restoring a bounty on hawks and owls. The Editor of the Rod and Gun column of the Richmond Times-Dispatch was one of the leaders in writing and working for the bounty. The Times-Dispatch also devoted a page of one issue to an article by Prof. Handley setting forth reasons why a bounty should not be paid on hawks and owls. One of the resolutions passed conveys the reaction of the V.S.O. to the bounty question. A statement from Ira N. Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey, shows that that agency does not encourage general extermination campaigns.

The following committees were named and asked to report at the business meeting: Nominations, Ralph M. Brown, Mrs. A. O. James and Alexander Wetmore; Resolutions, J. J. Murray, M. G. Lewis and J. W. Bailey. This closed the afternoon session.

About 25 members and guests attended the Annual Dinner.

Dr. Oberholser opened the evening program with a discussion of the Biological Survey Refuge Program. This was illustrated by lantern slides which gave glimpses of various wildlife refuges. The remainder of the evening program consisted of films on Game Conservation in Virginia, The Breeding Birds of Cobb's Island and The Todd Wildlife Sanctuary in Maine.

At the close of the evening program the business meeting was held. The minutes of the last Annual Meeting were read and approved as correct. In the absence of the Treasurer his report was read by Mr. Brown. The report shows total receipts of \$111.46 for 1936 and disbursements of \$48.41, which does not include the November-December issue of THE RAVEN. The report was accepted. A letter from the National Association of Audubon Societies in regard to the Sanctuary Fund was read. This led to the discussion of affiliating again with the National Association. Dr. Murray reported that instead of the \$5.00 fee there is a new basis for affiliation. For societies of less than 100 members this is a \$25.00 fee which includes a lecturer from the National Association for the Annual Meeting or a \$10.00 fee without the lecturer. It was moved and carried that the decision as to which type of membership the V.S.O. should assume be left to the Executive Committee. Action in regard to the rental of the film, The Breeding Birds of Cobb's Island, was also left for the Executive Committee.

The following nominations for membership were made from the floor: A. L. Dean, Blacksburg and Leo K. Couch, Washington, D.C., by Dr. Murray; Miss Agnes B. Sitterding, Richmond, by Mrs. Jurgens and Mrs. Colgate W. Darden, Norfolk, by Dr. McIlwaine. The names of new members who have already paid dues for 1937 were presented by the Secretary as follows: Compton Crook, Matthew Whaley School, Williamsburg; J. Southgate Y. Hoyt and L. W. Lane, II, Lexington; Mrs. E. H. Ingersoll, Richmond, Katy Friel Sanders, Max Meadows; Margaret Sandidge, Amherst, and, for reinstatement, John H. Grey, Raleigh, N.C. All were elected or reinstated.

Dr. Murray reported that there had been fewer issues of THE RAVEN in 1936 but that more pages per issue brought the total amount as high as previously. The Secretary's report was read and accepted. The resolutions reported from that Committee by Dr. Murray, Chairman, and unanimously adopted were as follows:

1. We wish to express in advance our most sincere appreciation of the lunch prepared by Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Jurgens and Miss Sara Snook for the field trip tomorrow.
2. We wish to express our appreciation of the cooperation given to us in our meeting by the Jefferson Hotel.
3. Resolved that we, the V.S.O. go on record as opposed to the payment of ^{bounties on} predatory birds and animals in Virginia for the following reasons: a) They are ineffective, as proven by actual experience in this and many other states, in bringing about an increase in game or other wildlife. b) Bounties result in unlimited fraud. c) Funds available can and should be used toward programs which will provide more adequate food and cover and more favorable breeding and living conditions for game birds and mammals.
4. Resolved that we favor the employment by the Forest Service of a wildlife conservation specialist in the Jefferson National Forest, recognizing the valuable work being done in this capacity by Mr. T. E. Clark in the George Washington National Forest and that the Secretary of this Society be instructed to write the several members of Congress and Senators from Virginia informing them of our wishes in this connection.
5. Resolved that we favor the establishment of a Chair of Ornithology at V.P.I. or at The University of Virginia or at both.

Mr. Brown reported for the Nominating Committee the following names for President, Mr. J. B. Lewis; Vice-President, Dr. Wm. B. McIlwaine, Jr. Secretary, Miss Florence Hague; Treasurer, Mr. A. O. English; Executive Committee, Prof. R. S. Freer and Mr. M. G. Lewis. The Secretary's objection to her nomination because of her expected absence from the State was put aside and the officers nominated were elected. Meeting adjourned.

The Executive Committee subsequently authorized payment for the use of the film, The Breeding Birds of Cobb's Island and decided to take the ten dollar membership in the National Association of Audubon Societies.

About 25 members and friends joined in the field trip to Curles Neck Farm. Because of clouds and wind boats were not used. At noon all gathered joyfully about an open fire and the lunch which Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Jurgens and Miss Snook had prepared. A list of the 83 species of birds

seen is appended.

BIRDS RECORDED

Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Blue-winged Teal, American Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Marsh Hawk, Osprey, Bob-white, Upland Plover, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellow-legs, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Hummingbird, Kingfisher, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Kingbird, Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Crow, Fish Crow.

Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Thrush, Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Yellow Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Water Thrush, Maryland Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Redstart.

English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Rusty Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Cowbird, Cardinal, Blue Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

INFORMATION DESIRED

Will all readers of THE RAVEN, in and outside of Virginia, who find and identify a nest of the Carolina Junco, please determine the approximate elevation(feet above sea level) of the nest and send this information together with the number of eggs or young in the nest, and date, to me? This information and cooperation on the part of THE RAVEN readers will be much appreciated.--D. Ralph Hostetter, MT. Lake Biological Station, Mt. Lake, Va.

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JUNE ISSUE

It is planned to devote the next issue of THE RAVEN as largely as possible to nesting notes. Contributors are requested to send in nesting data. Records of nests of common birds should be made brief, giving only the date, location and number of eggs or young; while records of more unusual birds may be given more space. These should be sent in to the Editor by the first of July.

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PRAIRIE HORNEED LARK'S NEST AT AMELIA, VIRGINIA

By John B. Lewis
Amelia, Va.

Last fall, Mr. C. T. Marshal, a farmer living one and a half miles west of Amelia village, told me of a pair of birds new to him that had nested on his farm the previous spring. He did not see the nest, but found young birds unable to fly while he was discing. He gave a fair description of the Prairie Horned Lark, so this spring I watched his fields closely for them. They were first seen on March 8. On April 10 the nest was discovered in a last year's corn field in which no fall crop had been sown. The field lies high, and the soil was bare except for the corn stubs and patches of dry bermuda grass. The nest was in a depression that just fitted it, and was unprotected except for a wisp of dry bermuda grass, not sufficient to give it even a suggestion of concealment.

Measurements made after the young left the nest showed that its depth was one and a half inches, its greatest diameter at the top three and a quarter inches, and its smallest diameter two and three quarter inches. It was rather heavily lined, especially at the bottom, with grass blades.

HISTORY OF THE NEST

First located on the morning of April 10, when it contained three dull-colored, somewhat mottled eggs. April 11, 2:20 P.M.; one egg had hatched. April 12, 5:10 P. M.; three downy young of a light, yellowish-brown color. Old birds chirped at a distance. April 14, 11 A.M.; young growing rapidly. Both parents about 50 yards from nest; male singing. April 16, 9 A.M.; young have about filled the nest. Mr. Marshal plowing field. Parent birds very solicitous. Marshal and I staked off strip to be left undisturbed in plowing. April 17, 4:40 P.M.; Mr. Marshal has successfully plowed around the nest. Young safe, parent birds at the nest when I approached. April 18, 11 A.M.; visited the nest in company with Mrs. and Miss Shaw, and Mrs. Ingersoll, of Richmond. Found the female near the nest with a worm in her bill. After looking at the young birds we retired to about 20 yards from the nest and stood quietly. Soon the female began walking in a zig-zag fashion about the field, always drawing near the nest until she finally reached it and fed the young, then flew away. About fifteen minutes later the male came to the fence, about 30 yards beyond the nest from us, with a worm in his bill, but did not approach the nest. Then the female lit on the ground near the fence with another worm in her bill; and again zig-zagged up to the nest and fed the young. As she reached the nest the male flew to it, but apparently did not pause long enough to feed the worm he carried to the young, as the female did with hers. Later we watched the male at about ten yards range, as he sang from the top of a corn stub. April 20, 9 A.M.; one of the old birds left the nest as I approached. The young seemed nearly fully feathered, though their wings and tails are quite short. Their backs are dark lead color, with numerous small, white dots, giving them a guinea fowl appearance. As I stood about ten yards from the nest, one

of the parents lit on the ground about 20 yards beyond it and as usual zig-zagged up to it with a worm for the youngsters. April 21, 2 P.M.; visited the nest and found it empty. The old birds were making short flights all about the field and chirping excitedly. Mr. Marshal said he visited the nest about 10 A.M. and found the young birds still in it, so they left between 10 A.M. and 2 P.M., April 21!

This would indicate a nest feeding period for the first-hatched bird of approximately ten days, and for the two later-hatched ones, nine days. From the feather development of the young when last seen it seems probable that they left the nest before they could actually fly.

On August 27, 1935, while laying out terraces on a farm near Earls, in the southeast part of Amelia County, fifteen miles southeast of Amelia Court House, I saw at close range what seemed to be a family of Prairie Horned Larks, two of which were in full adult plumage. This was on high, rolling open land. As the date seemed very early for migrants from the north, I suspected that these birds might have been reared there. This spring I had no difficulty in finding a pair of horned larks at this place. On April 12 and 16 this pair were visited and although they gave every indication of having either a nest or young birds just out of the nest, neither were found. I feel very confident that this pair are nesting there. One bird of this pair, when much excited as if by my close approach to either the nest or young, gave, in addition to the usual "chee-chip" call, a much stronger and clearer note that closely resembled one of the alarm notes of the Meadowlark, though with less volume. It was a clear "quee", with a strong rising inflection.

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THE BIRD LIFE OF THE ROANOKE CREEK SWAMP

By C. O. Handley
Blacksburg, Va.

The following notes on birds nesting in or near the Roanoke Creek Swamp in Charlotte County are supplied by Mr. T. R. Watkins of Charlotte Court House, Virginia:

Wayne's Warbler. April 20, 1933. Three fresh eggs in nest of grasses and roots on the end of a horizontal limb about six feet from the ground in a low growth of scattered pines, about 300 yards above Bailey's Pond. The eggs were white with brown specks on the large end.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron. April 27, 1933. Five nests containing from three to five eggs each and several nests not yet laid in were found in a thick growth of yellow pines growing on hillside on the south side of Daniel's swamp.

Black Duck. April 23, 1931. Nest and ten well-incubated eggs on high creek bank in sand; no cover in immediate vicinity of the nest.

April 17, 1933. Nest and nine fresh eggs in a bunch of grass and

leaves lodged in the crotch of three birches growing from the same root. Nest about eight inches from surrounding, frequently flooded low-grounds.

April 4, 1937. Nest and twelve slightly incubated eggs. Nest located on dyke in Bailey's Pond at high water level under a small red cedar within a few feet of a path frequented by fishermen; poorly concealed and composed of oak leaves and down. The nest was found the day before our visit, by fishermen, when the female duck flushed. Apparently the duck had not returned to the nest. The eggs were only partially covered by the down and leaf covering, and were cold. The chances for hatching the set of eggs seemed so slight that it was collected and placed in the museum being developed at the Virginia Polytechnic Institut

Red-tailed Hawk. March 14, 1936. Nest and three partially incubated eggs about 60 feet up in a tall pine about 100 yards from a last year's nest in an oak. Nest constructed of sticks and lined with strips of cedar bark and cedar twigs.

April 4, 1937. Nest and one fresh egg about 40 feet above the ground in top of a yellow pine on a wooded hillside. Nest a bulky mass of sticks. A pair of red-tails seen in the vicinity showed no concern when I climbed to the nest. The nest had apparently been deserted. The egg showed several scratches made by a squirrel's teeth. The nest contained one egg when Mr. Watkins climbed to it on March 21.

Red-shouldered Hawk. March 7, 1937. Three fresh eggs were collected from a nest of sticks, bark and trash in a willow oak growing in the swamp. Two additional eggs were collected from the same nest one week later, March 14.

April 4, 1937. I climbed to a nest containing three well-incubated eggs in the crotch of a willow oak about thirty feet above the ground, in the low grounds bordering Bailey's Pond. The nest was covered with white down. A brood of young red-shoulders had just left this same nest only a few days before my visit to the swamp last June. The nest and eggs were photographed and left undisturbed.

Barred Owl. March 14, 1937. Nest and three eggs found in a dead willow snag surrounded by water. Nest about fifteen feet up; eggs nearly ready to hatch.

March 28, 1937. A cracked egg over which had been smeared the contents of another egg were found in a newly constructed nest of the Red-tailed Hawk. The nest was in a willow oak about 40 feet above the ground. The owl was seen leaving the vicinity of the nest when it was investigated. A pair of Red-tailed Hawks have been known to nest in this part of Daniel Swamp each year for about ten years. They have a nest this year about a quarter of a mile away in a large willow oak tree completely surrounded by water. The hawk could be seen on the nest from a distance of several hundred yards through the use of our binoculars at the time of our visit on April 3.

WOODCOCKS AT MOUNTAIN LAKE

By D. Ralph Hostetter
Harrisonburg, Va.

At least six male woodcocks are on the Mountain Lake area, four on the Biological Station grounds, and two on the grassy fields near the Silver Fox Ranch. Every evening since our arrival here, April 1, these males have entertained us with their "love song" or "sky dance" as it is called.

The time for the dance is determined, not by the clock, but by the intensity of light or darkness. On April 1 the flights began at 7:00 P.M. and continued to 7:30 P.M. As the days became longer, April 12, their period of activity was from 7:15 to 7:45 P.M. On cloudy and rainy evenings they begin earlier than on clear nights. The performances average from 30 to 45 minutes. After the last flight they may continue to call for one to two hours, especially on moonlight nights.

Preliminary to the aerial flight, for a period of ten to fifteen minutes, he gives a varying number of calls, "peent, peent" or "zeent, zeent" from the ground. This is followed by the spectacular flight or sky dance which begins with a rapid rise from the ground, on whirring wings, in a large spiral. As he approaches his zenith, his spiral enlarges, his speed increases, and the whistle produced by the wings becomes louder and shriller. Finally he reaches his height which may be "300 feet from the ground" (Chapman). Here he slackens his speed, and for several moments seems to hover on whirring wings, although circling slowly forward. During the hovering phase, there is a fraction of a second pause at regular intervals interspersed between his rapidly beating wings. Then in a large spiral he dashes headlong toward the earth, uttering his "song" which consists of a musical mixture of whistles and twitters. When from 40 to 50 feet above the earth, his song ceases, and quietly in a small spiral he darts into approximately the same place from which he arose. He calls "zeent" a number of times before he takes off for another round in the sky.

The number of flights during one evening may be eight to ten. The aerial phase of the performance averages 50 seconds, the time between flights ranges from ten seconds to one minute or longer.

One evening I approached within ten feet of the Woodcock. I located his area, and while he was in the air I rushed to a bush or tree in the direction of his calls. During his eighth flight I darted behind a bush near the place where he took off, and on his return he landed ten feet from my hiding place. The guttural "cluck" which immediately precedes the call "zeent", was very distinctly heard. This "cluck" is very similar to that of the Whip-poor-will. By this time it was too dark to see more than his outline. As he called "zeent" it seemed to me that he bowed his head, or slightly tilted forward his entire body. However I am not too certain of this.

This instinct for courtship display is so strong and deeply rooted that inclement weather, as cold, snow or rain, does not interfere with it. This display has continued without interruption from April 1 to date.

April 20. Twice I have seen it in the morning just at daybreak. I have not been able to locate any nests.

This sky dance of the woodcock is the most remarkable and spectacular avian courtship display I have ever seen.

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APRIL IN VIRGINIA

By Bertha Daniel
Naruna, Va.

It is early morning, April 28. A Yellow Warbler is singing in the orchard as I leave the house. Pine and Myrtle Warblers are in the pines along the path. A Dove and Robin show uneasiness as I near their respective nests. A Bluebird pauses with nesting material until I pass by before entering the bird house where she has set up housekeeping. A Bewick's Wren is singing. Perhaps family cares prevent him from coming to meet me with friendly curiosity as he usually does. In the field the Chipping and Field Sparrows are common. From the ravine I hear the Towhees, Brown Thrashers, Carolina Wren and Cardinal. There are harsh cries up back of the house and I see three Blue Jays fly out of the trees.

I soon reach the highway, a winding road that has been cut down between two large bluffs. A small brooklet rushes over stone steps beside the road and I hear the sweet music of the Louisiana Waterthrush. From the bluff to the left I hear the Vireos, the Red-eyed, White-eyed and Yellow-throated. A Redstart, Hooded warbler and Ovenbird are also among them. As I near the river I hear the peculiar notes of the Parula Warbler and the piping of the Spotted Sandpiper.

There's an azure patch of dwarf iris beside the road. How well they contrast with the pearl green of the woods, the pink buds of the wild azaleas, and the "ivory trays" of the dogwood.

From a distance comes the clear call of the Crested Flycatcher. The Black-throated Green Warbler counts over his "zoe's" and a Phoebe is singing near an old barn. A Goldfinch shows brightly against the green of the pines.

I have reached the wide fields near Naruna. The Grasshopper Sparrow has returned to the clover. The Meadowlarks are wild with joy. I hear their flute-like songs and the whistle of the Bob-white. There's a large number of Chimney Swifts circling over; and with them seems to be a Rough-winged Swallow. But what is that wonderful music I hear coming from a nearby apple tree? Then I remember:

"The Meadowlark is in the field,
The Bobolink's on the wing"--

Nine handsome male Bobolinks fly gracefully out into the alfalfa field, one keeping watch from a leaf stalk and continuing its rippling song. A friend passes in a car, she waves to me, but I am oblivious to all

except the Bobolink choir. There's a large flock of Black Vultures circling over the village as I enter.

As I return home in the afternoon a Vesper Sparrow flies up from beside the road, I hear the farewell notes of the White-throated Sparrow, and a Prairie Horned Lark sings from his perch on a clod of dirt in a plowed field. The Whip-poor-wills are singing at twilight.

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ANOTHER EUROPEAN TEAL AT LEXINGTON

On April 11, 1937, as I was making my early morning trip in the field I noticed an odd-colored Teal on Big Spring. This duck sat in one place for several minutes so I had ample opportunity to study it at close range with my 8x binoculars. This duck resembled the Green-winged Teal (Nettion carolinense) except that it lacked the patch of white before the wings and it did have a very marked patch of white on the upper surface just above the bend of the wings. This can be none other than the European Teal (Nettion crecca). I was accompanied by R. B. Smith, Jr., and W. W. Grover. All comparisons with the field guide (Peterson's) were made individually and later compared. Each one of us checked the markings noticed by the others to be sure of no mistake. This is the second record of this species on this pond in the past two years. Dr. J. J. Murray collected a specimen last year.--J. Southgate Y. Hoyt, Lexington, Va.

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MEMORY OF JOHN JAMES AUDUBON HONORED BY WPA

Honoring the memory of John James Audubon, famous American artist and ornithologist, a museum is being erected by Works Progress Administration workmen in the Audubon Memorial Park, a mile north of Henderson, Kentucky. High on a hill overlooking a majestic stretch of the Ohio River, the gray stone two-story building is surrounded by the 400-acre park with its rolling land and thick woods.

The federal Government, the State of Kentucky, the city of Henderson, the Henderson Historical Society and the Transylvania ^{Society} are sponsoring the undertaking. In addition, Audubon enthusiasts from all over the nation have agreed to send in valuable prints, papers, portraits and other mementoes of the great naturalist, it is announced.

A complete collection of Audubon prints will be exhibited in a double frieze in the main gallery on the first floor of the museum. The second floor will have space for stuffed birds, books, portraits and other Audubonia. There will also be a Kentucky room, which will contain the relics of Daniel Boone, who was a close friend of Audubon, and mementoes of other contemporaries. A Transylvania room will honor the notables of this society of early settlers.

The Norman style of architecture has been employed in the museum structure because of Audubon's ancestry. This allowed the construction

of a round tower in the museum with pigeon holes so the birds can nest in the masonry. A formal garden will be laid out in front of the building with the wheel from the stream grist- and lumber-mill that Audubon built at Henderson, and which ended so disastrously for him, in the center. Near the museum will be a French gatehouse.

The decade that Audubon spent at Henderson included the happiest and saddest years of his life. Kentucky was practically a wilderness when Audubon, unsuccessful in the mercantile business in Louisville, arrived at Henderson on a flatboat in 1810 at the age of 25. With him was Lucy Bakewell Audubon, whom he had married two years before. Their daughter, Lucy, died and was buried there while still a child.

Information Service,
Works Progress Administration,
Washington, D.C.

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FIELD NOTES

AMELIA, VA.

OSPREY. April 2; an Osprey was seen at Rowlett's Mill Pond, circling about 75 feet above the water. Once it made a grand plunge, sending the spray flying in all directions, though I could not see that he had a fish when he arose from the water. Once he gave a series of rather weak, rapidly whistled notes, each one with a marked falling inflection.

WATER BIRDS ON RAIN PONDS. From about 9 P.M. Saturday, April 24, to noon, Monday the 26th, it rained heavily and almost continuously. Soon after the rain ceased I visited a large low-ground pasture on Nibb's Creek about one and a half miles below Amelia village. The rain had transformed several low places in this field into temporary ponds of considerable size. Around the borders of the upper of these ponds were five Herring Gulls, three Ring-billed Gulls and a Forster's Tern, the latter in winter plumage. The Herring Gulls were the first to fly, but I had a good look at them with 6x glasses, both on the ground and on the wing. The Ring-bills allowed a closer approach and were easily identified before they too took wing and circled out of sight. The tern was quite trustful, allowing an approach to about 75 yards, and plenty of time for study. His head and body appeared white all over except for a conspicuous black spot on each side of the head. The bill was black. The wings and tail were gray, with dark tips that were conspicuous in flight. On a large rain pond at the lower end of the field were about 20 ducks, eight of which were Scaups, the others Blue-winged Teals. They also arose and left as I approached.

On Tuesday morning I visited this place again. The rain ponds had drained out and no water birds were seen there. In a swampy field farth down the creek I found a single Blue-winged Teal that was probably injured in some way, as it allowed a very close approach and did not at any time fly more than 75 yards. An Upland Plover, Bartramia longicauda, left the

field as I entered it. This is my first record of it for Amelia County. On both days there were many Spotted Sandpipers in the fields and along the creek.

On April 30 a singing male Black-throated Green Warbler was found near Namozine Creek in the southeast part of Amelia County. This is my first Amelia record for this warbler.--John B. Lewis.

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HAMPDEN-SYDNEY, VA. (The following notes were furnished to the Editor by Mr. W. T. Williams, of Hampden-Sydney, who is making a collection of bird skins for an exhibit for the George Washington National Forest.)

On March 6, 1937, a Woodcock nest, with three well-incubated eggs, within a week of hatching, was found by Mr. Williams near Hampden-Sydney. His dog picked up the incubating bird and brought it to him uninjured. He released the bird but it did not return to the nest, as the eggs were cold the next day.

On February 22, 1937, he collected a female Barred Owl near Hampden-Sydney. The owl contained an egg, with shell formed, and ready to be laid.

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BIG LEVELS WILDLIFE REFUGE, AUGUSTA COUNTY, VA. On May 17, 1937, Mr. T. E. Clarke, Wildlife Technician for the George Washington National Forest, Mr. W. T. Williams and the writer spent an afternoon in the Big Levels in Augusta County. The territory is covered with small scrub growth, and birds were not common. Among the common birds seen were Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Titmouse, Chickadee, Prairie Warbler, Redstart, Red-eyed Vireo, Thrasher, Cardinal and Towhee. One Olive-backed Thrush was seen. As we approached a small woodland pond a Wood Duck appeared over the tree tops. Mr. Clarke found two nests of the Wood Duck in the area last summer. This year he is putting up hollow logs for nesting sites. A Broad-winged Hawk lit in a tree near the pond.

We collected a Black-billed Cuckoo which contained an egg with a hard shell. Ruffed Grouse were heard drumming at intervals. A Kingfisher was seen at Lake Sherando. Mr. Clarke is having clearings made at suitable intervals in the forest. Food crops are being sown in these places; and already there are indications of an increase, not only in game birds but in song birds. Deer have been released in the area and seem to be plentiful.--J. J. Murray

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LEXINGTON, VA. In my daily morning trips I have tried to cover as many of the good localities around this section as I could. My trips usually start at about 5 o'clock. I go straight to Brushy Hill then down a back road to the main highway and out to Big Spring. From here I usually try to get to Cameron's Pond if the time permits. I always have to return to a 9:30 class. In these localities I cover a wooded and well-covered

hill, a pond, well-protected and with tame ducks on it, and also an open field thickly covered with low brush and growth surrounding a nearly dried up pond.

The following dates are the earliest yet recorded for the Lexington region: Towhee, March 6; Spotted Sandpiper, April 16; Parula Warbler, April 16; Catbird, April 20; Wood Thrush, April 22; Prairie Warbler, April 21; Semipalmated Sandpiper, May 6; Chestnut-sided Warbler, May 10. Latest dates for the Lexington region: Bufflehead, April 22, four, two adult males, one immature male, one female; Mallard, April 27, one male, three female.

Records of uncommon birds: Pectoral Sandpiper, April 22; Osprey, April 27; Tree Swallow, May 1 (W. T. Williams); Blue Grosbeak, April 28 (Robert Smith, Jr.); Nashville Warbler, May 11; Pine Warbler, May 14.-- J. Southgate Y. Hoyt.

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LEXINGTON, VA. It is an interesting experience for the bird student when he hears a song that is new to him. I have had that experience three times this spring, having heard a Swamp Sparrow singing here on April 19; two Northern Water-thrushes singing on May 7; and a Connecticut Warbler on May 17. The Swamp Sparrow is common here in migration, the Water-thrush scarce but regular, but neither of these birds seems ordinarily to sing during migration. The Connecticut Warbler is scarce here even in autumn, and this is my first time to see the bird in spring. Last spring I heard my first songs from the Gray-checked and Olive-backed Thrushes, both of which were singing in my yard for a few days.

A Bonaparte's Gull was seen at Cameron's Pond, April 26. A Marsh Hawk at the same place, May 9. A Broad-winged Hawk, very scarce here except in the fall migration, was seen on April 19 and again in the same place on April 26, acting as if it had a nest nearby. The male of a pair of Blue Grosbeaks was collected at Cameron's Pond on May 1 by W. T. Williams.

A new bird for the Rockbridge list is the White-eyed Vireo, two singing males on April 19; one on April 26; and a pair at a different place on May 1.

Nests: A Killdeer's nest with four eggs was found by my little son, Jimmy, on April 6, on a limestone outcrop in a pasture. This is an extremely early date. H. H. Bailey's dates for fresh eggs are May 20 to June 1, which is about normal for Lexington. The earliest date ever recorded for the Washington, D.C., region is April 3 (1895). My first nest for the season was that of a Crow, the nest half or two-thirds completed on March 24. It had four eggs on April 12; three naked young on April 26; and young still in the nest on May 10.--J. J. Murray.

LYNCHBURG. Earliest date: Kingbird, 4/18. Unusual birds: Double-crested Cormorant and Common Loon, ponded river by Snowden power plant, Amherst County, 5/8; Pine Siskin, April 23; two male Old Squaws up to April 17; two Ospreys far from water, one near Lone Jack Mt., Campbell County, about April 15; the other over Peaks of Otter, Bedford County, May 16, seen with A. O. English of Roanoke; Bay-breasted Warbler, May 13, my second record for Lynchburg; Warbling Vireo in our yard, May 8, my fifth Lynchburg record; Cerulean Warbler nesting again on Locke's Mt., Bedford County; Worm-eating Warbler, Matt's Creek in Blue Ridge, Bedford County; Red-bellied Woodpeckers very scarce this past year, only two records this spring. New birds for my Lynchburg list: Least Sandpiper, May 13; Semipalmated Plover, May 18. Both should doubtless have been recorded here before.--Ruskin S. Freer.

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MOUNTAIN LAKE, VA. (April 23, 1937.) Since my arrival here on April 1, the following birds were seen. The dates represent my first observation, and not necessarily the arrival of the birds on the mountain. 4/1, Woodcock, Downy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Phoebe, Blue Jay, Crow, Carolina Junco, Song Sparrow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee, Robin; 4/2, Mourning Dove, Turkey Vulture, Flicker, Bewick's Wren, Bluebird; 4/3, Hairy Woodpecker; 4/6, Field Sparrow, Brown Creeper; 4/7, Towhee; 4/8, Ruffed Grouse, Golden-crowned Kinglet; 4/9, Pied-billed Grebe (on lake); 4/10, Hermit Thrush; 4/11, Red-tailed Hawk; 4/12, Barred Owl, Fox Sparrow; 4/13, Cooper's Hawk; 4/14, Scaup Duck (33 on lake), Sharp-shinned Hawk, Meadowlark; 4/15, Raven; 4/17, Broad-winged Hawk, Chipping Sparrow, Mountain Vireo; 4/18, Whip-poor-will, Cowbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 4/19, Purple Grackle, Yellow-throated Vireo, Black and White Warbler; 4/20, Brown Thrasher, Winter Wren. This list includes permanent residents, summer residents and transient migrants.

Ruffed Grouse drummed 4/17; Downy Woodpeckers are excavating nesting cavities 4/20. Bewick's Wren began building nest 4/20. All observations were made above 3800 feet.

(April 30, 1937). These notes conclude my observations for the month of April. Dates and arrivals are as follows: 4/21, Goldfinch, Cairn's Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Ovenbird; 4/24, Wood Thrush; 4/25, White-throated Sparrow; 4/28, Spotted Sandpiper (on margin of lake), Osprey (circling over lake), Blackburnian Warbler, Catbird, Veery; 4/29, Least Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler. Total number of species observed during April is 57.

The Woodcocks have continued their sky dances throughout the entire month. On April 30 their flights extended from 7:30 to 8:00 P.M.

Ruffed Grouse are drumming more frequently; they may be heard on warm days following a heavy fog or rain.

First egg of season is that of a Robin, 4/29.

The Carolina Juncos are building nests. One was begun April 17, 1

was abandoned before completed. Another nest, seventy feet from the abandoned nest, was begun by apparently the same pair on April 28. This is about completed.

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and Flickers are locating nesting sites and drilling holes. During the past week the males were busy displaying before the females.

The Banding record for April includes 26 Carolina Juncos, 14 White-throated Sparrows, 2 Towhees and 1 Fox Sparrow. Many of the Juncos and practically all of the White-throats have been retaken, some as often as four times in one day. The White-throats were determined to get a full meal from the traps. Trapping birds gives one an opportunity to study the nervous reactions and disposition of the various species. Juncos are very excitable, and when the hand is placed into the trap they rush and flutter wildly. When taken into the hand they jerk and twist continually in an effort to escape, and they will escape on the least possible release of the hand. They seldom use their beaks.

The White-throated Sparrows are much more easily removed from the trap, and make little effort to escape from the hand. In fact after being banded, they may remain lying in the open hand for several seconds before taking off. These birds, however, are contented and quiet only when they have a piece of finger or thumb in their beaks.

Bewick's Wren is a tiny bundle of nerves, and often the wrapper breaks. One caught in the trap reminded me of a feathered merry-go-round, and it shot through the trap door before I had a chance to get it in my hand. This illustrates their keenness of vision and accuracy of aim in flying through a very small opening.---D. Ralph Hostetter.



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

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

Vol. VIII

June, 1937

No. 6

JUNE DAYS ON COBB'S ISLAND

J. J. Murray
Lexington, Virginia

Of all places in Virginia Cobb's Island is probably the most widely known in ornithological circles. This little bit of sand on the Eastern Shore has been a famous working ground since the days of Robert Ridgway and William Brewster back in 1890. During these years its interesting bird colonies have been described by many writers. For many years I have wanted to visit the island but was never able to do so until this summer when I spent three days there, from June 21 to 23, in company with my wife.

We made the little fishing village of Oyster, eight miles northeast of Cape Charles, our headquarters. Here we stayed at the home of Mrs. John Gray and feasted bountifully on soft-shelled crabs and other seafood between bird trips. In the front yard I made my first acquaintance with the Atlantic Song Sparrow. I found that this race of the Song Sparrow is not hard to distinguish from its more widely-distributed relative, the Eastern Song Sparrow, even in the field by its larger size and darker coloring. In the nearby marshes the Long-billed Marsh Wrens sang by day and the Clapper Rails roused from their slumbers to make strange noises at night. In the woods behind the house Gnatcatchers, Crested Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireos, Pine and Prairie Warblers, and Yellow-throats were common. I was disappointed at not hearing Chuck-will's-widows. I noticed an interesting difference in the songs of some of the birds that are common at home in western Virginia. The Robins' notes had a more piping quality; the Yellow-throats gave a new turn to their songs; and even the songs of the Catbirds at twilight seemed somewhat strange.

In front of the house and beyond the little bay where the fishing boats anchor stretched the Broadwater, with its eight miles of marsh and water reaching to the outer islands, Hog, Cobb's, Cardwell's, Wreck and Bone. In the Broadwater are great stretches of high marsh, Cedar Creek Island, Mockhorn, Gull Marsh, the Big and Little Eastwards, where the Laughing Gulls and Forster's Terns and Clapper Rails nest. To anyone who has the salt water in his blood this is a fascinating country. We were fortunate in our weather, with three perfect days and a moon almost full

at night. Through this region Mr. Warren Cobb, the Audubon warden, was our guide, taking us out each day in his boat. Mr. Cobb is the great-grandson of Nathan Cobb, who came to the Virginia coast in 1840 and bought Cobb's Island for \$20 and a hundred bushels of salt which he himself made on the beach, and the son of George Cobb, who for many years kept a summer hotel on the island when it was a well-known resort and who lost his life in the terrible storm of August, 1933. A better guide could not be had as he knows the island and marsh region as most men know their front yard. He was not only guide and helper but kindly gentleman and good host.

Two of the three days, June 21 and 23, were spent on Cobb's Island. The island, eight miles long but only two or three hundred yards wide, is now only a remnant of what it was before the storms swept across it. On the first morning we landed at the southern end, near the old Coast Guard Station, and began to work along the beach. There are no buildings on the island except the old Coast Guard Station, now abandoned and with the roof fallen in, and the spick and span new Station, both located in the edge of the marsh at the southern end. There is no shade, not a tree nor even a bush, nothing but scattered weeds and the logs and driftwood swept in from Hog Island during the storm. Birds are not common at the southern end where most visitors land, and we had to go for a discouraging mile before we found a nest. At first we thought that this was because we did not know how to find them but when we came into the right territory it was easy enough to locate them. In the summaries that are given below it must be remembered that we covered less than half of the island, and that probably the poorer half.

We found that we had arrived at the height of the Black Skimmer season. Nests were found at every possible stage. On the whole the season this year was considerably earlier than I had been led to expect from the accounts of the visits of other men. A. C. Bent ("Life History of North American Gulls and Terns", p. 311) found that laying had only begun at Cobb's Island on June 24 in 1907. Of the 85 nests that we listed on June 21 and 23 five had one egg; six had two; twelve had three; thirty-four had four; twenty had eggs and young; and eight had young. Apparently no young had left the nests. Twenty-five of these nests were examined on June 21 in a colony about a mile from the southern end, and twelve more in the same colony two days later. On the 23d five nests were found in a small colony at the Key Post three miles from the southern end and forty-three in a larger colony a short distance farther north across an inlet. For lack of time we did not explore the northern half of the island, where the largest colony is said to be located. The eggs, about 1.75 by 1.30 inches in size, were striking and beautiful, most of them pale creamy, some of them bluish-white, in ground color, blotched more or less heavily with black or brown or even reddish, in an infinite variety of color and pattern. We found ... one egg that was pale blue with only one or two tiny dots at the large end. They also vary much in shape, some round at both ends, some pointed. They are laid in a slight depression in bare dry sand, with nothing whatever in the depression, and can easily be seen at some distance. The downy young are of the palest buff color, spotted above with dusky, white below. They blend so perfectly with the dry sand that they are not easy to find; and the difficulty is increased by their habit of lying half covered with sand. Long before one reaches the colony

some of the old birds fly screaming about, and over the nesting places there is always a cloud of frantic birds. In the last colony, possibly because there the hatching was somewhat more advanced, the birds were much more aggressive. Where in the first colony the birds merely flew about us, calling like a pack of hounds, here at times they flew at us, coming within a few feet. None of them actually struck at us. The adult Black Skimmer, with its black back and wings, its white underparts and its strange long red bill, the upper mandible shorter than the lower, is one of the handsomest and most interesting of the beach birds. In the most recent issue of 'The Auk' (July, 1937, pp. 237-244) O. S. Pettin-gill, Jr., has a very interesting article on "Behavior of Black Skimmers at Cardwell's Island, Virginia", in which he gives many details about the habits of the birds around the nesting areas.

Common Terns were very active among the Skimmers, generally flying higher overhead and in wider circles. As nearly all of their eggs had hatched we found only six nests, three with eggs on the 21st, and on the 23d one with an egg and two young and two with young. There were many large young still being fed by the adults, hiding in the grass and under the drifted piles of rushes on the beach. They are much darker than the young Skimmers and have black throats. When approached they always flatten out, trying to hide, but when disturbed they can run along the beach at an amazing rate. The adult terns were much more aggressive than the Skimmers, screaming "tee-arrrr" until the noise became very trying and darting at us, almost striking our heads. Oyster-catchers, Wilson's Plovers, Willetts and Least Terns had apparently all hatched, although the young were still hiding in the grass, and all these birds added their cries to the chorus that became almost deafening at times. Along the stretch of three miles that we covered I estimated that there were ten pairs of Oyster-catchers, two pairs of Willetts, twelve or fifteen pairs of Wilson's Plovers, fifty pairs of Common Terns and twenty-five of Least Terns. We saw no Royal Terns. In a tuft of grass I found two large, delicately-colored egg shells in what I took to be the nest of a Gull-billed Tern. In the marsh behind the island were a few nests of the Laughing Gull.

On June 23 we made a short stop at Cardwell's Island, a sand bar about a half-mile in length, across a narrow channel from the southern end of Cobb's. Here birds have steadily become scarcer. Five years ago some three hundred pairs of Skimmers are said to have nested there, but we found not over fifteen pairs. This island suffered heavily from the 1933 storm. Here we saw the only Gull-billed Tern that I actually identified on the trip, although one or two nests that I could not positively identify may have belonged to this species. Once common, this bird is now scarce in this whole region. A few Common Terns, Oyster-catchers and Willetts are breeding on the island. We also saw a few Fish Crows, a number of Rod-winged Blackbirds and three pairs of Atlantic Song Sparrows. Two pairs of Rod-breasted Mergansers, unable to fly but wonderful divers, were swimming about in the channel.

Only a few shore birds were noted on the beach, one flock of ten Dowitchers, a flock of fifteen Knots, four Sanderlings, three Turnstones.

and one large flock of small sandpipers, mostly Least. Six or more Herring Gulls, both adult and immature birds, were seen on the beach. In the marsh I flushed four Black Ducks, half wild birds that fed about the Coast Guard Station. Barn Swallows nested at the Station and were common over the marsh. I saw a few Green Herons, five Turkey Vultures feeding on the beach, a pair of Boat-tailed Grackles and one Seaside Sparrow. In the channels of the Broadwater I saw a Common Loon, in poor plumage, on the 22d, one Double-crowned Cormorant, perched on a stake, on the 21st; and a few Ospreys.

We spent all day on June 22 in the great marshes of Gull Marsh Island examining nests of Laughing Gulls and Forster's Terns. Here we were entirely satisfied with what we found. I had scarcely landed at the southern end of the marsh before I began to find Laughing Gull nests. I began to list the nests according to the number of eggs or young found, but after listing one hundred and twenty-five nests ceased to put them down. We found over three hundred nests without covering more than two miles of the six or eight mile stretch of marsh. There must be well over a thousand gull nests in the area between Cobb's Island and the mainland. We struck the gulls at the height of their nesting season. The season was probably a little later than usual this year. Mr. Cobb told us that many early nests had been washed away by high tides and that this was only a fair year for the species. Of the one hundred and twenty-five nests listed fourteen had one egg; 65 (half) had two; nineteen had three; seventeen had eggs and young; and ten had young only. The eggs are about 2.10 by 1.50 inches in size, usually dark brown with darker splotches, but sometimes pale greenish. The young are dark brown, spotted with darker shades. The nests are built of rushes, usually placed on drifted piles of the same material, generally twelve or eighteen inches high but sometimes almost on the ground. The larger nests measure two to three feet across on the outside, but some are only eight inches across. They are concentrated in the higher parts of the marsh, where the grass is thickest, and while isolated nests occur everywhere most of them are in compact groups with the nests just a few feet apart. The old birds are very noisy but not at all aggressive. They begin to settle back on the nests as soon as one has gotten a hundred yards from them.

Among the gulls were always to be found Forster's Terns in smaller numbers. These terns are so much like the Common Terns that they are not easy to distinguish except by their notes which are very different, a rasping "za-aap" instead of the harsh "tee-arrrr". We found them nesting among the gulls in two places, four nests in a bit of marsh separated by a channel from the southern end of Gull Marsh, and eighteen nests at a high spot about a mile and a half north. While in each case the colonies were compact and we found no isolated nests, there were gull nests interspersed among them. The eggs were just beginning to hatch, their nesting period evidently being considerably later than that of the Common Terns. Four nests had one egg; two had two; nine had three; four had eggs and young; and two had only young. One nest which we found had two gull egg and one tern egg. At one place we found a Clapper Rail's nest directly between two tern nests which were four and a half feet apart. The nests were like those of the gulls but much smaller, shallow saucers of fine rushes placed on the drifted masses of larger rushes and measuring about

nine inches on the outside and four on the inside. We found this tern much less aggressive than the Common Tern, and yet not quite so peaceable as others have reported them to be. O. L. Austin, Jr., in his very valuable article, "Cobb Island", (Bird-Banding, January, 1932, pp. 12-25), an article which should be studied by anyone intending to visit Cobb's Island, says that he has never had a Forster's Tern swoop at him. I did have one or two to dive at me repeatedly in one of these colonies. In each of these colonies we found a nest with two young birds, as large as young Laughing Gulls at a corresponding age but evidently terns. I thought that they might be Gull-billed Terns, although I did not see any adults about. Once I did think I heard the "kik-kik-kik" call of a Gull-billed as an Osprey flew near.

Although nearly all of the Clapper Rails had hatched we were fortunate enough to find four nests, with eight and eight and nine and eleven eggs respectively. All of these were more or less exposed, with very little grass pulled over them for a dome. The eggs were very lovely, a creamy buff in ground color, with small reddish spots and splotches. No birds were seen anywhere near the nests. The first nest was found by accident. Then we found that we could discover them without much difficulty by the runways through the grass leading to them. All were near gulls' nests. I flushed one Clapper Rail in the little marsh behind Cobb's Island.

Possibly the most interesting find of the trip was made from the Ferry Boat on the return trip to Norfolk on June 24, when I saw a Wilson's Petrel flying in front of the boat. The long legs, reaching beyond the tail, were distinctly noted. It is of course unusual to find a petrel anywhere in Hampton Roads; and this occurrence was most unusual as it was near the Norfolk shore within a few miles of landing at the entrance to Little Creek. When they come inside it is generally due to severe storms, but the weather had been perfect for a week.

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(We regret the delay in the appearance of the April-May issue of THE RAVEN. Because of this delay there has not been time for contributors to send in nesting notes by July 1 as requested. In order that the June issue might appear as promptly as possible it has been decided to devote this issue to the above article on Cobb's Island, and gather together all nesting notes in a July-August issue. Additional contributions for that issue are requested as early as possible after August 1.)



The Raven

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PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

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

Vol. VIII

July-August, 1937.

Nos. 7 & 8.

JUNE BIRDS OF VIRGINIA'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN.

by J. J. Murray

Bird students always have a special interest in the birds of the highest point within their state. Virginia's top-of-the-world is to be found at the summit of Mt. Rogers in the southwestern part of the State, where Smyth and Grayson counties meet at an elevation of 5719 feet. Rogers is a fine mountain, its higher reaches covered with a dense growth of spruce and its lower shoulders offering a great diversity of territory. White Top, its twin peak across the gap at Elk Garden, easily accessible by a good road and affording shelter in comfortable cabins, is known to thousands of visitors, but Rogers, rougher and more isolated, is not often visited even by bird students. On former camping trips on White Top Dr. Alexander Wetmore and I had often looked across the gap at the dark top of Mt. Rogers and discussed the possibility of camping there. When we undertook this year to make the trip we found that it was not so difficult as we had expected. There is a rough mountain road to the opening within five hundred feet of the summit and a tough car can make the climb without too much trouble. There is no shelter, but there are good camping sites and an abundant supply of the best mountain water. Dr. Wetmore and I spent the week of May 31 to June 4, 1937, camping at this spot and studying the birds of the mountain. Mr. A. F. McDaniel, the capable caretaker at White Top, took us over with our tent and supplies in his light pick-up truck on May 31st. We had our camp set up well before dark, and slept well on air mattresses and under plenty of blankets.

Our camp was in a large pasture at almost exactly a mile high. The tent was pitched on the east side of the saddle, sheltered from the prevailing winds and near a cold spring. Around us spread three hundred or more acres of open pasture, not a natural bald such as is seen on White Top but a clearing made when the spruce was taken out many years ago. Above us to the north rose the dark, spruce-covered peak. Immediately to the north and east are woods of birch and beech with small grassy glades. To the west, hidden from our tent by the sheltering ridge, the great dome of White Top dominates the whole landscape. Across the dip in the saddle is a lower peak covered with birch and cherry and scattered spruces. In a depression at the lowest point of the clearing lies a sphagnum bog of some fifty acres, with a tangle of fallen logs in the wet grass and moss, small bushes and thick clumps of rhododendron. From the door of our

tent we looked southward down the middle fork of Helton Creek and on to the high mountains of North Carolina.

During our stay there the weather was very variable but most kindly in the timing of its wilder phases. The mornings, which we needed for collecting, were always fine. During the afternoons it rained in torrents, with an occasional hail storm thrown in for good measure, but then we were always in the tent preparing specimens. Late each afternoon the rain halted to give us time for supper; and at night again, when it only made sleeping better, there was rain and fog. During the week we covered all the various areas to be found about the camp. On June 1st we climbed through the spruce to the top, where the United States Geodetic Survey has erected a rough scaffold for surveying purposes. The next day we worked below the camp in the sphagnum bog and through the open woods. On June 3rd we were again in the spruce. On the last day, while waiting for the truck to pick us up, we covered the old fields in Low Gap at 4900 feet, along the road down the mountain toward Elk Garden. We found birds more common, both as to species and individuals, on Mt. Rogers than on White Top. Four Canadian Zone species were met with during the week; and in all birds of nineteen species were collected. A report on the sub-specific status of some of these forms will be made later. The Carolina Junco was decidedly the most common bird of the mountain, followed by the Robin and the Veery. I timed the ending of song on the first evening. The last Junco sang at 8:00, the last Robin at 8:05, and the last Veery at 8:13. Then a Barred Owl called from a nearby ridge and stirred the Robins momentarily to a frantic clamor. A passing Raven called at 8:15. In the morning the Robins were the first to sing, beginning about 4:30, and soon followed by the Juncos. The annotated list of forty-four species seen follows. All of these notes were made in Grayson County.

1. Turkey Vulture. Fairly common. Shortly after we came to camp one appeared near the top of the mountain and was chased away by a Raven.
2. Cooper's Hawk. On the 3rd, while we were in thick woods squeaking for small birds, one came in like a flash to a tree near us and was collected as it quickly took wing again. It was a male, past the breeding state with sex glands retarded.
3. Ruffed Grouse. We heard two different birds drumming, one on the 31st and one on the 2nd.
4. Bob-white. At least two pairs below camp.
5. Woodcock. One of the surprises of the trip was the flushing of at least three of these birds in a brier patch in the edge of the spruce near the top of the mountain on the 1st.
6. Barred Owl. One heard at night on May 31st. The imitation of the note of this owl would always stir up the Red-breasted Nuthatches in the spruce woods.
7. Chimney Swift. Fairly common about the clearing. On Mt. Rogers these birds have reverted to their ancient habits and are using hollow trees. We saw them going into a hole about twenty feet up in a large dead chestnut on the afternoon of the 1st; and into a hole in another tree on the 3rd. They were evidently nesting, as we saw them gathering twigs.
8. Flicker. Abundant; nests, probably with young, judging by the number of trips made by the adults.
9. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. One heard in the woods at Low Gap on the 4th.
10. Hairy Woodpecker. One near camp on the 1st.
11. Downy Woodpecker. One collected at Low Gap on the 4th.
12. Wood Pewee. Two at Low Gap.

13. Blue Jay. Common.
14. Crow. Common.
15. Raven. Seen nearly every day; three seen on the 2nd. The birds seen evidently consisted of a family party. They are probably nesting on Pine Mountain, a ridge connected with Rogers on the east side.
16. Red-breasted Nuthatch. Common in the spruce, and coming down near camp, where the languid notes of their little trumpets were heard every afternoon.
17. House Wren. Abundant among the dead trees below camp; also seen at Low Gap. They seemed to have just arrived, and there was no evidence of their nesting at this time.
18. Winter Wren. None heard in the spruce on the 1st, when the woods were dry, but on the 3rd after the rains we heard six or seven. They were very shy, and we had great difficulty in collecting one.
19. Catbird. Fairly common in wet thickets below camp.
20. Brown Thrasher. Fairly common below camp; one in the briars near the top.
21. Robin. Abundant. We estimated the numbers about camp at from forty to fifty pairs. We found them even in the woods at the top.
22. Veery. Abundant everywhere. The song usually had three twirls, often only two, and rarely four.
23. Bluebird. Uncommon, notwithstanding the abundance of good nesting sites. Two or more pairs. Nest with young, 8 feet up in a stub.
24. Golden-crowned Kinglet. Abundant in the spruce above 5400 feet.
25. Cedar Waxwing. A pair flew over camp on the 1st.
26. Starling. Common to abundant among the dead trees. Very shy. Nests with nearly grown young.
27. Mountain Vireo. Common in the woods. Apparently not yet nesting.
28. Parula Warbler. A singing male collected at Low Gap.
29. Cairns' Warbler. Fairly common in the spruce. More common in a big field of briars near the top and in the sphagnum bog.
30. Black-throated Green Warbler. Fairly common everywhere.
31. Chestnut-sided Warbler. Abundant, especially at the edge of the woods.
32. Ovenbird. One heard above camp on the 1st.
33. Yellow-throat. Three singing in the bog on the 2nd. Very shy.
34. Canada Warbler. Abundant everywhere. Apparently nesting.
35. Meadowlark. One pale bird in the pasture on the 2nd.
36. Scarlet Tanager. Uncommon. Two below camp on the 2nd. One at Low Gap.
37. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Uncommon. Heard on 31st and 2nd; and two at Low Gap.
38. Indigo Bunting. Two at Low Gap.
39. Goldfinch. Fairly common. A flock of about 30 feeding in the pasture on the 3rd. Mostly very bright; one or two still in winter plumage.
40. Towhee. Common in thickets. One at the top. Nest with two eggs, female incubating in an open glade in beech woods, on the 3rd.
41. Vesper Sparrow. Pair flushed on the 31st.
42. Carolina Junco. The most abundant bird on the mountain, occurring everywhere. Nest with three young about three days old on the 1st, in the edge of the woods. Grass pulled over the nest to make a dome. On the 3rd as I approached the nest the female flew off and fluttered about the grass, playing the broken wing ruse. Both birds much excited, actually flying at me and coming within a few feet. On the 3rd the tail feathers were still sheathed, the inner eight in dark and the outer four in white sheaths. Other pairs seen carrying food. We saw only one young bird on the wing. At White Top one nest had eggs on May 27th, while the young had left another nest on the 28th.

43. Field Sparrow. Fairly common. Nesting.
44. Song Sparrow. Abundant in wet places below camp and in brier thickets on east side of top.

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MOURNING WARBLER IN HIGHLAND COUNTY

by Maurice Brooks

On the morning of May 31, 1937, the writer, with Messrs. I. B. Boggs and A. S. Margolin, of West Virginia University, visited the Allegheny Mountain section of Highland County, Virginia. Here, near the West Virginia line, we were able to record Mourning Warblers (*Oporornis philadelphia*) in considerable numbers. The birds were singing in the thickets that lined the highway between Monterey, Virginia, and Durbin, West Virginia, the altitude here being around four thousand feet.

Only a remnant of the original Red Spruce forest remains in this area, and the country is covered with deciduous second-growth forest, the under-cover being largely blackberries and elder. Such a flora is ideal for Mourning Warblers, in West Virginia at least, and we were not at all surprised to find them in Virginia. Since these birds were already nesting in West Virginia, it seems entirely reasonable to suppose that the Virginia birds were breeding.

The curious inter-mixture of birds of northern and southern associations that first manifests itself so remarkably on Cheat Mountain, West Virginia, is even more pronounced on Allegheny Mountain. Here we found Red-breasted Nuthatches, Blackburnian, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Canada Warblers, Juncos, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers occupying identical territory with Worm-eating and Hooded Warblers, Chats, Cardinals, and Bowick's Wrens. The flora is also interesting, such northern plants as Clintonia borealis growing with southern or lowland species.

It is worth noting that local people talked with reported seeing three Golden Eagles in Highland County during May, and also stated that a considerable flock of Wild Turkeys spent the winter on Allegheny Mountain.

West Va. University,
Morgantown, W. Va.

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PRAIRIE WARBLER AT 4000 FEET ELEVATION IN CRAIG COUNTY

by Maurice Brooks

When a bird species occupies territory well outside its normal habitat, the matter is of ornithological interest. It therefore seems worth recording that Mrs. Brooks and the writer found Prairie Warblers (*Dendroica discolor*) in full song on Potts Mountain, Craig County, Virginia, on June 21, 1937. The locality is about five miles south-east of Paint Bank, at approximately 4000 feet elevation. Here there is a considerable growth of Pitch Pine, Scrub Oak, and Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia*), the woods, where present, being very open. Juncos were singing in the same territory.

There are many cases recorded in which Carolinian birds ascend to more northern life zones in the Alleghenies, but I have not found the Prairie Warbler in West Virginia above the 3000 foot mark.

West Virginia University,
Morgantown, W. Va.

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BEWICK'S WRENS AT MT. LAKE

by D. Ralph Hostetter

Chapman in his "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America" mentions as nesting sites for the Bewick's Wren "hole in a tree, bird-box, crevice, etc." Whether this "etc." refers to a mass of roots under a tree stump projecting out over the bank along the roadside, I do not know; but four nests have been located in such situations. Upon finding these nests, I referred to various writers and not one of them mentioned roadside embankments as possible nesting sites. The editor of *THE RAVEN* in a letter to me stated that he has found a Carolina Wren's nest in such a place. Doubting my identification of the wrens, I made further investigation on May 25, only to find that three of the nests contained young which were being fed by their parents, the other two containing eggs. There was no mistake about my identification of the wrens.

Three of the nests were built in among the small roots of stumps which projected out over the roadside bank. The nests, very well concealed, were constructed of coarse sticks on the outside, followed by smaller sticks and lined with fine grass and feathers. These nests were approximately ten feet above surface of road. The fourth was built hard up against the bank overhang on the exposed roots of the vegetation above. A fifth nest was located in the side of the bank, about half way between top of bank and bottom, with trash and grass serving as a projecting roof. All the nests were similar in construction.

The caption above is incorrect in that these nests were found along the Newport and Pembroke roads, from one to two miles below the hotel. However, it is the location of the nests rather than the elevation that is the point of interest.

Mountain Lake, Va.

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MOUNTAIN LAKE NOTES

by D. Ralph Hostetter

May has added a goodly number of birds to the Station list. As stated in the April issue, the dates given are not necessarily dates of arrival, but date of first observation. Chimney Swift, 5/1; Crested Flycatcher, 5/3; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, Black-throated Green Warbler, Canada Warbler, 5/4; Red-headed Woodpecker, 5/9; Palm Warbler, 5/10; Wood Pewee, 5/11; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 5/12; Yellow-breasted Chat, 5/13; Indigo Bunting, 5/14; Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo, Maryland Yellow-throat, Redstart, 5/17; "Orm-

oating Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Parula Warbler, 5/19; Prairie Warbler, 5/29; Magnolia Warbler, 5/31. Total number of species since April 1, 78. The Worm-eating Warbler and Redstart were seen below 3800 ft. but above 3500 ft.

The two Red-headed Woodpeckers, apparently a pair, appeared to be very much at home on the Biological Station campus. But evidently conditions were not entirely satisfactory, as they remained with us for only 12 days. The caretaker of the Station cannot recall ever seeing them on the Station grounds before this spring.

Throughout the entire month the Woodcocks have been taking their sky flights. No change has been noticed from the April flights, except that as the days become longer their period is moved up to 7:40 - 8:15 p. m. The morning flights are taken just at daybreak.

May has been a month of singing, mating, nest-building, egg-laying, and feeding of young. Carolina Juncos, Bowick's Wrens, and Robins have already led forth a brood from the avian nursery.

The nests found include one Flicker, 5/20; two Towhee, one on ground, 3 eggs, 5/21; one on small Hemlock tree, two and one-half feet above ground, 4 eggs, 5/23; twenty-two Carolina Junco, chiefly along roadsides; one Ovenbird, 5 eggs, 5/23; two Black and White Warbler, one with 1 egg, 5/22, one with 5 eggs, 5/26; six Bewick's Wren, five along road side, one under cottage, six eggs or young; first date, 5 eggs, 5/9; ten Robin, first incubation, 5/1.

Judging from the depth of color of the Robin's breast, it appears that both the Eastern and Southern forms breed on the Station grounds. However, to be certain of this would necessitate the taking of several specimens.

Does the same Robin use the same nest twice in the same month? On the porch of one of the cottages a robin began incubating three eggs on May 1. This continued in normal fashion until May 9 when the nest and eggs were knocked down from the support on which the nest was built. The eggs were crushed; the nest was placed in its former position, we might say "just for fun". On May 26 a robin was noticed sitting on the nest. Investigation showed three eggs. The nest was not fastened to its support, could be easily moved with the finger. There was no evidence of repair work on the old nest lining. Incubation has been in progress since that date. While I am certain it is the same nest, I have no way of knowing whether it is the same Robin. Might this be a case in which the reproductive instincts were out of tune, and her eggs were ready to be laid before her nest was completed, so she took advantage of this abandoned nest? This is the first instance of which I have knowledge that a nest was used the second time without some change or repair.

The banding records include 5 White-throated Sparrows, 5 Towhees, 7 adult Carolina Juncos, and 23 nestling Juncos.

Further observation on the Woodcock showed that he tilts his body forward, using his legs as pivots, every time he calls "zoent". This call is given only from the ground. Reference was made to this peculiar motion in the previous issue.

For the majority of species, June has been a month of incubating,

hatching, and feeding young. Singing, especially during the latter half of the month, was at a minimum.

Several new species have been added to my list. On June 1 a Wilson's Snipe was flushed along the road leading to the Cascades. On the same date, in a rocky ledge on top of Little Cascades of Little Stony Creek, a Louisiana Water-thrush's nest, containing four eggs, was found. June 10 a Bob-white was heard calling lustily directly back of one of the Biological Station Cottages. This is my first record for Bob-white at this elevation of 3840 feet. He has not been heard since and apparently had strayed away from his kind in the grassy fields down the mountain. Total species for Mt. Lake 80; all above 3800 feet except Wilson's Snipe, Worm-eating Warbler, and Louisiana Water-thrush, and Redstart.

The nests include: 6/1 Mt. Vireo, 4 eggs; 6/3 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 2 young; 6/4 Scarlet Tanager, 4 eggs; 6/6 Field Sparrow, 3 young; 6/7 Mt. Vireo, 2nd nest, 4 eggs; 6/7 Robin, 3 young in nest used second time as described above; 6/10 Woodcock, adult and 2 young flushed near Hunter's Branch; 6/11 Downy Woodpecker, young; 6/11 Least Flycatcher, 2 eggs; 6/14 Cedar Waxwings incubating; 6/16 Mt. Vireo, 3rd nest, 4 young, 6/16 Canada Warbler, 4 eggs; 6/24 Northern Flicker, young; 6/26 Downy Woodpecker, 2nd nest, young; 6/27 Wood Pewee, 2 young; 6/30 Chipping Sparrow, 3 young; 6/30 Bowick's Wren, 5 (?) eggs. Throughout the month Carolina Junco and Robin nests, containing either eggs or young, could be found.

Ruffed Grouse hens with from 7 to 12 or more young are frequently seen. Ravens seem to be on the increase; I have seen more this spring than I have all together during the three previous summers. The Woodcocks have not been seen nor heard "sky dancing" since May 30.

Banding records for June include 1 adult and 4 nestling Towhees, 5 Robin nestlings, 3 Field Sparrow nestlings, 5 adult and 27 nestling Carolina Juncos.

Carolina Juncos, as well as other ground-nesting birds, lose many eggs and young during the breeding season. Snakes, Chipmunks, and Cats seem to be in the vicinity of every nest. On June 18 and 28 I saw Junco nests entered by Garter Snake and Black Snake respectively. Both nests contained young. In the first case, one nestling was badly bitten before the snake was killed, it died several hours later. In the second case, the snake was killed before any harm was done except the scattering of the nestlings from nest. Chipmunks are abundant and have been seen several times very close to nests, but as yet they have not been caught in the act.

The following observation, by L. S. Givens, Graduate Student, V. P. I. Wildlife Research, will be of interest to RAVEN readers:

"Further proof of the fact that certain species of snakes are sometimes serious predators of ground-nesting birds was noted by the writer on June 14th.

"While working on the Mountain Lake Game Demonstration Area my attention was attracted by the distress call of a pair of Oven-birds. They were circling a Copperhead snake about five or six feet distant. It was still in the nest but had swallowed four young as revealed later by an autopsy. The snake was about 2 ft. 6 in. long, while the birds were

approximately 7 days old.

"The length of time which it took the snake to swallow the birds is not known. No digestive action could be seen and the birds were entire except for the last bird swallowed which had its head missing."

A new species of my Mt. Lake list, added during July, is the Yellow-throated Warbler, 7/8. Two species not reported in previous issues for the elevation of the Biological Station (3840 feet) are Barn Swallow, 7/22, and Redstart, 7/24.

During the early part of the month several nests contained young, Phoebe, 7/3, 3 young; 7/6, 4 young; Bowick's Wren, 7/6, young. Carolina Juncos and Robins had young in the nest throughout the month. Cedar Waxwing nestlings left their nests. During the latter part of the month Goldfinches, Carolina Juncos, and Robins were still occupied with domestic duties.

Ruffed Grouse with half-grown young are frequently seen. Along the roadsides Wood Pewees, Blue Jays, Field and Chipping Sparrows, Carolina Juncos, Towhees, Cairn's, Chestnut-sided, and Canada Warblers, Ovenbirds, Bowick's Wrens, and White-breasted Nuthatches are feeding their fledglings.

On July 14, one, and on July 23, two male Scarlet Tanagers were seen in full brilliant scarlet and black plumage.

Banding records for July include 9 adult Carolina Juncos and 4 nestlings.

Mountain Lake, Va.

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SWEET BRIAR NESTING NOTES

by Martha Clark

The following nests were found on an area of about 36 acres immediately surrounding and including most of the college buildings.

Flicker: 6/3; about 20 feet up, in a Paulownia; several young in nest.
6/15; about 40 feet up, in a Common Locust; young just out of nest.
6/20; about 30 feet up, in a Common Locust; young just out of nest.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 6/20; young apparently just out of nest and being fed; nest not definitely located but probably on west side of Sweet Briar Garden near the Doll Pond.

Crested Flycatcher: 5/21; being built in a hole in a Paulownia, about 20 feet up; several young seen nearby on 6/20.

Wood Pewee: 6/16; being built about 50 feet up, in a Black Walnut tree.

House Wren: 6/3; 4 feet up, in a box in a Common Locust.
5/7; in a box in a Red Cedar.
5/21; in a box in a White Cedar.

5/21; in a hole in a telephone post.
6/2; in a box at entrance to Gray Hall.
6/9; in a box in a Dogwood.
6/15; in a box in a Koeleruteria paniculata.
6/16; in a box in a Honey Locust.
6/18; in a box in a Paulownia.
7/3; in a box in a Koeleruteria paniculata.
6/20; in an old barn.

Mockingbird: 5/21; in tall shrubbery; 5 young.
6/11; in shrubbery; 5 young.
6/11; rose bush.
6/11; in shrubbery; 4 young.
6/15; in a Boxwood; 4 young.
6/20; in a rose bush; several young.
6/20; being built in a rose bush; destroyed a week later.
6/16; in top of young Magnolia; bird on the nest.
6/29; in shrubbery; 4 young.
7/2; in a rose bush; 4 eggs.
7/2; in a rose bush; 3 eggs.
7/7; in shrubbery; contained three young on 7/30.

Catbird: 5/18; in thick shrubbery; 5 eggs.
6/1; in shrubbery.
5/17; in Red Cedar.
6/3; in tall shrub; 5 eggs.
6/20; in a low shrub; 1 egg.
6/20; in a tall shrub; 5 young.
6/20; in thick shrubbery; 2 eggs.
6/20; in honeysuckle thicket.
7/3; in shrub; bird on nest.
7/9; in thick shrub; bird on nest.

The following dates are of Catbird nests found in the Boxwoods in Sweet Briar Garden. The approximate location of each nest was noted on a rough sketch map. In most cases the first and second brood nests were distinguished; however, the ownership of the various nests was difficult to determine because many of them were within 10, 15 or 20 feet of other nests. Dates: 6/15, 9 nests; 6/16, 11 nests, 6/20, 9 nests.

Brown Thrasher: 5/18; in shrubbery.
6/20; in tall shrubbery; bird on nest.
The following nests were found in the Boxwoods in Sweet Briar Garden:
5/17; 6/15, 4 nests; 6/16, 3 nests; 7/3, 2 nests.

Robin: 5/15; in a rose bush; several eggs.
5/19; in a rose bush; 5 young.
5/20; in ivy on wall of a building.
5/20; in vines on wall of a building.
5/20; in vines on wall of a building.
6/1; in American Elm; several young.
6/15; in White Ash.

6/15; in Boxwood.
6/16; in Chinese Elm; several eggs.
6/15; Sugar Maple.
6/18; in Honey Locust.
6/19; being built in Common Locust.
6/20; in Deodar; just completed.
6/20; in Scrub Pine.
6/20; in Peach tree; young being fed.
6/20; in Common Locust.
6/20; in Black Walnut tree; bird on nest.
6/20; in American Elm.
6/20; in Deodar; several young near.
6/15; in Boxwood; several young in nest.
6/20; in Paulownia; young in nest.
5/20; in White Pine.
6/29; on top of a column of a building; young being fed.
7/3; in a Paulownia.
7/9; in a Paulownia.
7/9; in Black Walnut tree; bird on nest.

Bluebird: 6/18; in hole in an Apple tree.
6/20; in Black Walnut tree.

Starling: 5/20; in Paulownia; several young; 2nd brood 6/18.

Yellow Warbler: 6/19; in Common Locust.

Yellow Throat: 6/15; high weeds on roadside; 1 egg.

Meadowlark: 6/16; edge of a field; birds near.
6/20; nest empty and no birds near; status doubtful.

Orchard Oriole: 5/21; in top of Tulip tree.
6/3; in top of young Norway Maple; several young in nest.
6/23; being built in Paulownia.

Baltimore Oriole: 5/21; in Tulip tree; several young seen there 6/15.

Purple Grackle: 6/15; in Common Locust; 2 fairly well feathered young
in the nest and 2 or 3 others near.

Cardinal: 6/15; in Boxwood; nest empty.
6/20; in rose vine on wall of a building; bird on nest.
6/20; in rose vine on wall of a building; 1 egg.

Chipping Sparrow: 5/11; in small Red Cedar; several young in nest.
5/18; in shrubbery.
5/20; in shrubbery; 1 egg.
5/20; in shrubbery.
5/20; in vine on wall of building.
5/24; in Aralia; 4 young in nest.
6/2; in Loblolly Pine.
6/20; in small shrub.
6/20; in young White Ash.
6/20; in shrub; bird on nest.

6/20; in young Dogwood; 4 eggs.
6/20; in Red Cedar; 3 eggs.
6/20; in small shrub; 2 eggs.
7/2; in rose bush; 2 eggs.
7/2; in Common Locust.
7/3; in White Pine; several young in nest.
7/3; in American Elm; nest over-turned and several eggs broken.
7/3; in shrubbery; young out of nest.

In addition to the above notes, nests or young of the following birds were found at Sweet Briar (outside of the 36 acre tract) this year;

Green Heron: 5/6, nest with 4 eggs (this nest contained 5 young on 5/27);
6/26, nest with 4 young nearby; 7/11, nest with 3 downy young.

Pileated Woodpecker: young reported by another observer about 7/10.

Red-headed Woodpecker; Phoebe; Prairie Horned Lark - 4/20, nest with one egg; 2 birds (one with food) seen 7/16.

Crow; Carolina Chickadee; Tufted Titmouse; White^{-breasted} Nuthatch; Carolina Wren;
Wood Thrush; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher; Shrike - 5/3, nest with 5 young;
6/12, nest with five eggs.

Red-eyed Vireo; Ovenbird; Hooded Warbler; Red-winged Blackbird; Summer Tanager; Blue Grosbeak, 7/16 - nest with 5 young.

Indigo Bunting; Grasshopper Sparrow; Field Sparrow; Song Sparrow.

1403 Filmore Street,
Lynchburg, Virginia

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AN ISLE OF WIGHT SWAMP

by M. G. Lewis

On April 24, following the field trip to Charles Neck farm in connection with the annual meeting of the V. S. O., the writer spent the night in camp near one of the wooded swamps in Isle of Wight county. It was a rainy night and the rain continued through the following day which was of course a disappointment. However the abundance of bird life was hardly less fascinating and interesting than it could have been had the weather been more favorable during the morning. A number of years ago at this same season my father John B. Lewis and I spent a forenoon in King Sail swamp in Southampton county which was a never-to-be-forgotten event in our lives. Of most interest to us on that occasion which was in early June, were Yellow-crowned Night Herons and Prothonotary Warblers, as neither of us had previously really made the acquaintance of these two very interesting species.

On the morning of the past April 25th I was most impressed with the abundance of Swamp Sparrows and had a chance to study the song. The reeds and

undergrowth seemed to be alive with them. No doubt at this particular season there was an accumulation of individuals which had spent the winter further south starting their northward movement. To a mountaineer the abundance of bird life in these wooded swamps along the streams in the eastern part of the state is particularly inspiring. Certainly no section of the State has greater possibilities for interesting and worth while study of bird life at any season and particularly in spring and early summer.

Salem, Virginia.

AMELIA COUNTY BIRD NOTES

by John B. Lewis

May 9. Louisiana Water-thrush's nest in a hole in the nearly perpendicular, moss-covered bank of a little stream. Hole 4 feet above the water, just large enough for the nest. Contained very young nestlings.

May 9. Black and white Warbler's nest farther up bluff of same stream, at base of mountain laurel bush. Contained 5 eggs.

May 18. Red-shouldered Hawk's nest, 25 feet up in beech tree. Contained very young birds.

May 25. Red-shouldered Hawk's nest, 35 feet up in large pin oak. Contained nearly fledged young.

June 20. Found a pair of Rough-winged Swallows feeding nearly grown young in last year's Kingfisher hole, in same bank in which the Rough-wings nested in 1933 and 1934. Young left nest June 25.

August 2, 1937, I visited for the first time a large, abandoned plantation known as "Mill Quarter" in the south-east corner of Amelia county. There are several hundred acres of nearly level old fields, formerly drained by open ditches, now mostly filled up. On first arrival I heard the songs of two Henslow's Sparrows, and in more than two hours spent in tramping through the tract I was not out of hearing of one or more singing males. I saw them several times at rather close range as they sang from weed tops. My only previous record of Henslow's Sparrow in Amelia county was in July 1932, at a point about 15 miles north west of Mill Quarter, near the center of the county.

Amelia, Virginia.

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LYNCHBURG NOTES

by Mrs. C. L. Burgess

April 13, 1937 - Northern Flicker started his nesting in maple tree, 15 feet from house, and 15 feet from ground. Male and female worked each day for three weeks and three days. Several times the male called the female, and each time she answered, coming to relieve him. A pair of Starlings broke them up.

June 29 - Saw pair of Towhees feeding young birds, on Snowden mountain.

May 24 - Mockingbird started nesting in plum tree, twelve foot from ground. Feeding young in nest, June 18.

June 6 - Rocky Row Run on Snowden Mt., near Whip-poor-will Cabin, Humming-birds nest in sycamore tree, twenty-five feet from ground.

Lynchburg, Virginia.

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NESTING OF THE LOUISIANA WATER-THRUSH NEAR NARUNA

by Bertha Daniel

On March 23, 1937, the Louisiana Water-Thrush arrived and soon picked out his nesting site near our home on a brook that flows into Falling River. On March 31 he was joined by his mate and on April 17 they began building their nest on a mossy bank about 3 feet above the water. The nest was completed by April 20; and there were three eggs in nest April 27. Four eggs were laid, and the young birds were in nest on May 14.

On June 25 while walking near the river along the bluffs I found a male Scarlet Tanager. This was a sight record, I recognized his song and saw his black wings. He was singing in a tall hemlock. Since that day I have heard or seen him almost every day up until today, July 17, but no evidence of nesting.

Naruna, Virginia.

NARUNA NESTING NOTES ALONG FALLING RIVER

by Bertha Daniel

At the present time I am making my home with my oldest sister, Mrs. E. P. Elder, about four miles southeast of Naruna. This estate has been in our family for over fifty years. At the edge of the front yard are several snags that were once beautiful apple trees in my childhood days. In the back yard is the remnant of a once majestic locust tree. These old snags are full of cavities where Bluebirds, Starlings, Flickers, House Wrens, and Crested Flycatchers have built for years. When the nesting season set in the sites were carefully looked over, and rejected by all except a pair of Starling that built in the locust tree, and the Crested Flycatcher, Flickers and House Wren that built in the apple trees. These nests were destroyed by black snakes, one large one was killed while eating the young in nest of House Wren on May 27. Four black snakes were killed about the yard about the same time. One large snake left his old discarded skin hanging upon the limb of the old locust.

Dove nest with two eggs, March 29, with bird incubating.

Carolina Wren, building nest, March 19; five eggs, April 16,

Starling, building nest April 1; feeding young, April 25.

Flickers, building nest and courting, April 1; feeding young May 7; young destroyed, May 9.

Bluebird, nest in mail box with two eggs, April 12. This box had lost its door but received mail each day. The Bluebird liked it so well they raised the second brood in same nest.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, building nest, April 23; feeding young in nest May 16.

House Wren, building nest, May 6; nest robbed by snake May 27.

Prairie Warbler, building nest, May 4; three eggs in nest, May 12; four eggs on the 13th; young in nest May 25.

Pine Warbler, gathering material for nest, May 16. The Pine Warbler has a preference for hair that is shaved off of hogs at butchering time. I have watched them come from a distance to fill their bills with these fine hairs to line their nests with.

White-eyed Vireo, young fledgeling just out of nest, May 31.

Cardinal, female incubating, June 5.

Meadow Lark, young fledgeling just out of nest, June 8.

Naruna, Virginia.

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FIELD NOTES

BLACKSBURG.

March 3, Kildeer. March 7, Migrant Shrike (2); Pileated Woodpecker.
March 19, Little Blue Heron. April 3, Winter Wren, last; Vesper Sparrow.
April 18, Purple Finch, last; Solitary Sandpiper. April 29, Pectoral Sandpiper (2). May 1, Solitary Sandpiper (30); Wilson Snipe (6); Upland Plover (10); Green Heron. May 10, Lesser Yellowlegs. May 14, Black-billed cuckoo; Least Sandpiper. May 16, Night-hawk; Lesser Yellowlegs. May 17, Semi-palmated Sandpiper. May 23, Worm-eating Warbler; Cerulean Warbler. May 29, Pied-billed Grebe. May 30, Ovenbird. Nest with five fledglings. May 21 -June 8, female Lesser Scaup.

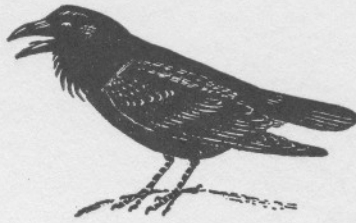
Ralph M. Brown.

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CHARLOTTESVILLE.

On April 28, 1937, I saw a male Blue Grosbeak near here, a rare bird in this county. On May 15, I saw an Upland Plover, obviously in residence, in Culpeper county.

Martin S. Curtler.



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

LEXINGTON, VA.

VOL. VIII

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1937

Nos. 9 & 10

BIRDS OF CHATHAM, VIRGINIA

By Eleanor E. Herrick

For the past three winters I have had the opportunity to study the bird life on the campus of Chatham Hall, in Chatham, Virginia, located in Pittsylvania County. Being in the very southern central part of the state, altitude 750-780 feet, we were fortunate in observing birds typical of the Carolinian fauna.

The area of the campus on which the birds were observed is about fifty acres and can be divided into five sections:

(1) Shrubs around the buildings consisting of Spirea, Barberry, Lilac, Magnolia, Forsythia and Ivy on the walls of the building.

(2) The flower and vegetable garden containing Lilac, Wistaria, Syringa, Flowering Myrtle, climbing roses, Boxwood, Honeysuckle, Black Locust, Mimosa and Red Mulberry.

(3) The Lawn, populated with Post Swamp White, Black, Southern Red, Northern Red, White, Scarlet and Chestnut Oaks; Sugar, Norway and Red Maples; White, Pignut, Butternut, Big Shell-bark Hickories; Short-leaved and Spruce Pines; Red Cedar, Paulownia, Mimosa, Umbrella, Sourwood, Butternut, Wild Sweet and Red Heart Cherries; Lombardy Poplars, Pecan, Rock Elm, Persimmon, Tulip Tree, Sycamore, Beech and Flowering Dogwood.

(4) A four-hole golf course with Black Walnut, Red Cedar, White Oak, Sycamore and Persimmon trees.

(5) A small pond with willows shading it almost entirely, and sand along the edge, off campus, and rarely visited.

My bird records cover from September 24, 1934, to May 24, 1935; September 26, 1935 to June 1, 1936; and from September 25, 1936 to June 5, 1937 (exclusive of about eighteen days at Christmas, and ten days at Easter.) I was out in the field almost daily and kept daily records - or weekly ones when my time was limited. Unfortunately I do not have daily records from the twenty-fourth of February to June first in 1936, but kept first migration dates.

The word "on" is frequently used to save time, - it means from a certain date until about June first. Most records were made between

seven and seven-thirty A.M. on week-days, and on clear Mondays from 6:30 A.M. to 8:15 A.M. First spring dates are frequently given.

1. GREEN HERON. Three birds seen, June 1st, 1936, at the Pond.
2. TURKEY VULTURE. Seen almost every day. Commonest on clear, windless days. Seem to rise about 7:30 A.M.
3. BLACK VULTURE. Uncommon in 1936 and 1937, but rare during the two previous years. Usually in a flock of Turkey Vultures. Twelve birds by themselves on December 12, 1935.
4. COOPER'S HAWK. One bird, April 18, 1935, and February 24, 1936, flying over the golf course.
5. MARSH HAWK. One bird, April 18, 1936, and May 3, 1937, on golf course.
6. OSPREY. One bird, May 3, 1937.
7. PIGEON HAWK. One bird, April 16, 1937.
8. SPARROW HAWK. November 16, 1936, and December 12, one bird at a time.
9. BOB-WHITE. Very rare on campus. Heard occasionally in the fall, and from May on they are heard every night at dusk.
10. KILLDEER. Uncommon in September and October; rare in December and January. In February and March often seen, but become rare in the late spring. Seen on golf course or flying.
11. SPOTTED SANDPIPER. Pair seen at the Pond, May 25, 1936.
12. HERRING GULL. Only record is February 14, 1936, with snow on the ground, when one bird flew overhead. NOTE- There is no large body of water near Chatham within many miles.
13. MOURNING DOVE. Present all year in small flocks, but seen every day in the spring. Like pine trees.
14. YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO. One bird on May 18, 1936, near the pond.
15. BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO. One bird, October 14, 1935, by the pond.
16. SCREECH OWL. One gray phased bird every day from April 28th to May 9th, 1935, always on the same Red Oak tree and branch. In 1936, one gray and one rufous phased bird on May 4th - same tree!
17. GREAT HORNED OWL. One female, accidentally killed on January 22, 1937.
18. WHIP-POOR-WILL. Heard in May at dusk.
19. CHIMNEY SWIFT. In 1934 and 1935, these birds were common up to October 5th. Then very few until October 10th, when they were common. Returned April 18th, 1935 (one bird). Then very common. In 1935-1936, they were common until October 11, and returned during the first week of April, 1936. In 1936-1937 they were very common until October 12th, heard last one on October 13. The first spring record for 1937 is April 13th. These birds were noticeably fewer this spring, but present every day. Roost in nearby chimney.
20. RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD. Earliest record is April 8. Around the garden and Paulownia trees the last week in April and the first week in May.
21. BELTED KINGFISHER. Near the pond on October 14, March 2, and May 1st. (One bird.)
22. FLECKER. Present all year. From middle of October until March they are uncommon. Nest here every spring. Common from March on, every day.

23. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER. Seen in September and October about every day, becoming uncommon in winter months until the end of March, when they are seen and heard all the time. Never more than four birds at a time.
24. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER. Seen frequently in November and December, present all winter less commonly. From April 18th on. Two pairs nest.
25. YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER. From around December 13th to March 7th, one bird daily. Very rare after that.
26. HAIRY WOODPECKER. Common in October, and few in December.
27. DOWNY WOODPECKER. Common in October, but rare the rest of the year.
28. KINGBIRD. Earliest record in April, the 8th. Uncommon on campus.
29. CRESTED FLYCATCHER. From April 30th on, but only one bird at a time.
30. PHOEBE. Latest record is November 9th. In spring from April 7th on, frequently.
31. WOOD PEWEE. From April 22nd on, every day, usually two birds.
32. NORTHERN HORNED LARK. One bird feeding in the garden in the snow on February 14, 1936. Very tame.
33. TREE SWALLOW. First record is April 27th. Very rare on campus.
34. BANK SWALLOW. June 1st. Very rare.
35. BARN SWALLOW. April 9th. Also very rare.
36. BLUE JAY. Every day during the year. Nests from April 30th on.
37. CROW. Present all year in nearby woods. On December 12, 1936, about seventy-five birds flew southwest.
38. CAROLINA CHICKADEE. Commonest in September and October, uncommon in winter. After March 1st, common and nesting on the golf course.
39. TUFTED TITMOUSE. Seen all year in all sorts of weather. Nest after May 1st. Seen all over the campus.
40. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH. Seen all year quite regularly. Never more than two at a time.
41. BROWN CREEPER. One bird on October 22, November 5, April 22, on lawn.
42. HOUSE WREN. November 3 is latest record. From April 10 on they are common. Three pairs nest in garden in bird houses.
43. WINTER WREN. March 18, 1935, one bird in garden.
44. CAROLINA WREN. On October 9, 1934, one bird flew into my room on the third floor of the building. Uncommon all the year around. Seen in the garden calling on November 29th, and singing on March 3rd.
45. MOCKINGBIRD. Common all year, five at most.
46. CATBIRD. No fall records. From March 22nd they are common. Nest in shrubs and buildings.
47. BROWN THRASHER. September 25th is the last fall record. Return March 22nd, and nest on the campus.
48. ROBIN. Present all year around. Few in winter. One called on November 2nd, and one sang on February 24. From end of February on, common. About ten pairs nest.
49. WOOD THRUSH. Heard in the woods from April 24th on.
50. HERMIT THRUSH. Rare. On April 26th, heard in the distance.

51. BLUEBIRD. Common in October. Few birds until February and March, when they are very common. Uncommon again in May. Usually seen on golf course.
52. BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER. One bird on April 22 and May 8th, 1935.
53. GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET. From October to December they are present occasionally in small flocks. Few records for March.
54. RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET. A few birds in the middle of October.
55. CEDAR WAXWING. Around all year in spells. November 18, twenty-five; November 19, seventy; November 21, one hundred; January 21, forty; February 10, seventy-five; March 3 to 9, seventy-five per day.
56. STARLING. Common all year. In September and October flocks of 1000 appear frequently. Decided decrease until February when they are common in the fields in large flocks all spring.
57. YELLOW-THROATED VIREO. March 29th and April 31st.
58. BLUE-HEADED VIREO. March 27th.
59. RED-EYED VIREO. From April 27th on, every day, a few birds.
60. WARBLING VIREO. April 26th, May 6th (two birds.)
61. BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER. From March 20th on, rare on campus, common near pond.
62. BLUE-WINGED WARBLER. April 6th and 30th, male.
63. PARULA WARBLER. May 5th, four; May 13th, one.
64. YELLOW WARBLER. April 24th to May 7th, around in small flocks.
65. MAGNOLIA WARBLER. April 19th, June 1st.
66. CAPE MAY WARBLER. May 4th to May 13th, a few.
67. BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER. October 14th, May 3rd and 10th.
68. MYRTLE WARBLER. January 21st, one bird; March 15th to 23rd, six birds; April 22nd, average three.
69. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER. October 9th, one bird; May 5th, one bird.
70. BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER. May 5th, three.
71. CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER. May 5th.
72. BAY-BREASTED WARBLER. May 5th, male.
73. BLACKPOLL WARBLER. May 5th on, about the only warbler left on campus after May 16th.
74. PINE WARBLER. Around in October, a few in March and the end of May.
75. PRAIRIE WARBLER. From April 20th on. Sings off campus from the top of the pines. Very common.
76. YELLOW PALM WARBLER. May 3rd, one.
77. OVENBIRD. From April 19th on, heard in the woods every day.
78. MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT. From April 22nd on. Common near pond, but rare on campus.
79. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT. No exact records. Heard near the golf course in May.
80. REDSTART. September 30th; April 26th; May 11th until May 22nd, almost every day.
81. CANADA WARBLER. May 3rd, two.

The WARBLERS were seen either in the garden or in the oaks and maples on the lawn in the Spring of 1935. Warblers were plentiful both in variety and number that spring. During the following two springs warblers were scarce and few ever came on campus!

82. HOUSE SPARROW. Every day all year around. Fewer birds in cold weather. Stayed around the feeding station in the garden.
83. MEADOWLARK. Sings all year in the fields. In cold weather they come on the lawn and the golf course for food, but return to the fields in March.
84. RED-WING. On February 25--ten. From March 2 on they fly overhead occasionally.
85. ORCHARD ORIOLE. May 2nd, 1936.
86. BALTIMORE ORIOLE. Common by May first, but by the ninth of May they have moved on. Love Paulownia trees.
87. RUSTY BLACKBIRD. One bird with two grackles on April 17, 1936.
88. PURPLE GRACKLE. 1934-1935, September 24th to October 3rd, birds covered the trees - thousands of them. Became fewer until October 13th to 30th, when they became very common. Then absent until March when they became common again. After the middle of April never over three birds at a time. 1935-1936, flocks of couple of hundred in late September, then flocks became smaller until around October 30th, when flocks of about 400 are around. 1936-1937, very common until the middle of October. Small flocks (10-20) from February 25th to March 22nd.
89. COWBIRD. December 12th, 1935. March 15th, a flock of twenty--~~odd~~; April 18th, fifteen; April 22nd, two.
90. SCARLET TANAGER. In 1935, on May 1st and 7th, only record.
91. SUMMER TANAGER. From April 20th on, two pairs nest each year in chestnut oak.
92. CARDINAL. Present all year around in all weather. Nest in honeysuckle and ivy. Rarer in 1936 and 1937.
93. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK. May 4, 6, 8, one male each year.
94. INDIGO BUNTING. From the end of April, off and on until June. Either seen in pairs or sixes.
95. PURPLE FINCH. None in 1934 or 1935. On November 4th, eight; January 19th, about seventy-five; very common in February and March, about fifteen at a time, one singing.
96. GOLDFINCH. Small flocks around in October and November. From early April until early May, seen every day, and occasionally after that.
97. RED-EYED TOWHEE. Around in October, March, and April. Heard on the golf course. Two May records on the lawn. Never more than two at a time.
98. VESPER SPARROW. Uncommon all year. A few birds around during the end of March near the garden.
99. CAROLINA JUNCO. Very erratic birds. 1934-1935; October 15th, quite common; from November 5th to November 22nd, decrease in flocks but very common on November 23rd, decrease until on December 11th they were very common. Few until January 28th, then very, very common. In April the breasts of the birds were noticeably lighter gray, and on April 24th the last bird. 1935-1936; not as common, but present in good numbers; few birds until November 25th (over two hundred birds). 1936-1937; heard one on September 25th, one or two birds daily until November 3rd, from November until January 16th average about ten per day. In January the average was up to fifty, but in February and March down to ten again. Last bird, April 20th.
100. TREE SPARROW. A few in November, commonest in March. March 16th, one; March 22nd, about seventy-five; March 24th, about fifty -- near the garden.

101. CHIPPING SPARROW. Uncommon through November. Return again by March 13th, and about ten pairs nest on the lawn.
102. FIELD SPARROW. A few in October and first week of November. A few in February near the garden.
103. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW. One, January 28th, 1935, in the garden.
104. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW. A few birds seen every day in November, and from February on.
105. FOX SPARROW. March 19th, eight on golf course.
106. SONG SPARROW. Uncommon in October and November. Few December records. A few birds present every day from the beginning of February on. Nest in garden.

I hope that this paper has brought to light some information concerning the bird life of this particular section of the State.

Woodmore,
Long Island, N. Y.

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HERONS AND EGRETS ON THE POTOMAC RIVER

NEAR ALEXANDRIA, VA.

By William B. McIlwaine, Jr.

Under the above caption I contributed an article which appeared in THE RAVEN in its issue of July-August, 1935. Reference to this summary will give a fair picture of conditions today. But since two years have passed (two seasons), it is not amiss to record a few definite facts for each of these seasons.

During the summer of 1936 absence from the State or duties at home kept me away from the river. I have a general impression that there were fewer of these birds than we had had the year before. I cannot be positive; my notes are meager. At least here are three interesting excerpts:

April 13. First for the season, and a find indeed! Bobbie found it, and called to me, "Look! An American Egret!" And sure enough it was. I made a most careful identification. Yellow bill and dark legs. I did not see any plumes.

June 1. Two American Egrets at the mouth of Hunting Creek. While Bob and I saw one on Easter Monday (April 13). Of course that was a wanderer. This is my first normal record for the season. Though my son Billie tells me he saw several on Saturday (May 30).

October 13. Three Snowy Egrets on Four Mile Run. A late date for this species.

I cannot resist telling a little story which, I believe, illuminates the fact of the Egret's presence on my Four Mile Run on a cold Easter Monday. It happened in my boyhood (and not to me). A beautiful Sunday morning--just after church. He went to see his sweetheart, with a beautiful thought in his heart. For the nth time she "kicked" him, and evidently kicked him hard. Out of the house he groped. He found his way: into the office of a doctor next door. On the mantel was a bottle of pills "What are these?" he asked, and swallowed down a number of them. No, they did not kill him; and he married--another girl. So too my disconsolate Egret.....

This season (1937) we have more Herons and Egrets than ever before. And I am particularly impressed with the number of Little Blue Herons. Of course the white plumage is the rule, almost invariable. Occasionally we see the dark adult bird. But I find myself wondering if he does not seem to feel out of place in this juvenal company.

My earliest record for the American Egret this year is one on June 7.

As Four Mile Run empties into the Potomac River it runs across flats that at high tide are covered with water. At the edge of this little bay is a clump of low trees which the herons have taken as a roosting place. On August 27 I went out to watch the homing. But I was early enough for other matters. I took my seat by the side of the river, and looked over to where dredges are deepening the channel, throwing up quite a bar, indeed, making a substantial bank. On this bank, and in the shallow water beyond, the birds collect in great numbers. This afternoon I counted more than 30 Great Blue Herons. Presently from that direction came a flock of about one hundred Laughing Gulls to feed on insects flying over the bay. I had never before seen them acting as flycatchers. Of course this behavior is orthodox.

But I had come to watch the herons. About six o'clock I counted around sixty, white against the green of the trees. Fifteen minutes later I could see nearly twice that many. But as they came in increasing numbers I realized I could see only a fraction of those that were on the roosts. So I turned my attention to the birds in the air. Sometimes there were single birds; sometimes there were groups of five or six; sometimes loose gatherings of fifteen or twenty; once a great irregular flock of more than one hundred. With steady wing-beats they would come, most of them from the river, up or down. When fairly close in they would set their wings, and then seem to slip down through the air, never changing their direction, never seeming to miss their aim, flapping a moment or two as they neared the goal, and dropping their landing gear for a perfect performance. It was fascinating. And I estimated that there must be in those few little trees from four hundred to five hundred birds. All of them were American Egrets and Little Blue Herons. Not one Great Blue. Out on the flats was one lonesome-looking little fellow that I could not see well, but which I somehow felt must be a Snowy Egret. Possibly there were more such on the roosts; but I did not identify any. This apartment house seemed to be quite exclusive.

By six-forty-five the arrivals had ceased, and light was failing. I rode around to the back of the trees to get a view from the land side.

Few birds were to be seen. And the croakings were still fewer. It was evident that my herons had

left (leave) the world to darkness and to me.

So I went home.

Alexandria, Va.

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HAWKS AND STARLINGS FLYING TOGETHER

By Maurice Brooks

In The Auk (Vol. L, No. 2, p. 211. 1933) I recorded seeing on several occasions accipeterine hawks flying with flocks of Starlings, the whole performance apparently in a spirit of play. Recently I have seen this happening again on two occasions, but with an interesting variation.

While making some observations in Highland County, Virginia, during early October, 1937, Mrs. Brooks and I saw a flock of Starlings which gave every evidence of pursuing a Sharp-shinned Hawk. The hawk was a bit in advance of the Starlings, and it swerved, circled, and dived, each movement being followed faithfully by the Starlings. Once I saw it drop back into the flock, with no manifest signs of alarm on the part of the smaller birds. This flight continued for some minutes, and, as in former flights where the hawk seemed to be pursuing the Starlings, no attempt was made by the raptor to make a kill.

Another opportunity to observe almost exactly the same behavior came to us recently near Washington, Pennsylvania. In this case the hawk (Cooper's this time) flew behind the flock, with it, above it, below it, and in front of it, without at any time seeming to alarm the Starlings. I have no explanation to offer for this behavior, but in the light of the numbers of times I have seen it, or heard about it, I cannot think of it as particularly unusual.

West Virginia University,
Morgantown, W. Va.

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ACTIVITIES ON BIG SPRING IN A MORNING IN OCTOBER

By J. Southgate Y. Hoyt

It was a rather warm morning and the sun was just getting well above the horizon on October 7. As I approached the pond a large Great Blue Heron arose from its stance near the shore and uttered a slight sound of disapproval as it gracefully floated away over the hills. The trees around the shore were alive with Bluebirds and Myrtle Warblers, collected there to feed and rest up on their way southward. Once in awhile a young Cedar Waxwing and an occasional adult flitted

through the trees or stopped to pick a berry from the wild grape vines. Just before I approached the shore line I heard a piercing cry overhead and on looking up I saw an Osprey circling, searching the water for a fish. It evidently sighted one because it soon plunged into the water with a terrific splash. It rose again and without the fish, so, shaking the water from its plumage, it soared away because I had approached the shore line in attempts to photograph the dive. My attention was now drawn to the middle of the pond where sat five Pied-billed Grebe. These birds were getting their breakfast and in so doing each made a number of silent and swift dives under the surface, arriving on the surface again with a small fish in its mouth. The next object of interest was the American Coot which had been on the pond for some days. The Coot was walking on the rocks out in the water and stretching its neck way out to get food from the green algae so abundant there. Its green legs and long toes were clearly visible. At this time the Osprey returned for its breakfast and as it was time for mine I had to leave this fascinating pond to return to town.

Lexington, Va.

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NIGHTHAWK MIGRATION OVER LEXINGTON

The sun was just starting to sink in the west and throw a pinkish tinge on the clouds in the east on September 18. I was out in the field as usual, this time at Lime Kiln Bridge, when I noticed a Nighthawk pass over. I caught it in my glasses and was soon surprised to find that I was seeing not just one Nighthawk, but several. I removed the glasses and was startled to see a flock of thirty-seven birds wending their way southward and pausing once in awhile to make a wide circle or to swoop downward and back up again to continue their journey. Following this flock were several separate birds also moving southward. I watched these until they were out of sight and started taking notes when another flock came over. This time there were only nineteen birds but this made a total of some seventy-five Nighthawks to pass over at one time.

Again on October 7th I saw about eleven Nighthawks pass over just an hour or so before sunset. This time they were spread over a much larger space than before.

J. Southgate Y. Hoyt,
Lexington, Va.

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BALD EAGLE NEAR LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

While on my daily trip to Brushy Hill just about four miles from Lexington, on September 21, my attention was drawn to a large dark colored bird sitting on the end of a limb of a big dead tree well up on the hill. When I focussed my 8x glasses on it I could see that it had a white head and light tail. My first thought was an eagle but I hardly believed it could be that. I climbed the hill until I was quite close to the tree and again I looked through my glasses for

better view. There was no mistake about it; there it sat on the end of the limb in all the majestic splendor befitting a bird of such a state. The white head looked even whiter than when first seen, the tail looked a little darker but could definitely be called white. The sharply decurved yellow bill stood out well in the morning sun. This bird remained on this same point of lookout for a half hour and was still there when I left the hill.

J. Southgate Y. Hoyt,
Lexington, Va.

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AN ERRONEOUS RECORD CORRECTED

In Dr. William T. Hornaday's book, "Our Vanishing Wild Life," page 20, he gives a record for the Trumpeter Swan for Virginia. "Dr. Leonard C. Sanford procured in 1910 two living birds from a bird dealer who obtained them on the coast of Virginia." This was called to my attention by Prof. C. O. Handley, and I have been able to trace the record through the kindness of Dr. Frank M. Chapman, who asked Dr. Sanford about the record and learned that the birds came not from Virginia but from Montana. This should be put on record before the reference gets farther in print.

J. J. Murray.

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A SPORTSMAN SPEAKS OUT AGAINST A BOUNTY LAW

The members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology have always realized the dangers and the waste inherent in any kind of bounty law on predators. Consequently a recent statement by Mr. Collins Denny, Jr. will be of the greatest interest to all bird lovers and to all well-informed sportsmen. Mr. Denny, who is assistant Attorney-general of Virginia, is also president of the James River Wild Life Association and is active in the organization of a State Federation of Sportsmen's clubs. The Times-Dispatch, Oct. 7, 1937, states that at a meeting of the Albemarle County chapter of the Izaak Walton League in Charlottesville Mr. Denny declared that a bounty law would be uneconomical and would fail to improve the game situation. He went on to say that "Two things are important if we are to have more game birds - an adequate supply of food, and proper coverage provided near this supply. If birds have food and proper cover, they will multiply and survive in increasing number in spite of predatory animals and birds." It will be remembered that Mr. Denny was the presiding officer at a meeting of Virginia sportsmen held in Richmond last February to consider, among other things, the recommendation to the Game Commission that the bounty law be restored. He has made the above statement after having had ample opportunity to consider both sides of this much-discussed matter.

J. J. Murray.

THE 1937 CHRISTMAS CENSUS

Dates set for Bird-Lore's 38th Christmas Census to be taken this month are December 20 to 26 inclusive. Every V. S. O. member should take the census and send the report to Bird-Lore and to THE RAVEN. The rules must be followed, if the census is to be printed. Only the birds seen in one day should be listed. The territory covered must come within a circle of fifteen miles in diameter. The trip should cover at least six hours, and an all-day trip is much better. The list should be type-written and must follow the order of the 1931 A. O. U. Check-List (the same order as used in the latest edition of Chapman's Handbook). Only common names are to be used, and sub-specific names are not to be used. The number of birds of each species seen should be tabulated. The census lists in former January issues of THE RAVEN may be used as a guide. It is preferable that the census be taken, when possible, by a group rather than by an individual, but individual lists will be accepted. For THE RAVEN only the dates set by Bird-Lore will be extended to December 31. Lists for Bird-Lore should be mailed on the day after the list is taken to The Editor, Bird-Lore, 1775 Broadway, New York City. Lists for THE RAVEN should be mailed to Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va., as soon as possible after January 1st. Other material for the January issue should be sent at the same time.

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FIELD NOTES

Nesting Notes at Salem, Va. We have listed the following nesting records for 1937 of birds around and about Salem, within a radius of five miles. As we look over these notes we see that this record is far from complete. However, they may be of some interest. April 11, 2 cardinal nests about complete; 2 dove nests, no eggs. April 18, dove, 2 eggs; robin, 3 eggs. May 2, kingfisher, 7 eggs; yellow warbler, 1 egg; meadowlark, 4 eggs; song sparrow, 5 eggs; wood thrush, nest only complete; rusty blackbird, 3 eggs; mockingbird, 2 eggs; brown thrasher, 3 eggs; dove, 2 eggs; cardinal, 2 eggs; cardinal nest, no eggs. May 6, phoebe, incubating. May 8, field sparrow, 4 eggs; brown thrasher, 4 eggs. May 9, brown thrasher, 2 eggs; wood thrush, 2 eggs and one cowbird egg; robin, 3 eggs. May 11, brown thrasher, 1 egg; brown thrasher, 3 eggs; robin, young 2 days old; cardinal, nest only; field sparrow, 4 eggs; catbird, 3 eggs; robin, 4 eggs; yellow warbler, 5 eggs; Maryland yellowthroat, 3 eggs; catbird, 4 eggs; brown thrasher, 4 eggs. May 19, Meadowlark, 4 eggs; bluebird, feeding. May 20, wood thrush, 4 eggs; wood thrush, 4 eggs; catbird, 4 eggs; robin, 4 eggs. May 23, brown thrasher, nest on ground in open field, 3 eggs; field sparrow, 4 young; robin, 2 eggs, 1 young; kingbird, incubating; orchard oriole, building. May 27, field sparrow, 4 eggs; yellow-billed cuckoo, 1 egg. May 30, field sparrow, 4 eggs; scarlet tanager, 4 eggs. June 6, red-eyed vireo, 1 egg with 1 cowbird egg; red-eyed vireo, 3 young about week old; indigo bunting, 4 young; dove, 2 eggs; dove, 1 egg and 1 young; dove, 2 young; ovenbird feeding fully feathered young.

F. B. Sellers

C. A. Brubeck, Jr.

Cape Henry, Ocean View, Va. On August 19th, near Little Creek Ferry, I saw three Gannets flying up the bay toward Norfolk. When first sighted two of the birds were some distance off-shore, flying low over the water. The other bird came along behind them about an hour later, flying in the same direction; thus there may have been only two birds in all and this was a second sight of one of the other birds. This last bird was only a quarter mile out. I had a good view of the great white wings, tipped with black, and the lemon on the side of the head. I was positive of the identification, as I was using a 20x telescope, and had seen many of these birds in the British Isles. What surprised me was to find Gannets in Chesapeake Bay in August. Along the North Carolina coast the only records of these birds are in the middle of the winter. Dr. Elliot Coues, who spent some years at Fort Macon below Cape Hatteras, reported Gannets only during some heavy weather in 1869 and 1870; other records are for January and February.

August 23rd: Purple Martins congregating in a flock of more than a thousand; by the 26th the flock had doubled and on the 28th none were seen. All of these were in immature plumage, not an adult male was seen. 8/24: Turnstone (numerous), Least Tern (numerous), Common Tern (numerous), Least Sandpiper and Semi-palmated Sandpiper (fairly abundant), Solitary Sandpiper (2). 8/25: Black Skimmer (7), Semi-palmated Plover (numerous), Dowitcher (30), Spotted Sandpiper (2). 8/26: Sanderling (10).

John H. Grey, Jr.,
Raleigh, N. C.

Montebello, Culpeper, Big Meadows, Va. Dr. Alexander Wetmore reports having seen an Olive-sided Flycatcher near Montebello, Nelson Co., August 1, 1937. Records for this bird in Virginia are few. He also reports two groups of Prairie Horned Larks that were in all probability family parties on the same day near Culpeper, and a Prairie Horned Lark circling over the crowd when President Roosevelt was speaking at Big Meadows on July 4, 1936.

Bath Co., Va. I saw an Osprey flying up the Cowpasture River near the Warm Springs Mountain, Bath Co., on October 17, 1937.

J. J. Murray.

Charlottesville, Va. I was much surprised to see a tern flying over the reflection pool at the University early in October, 1937. It was either the Common or Forster's.

John B. Calhoun.

Montgomery Co., Va. White-rumped Sandpiper, June 3 and 5 (two). June 12, Killdeer, nest with eggs. July 17, Scarlet Tanager (two), in scarlet and black plumage. Aug. 8, flock of adult and young Prairie

Warblers, on Craig Creek. Aug. 18 and 28-30, Lesser Yellowlegs.
Ralph M. Brown.

Emory & Henry College, Va. While waiting for a train at this place on June 4, 1937, I entertained myself by looking for nests. A pair of Robins had a nest in which they were feeding young on a brace under the train shed at the station. In spite of the noise of the trains that passed directly beneath, in spite of the smoke and dust, in spite of the crowds of people, they had managed to rear their brood. Along the fence at the old cemetery a family group of Bewick's Wrens, the young as large as the parents but with not quite such a saucy cock to their tails, was very active. The beautiful grove of ancient pines in the cemetery held a score of nests of Purple Grackles. One of the Grackles chased a Turkey Vulture which came too near, following it for several hundred yards.

J. J. Murray

Lexington, Va. Migration dates. Sept. 17, Warbling Vireo. Sept. 21, Wilson's Warbler, Voery, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Tennessee Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Least Flycatcher. Sept. 24, American Egret. Sept. 26, Black-crowned Night Heron, immature.

J. Southgate Y. Hoyt.

Lexington, Va. Nesting Notes. Sparrow Hawk - 4/26 - in old Pileated Woodpecker hole, 50 ft. up in partially dead oak in edge of woods. Mourning Dove - 4/13 - our earliest record for a full set of eggs - found by William Williams. Yellow-billed Cuckoo - 6/7 - three well-incubated eggs in tangle of grape vines - Black Snake coiled about the bush at the nest. Hummingbird - 5/24 - nest on small dead twig of oak - female incubating. Kingfisher - 5/24 - carrying food into the nest hole. Least Flycatcher - 6/7 - nest not found, but bird calling all morning around same group of trees. Wood Pewee - 5/15 - nest under construction. Carolina Wren - 5/19 - unusual nest location, on the ground in a hole in a steep bank at the foot of a stump - nest roofed over, with small entrance, - five small young. Prairie Warbler - 5/10 - under construction, almost complete - later finished but never laid in. Yellow-breasted Chat - 5/24 - three eggs - in crotch of small hawthorn, rather exposed and near a path.

J. J. Murray.

Mountain Lake, Va. August is a month of quiet, or very little activity among the birds. The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds continued to come regularly throughout the day to the "artificial flower," supplying a tasty mixture of honey and water. Chipping Sparrows were still feeding nestlings on Aug. 26. A Carolina Junco's nest containing 3 eggs was due to hatch on Aug. 3. Two days before hatching, the nest was attacked by some creature, one egg was broken and was thrown outside the nest. No Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were observed during the summer before Aug. 20, when one appeared on the Station grounds, apparently one of the first of the fall migrants. Most of the birds are in the molt; they are quiet, elusive, and difficult to find. Occasionally a member

of such species as Carolina Junco, Canada Warbler, Cairn's Warbler, and Mountain Vireo will sing a few phrases although rather weak and without much enthusiasm.

D. Ralph Hostetter.

Lexington. Pied-billed Grebe, 7/27, Big Spring, very early date. Black-crowned Night Heron, an immature bird at Big Spring, 9/20-29. Bittern, Cameron's Pond, 11/4. In a flock of Black Ducks that have spent some time at Big Spring late in November and early in December two were identified at close range and in bright sunlight as Red-legged Black Ducks. An early date for the Blue-winged Teal is 8/28, a female or immature at Big Spring, the bird remaining until some time in October. Green-winged Teals have been unusually common this fall, some of them young males still in the molt and up to December 6th still lacking the white bar before the wing. Ruddy Duck, 10/20. Hooded Merganser, female, 11/22 - 12/3. Broad-winged Hawk, 9/23. Late date for Coot, 11/22. Pectoral Sandpiper, 10/21 (4). An adult Ring-billed Gull was killed by a farmer at Timber Ridge on 12/7. Nashville Warbler, 9/13.

J. J. Murray.

Blacksburg. 9/9, Dowitcher; 9/1-10/5, Solitary Sandpiper; 9/14-10/10, Least Sandpiper; 9/14, Pectoral Sandpiper; 9/17, Coot; 9/19, Black-bellied Plover (my first Blacksburg record), Little Blue Heron, Marsh Hawk (pair); 10/5, Pintail (3); 10/10, Pintail; 10/15, Lesser Yellowlegs (6), Ruddy Duck(3), Baldpate. Warblers: Bay-breasted, 9/19, 20; Black-poll, 9/23; Black-throated Blue, 9/19; Cape May, 9/23-10/2; Chestnut-sided, 9/19; Magnolia, 9/19-10/2; Myrtle, 9/20-23; Parula, 9/20; Pine, 9/19; Tennessee, 9/19-23.

Ralph M. Brown.

THE RAVEN

Bulletin of the Virginia Society of Ornithology
Published at Lynchburg, Virginia

Dr. J. J. Murray, Editor
Lexington, Virginia

VOL. VIII

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1937

Nos. 11 & 12

FOUR WINDS FARM

By George Carrington Mason

For me, every path from the old brick farm house at the very top of the green Connecticut hills leads down to the brook, whether I follow the abandoned cross road past the grass grown ruins of the pioneer homestead, or climb the sunny hilltop with its windswept view of the high horizon. But the best way of all is down the birch-lined glen, where the brooklet lingers in quiet pools, forget-me-not bordered, and then rushes on over the gray old rocks, eager to join the brook. Once at the bottom of the glen, I may choose my path to suit my mood, for the brook has many moods to match my own. Sunny and shallow and unhurried, sandy-bottomed and alder-lined, it winds through the open pasture, its boggy shores frequented by green heron and woodcock, and its sandbars the noonday resting place of the dairy herd. But it seems most truly a brook when it enters the shade of the woods and foams swift and deep over the glistening rocks between its mossy banks, under interlacing hemlock boughs, or spreads out into pools so clear and cold that a plunge takes your breath away and leaves you with every fiber tingling. Here, where the deer come down to drink, it is my privilege to share the family joys of a pair of hermit thrushes, nesting in a bed of ferns by the wooded bank of the brook. After a week of friendly visits, the beautiful greenish blue eggs give place to a nestful of sleek brown fledglings, and another short week later, I part the ferns over an empty nest, and the world is richer by four more of the finest voices in the whole bird choir. Here also I find myself on the most intimate terms with whole families of warblers, hitherto known only as exquisite visitors, too ethereal for human friendship, who gave me fleeting glimpses of their beauty during their brief migration passages through the treetops. No matter how early I reach the brook, they are all up before me, and feeding their brand new offspring as fast as the inexhaustible supply of insect food presents itself: Magnolia warblers, flashing their brilliant plumage of slate-blue, black and yellow, and squeaking like little mice in nervous fear for their babies' safety, and black-throated green, chestnut-sided, and black-and-white warblers, each pair with an overgrown youngster in tow, who uses up more energy in fluttering his wings and calling for his breakfast than would be required to feed himself to gorging.

Every visit to the brook gives me a picture to remember: perhaps a Kingfisher, silently flashing and turning as he follows the winding channel and avoids the overhanging branches of birch and hemlock: or a handsome chestnut brown mink, who sits down quite unafraid when he sees me, scratches his ear with a hind foot, and then goes back the way he came; or it may be a mother ovenbird, distractedly seeking shelter for her brood, who bounce along after her over the dried leaves like balls of down blown by the wind.

Of the more than one hundred and fifty kinds of wild flowers that adorn this Connecticut countryside ("one hundred and fifty kinds of woods," says my farmer brother-in-law in agricultural scorn) the earliest and most interesting grow along the brook. Though I have never been fortunate enough to see them in their springtime beauty, I would know where to look for every one, if I should happen to revisit the brook in the New England spring, when the last snows of winter still lie unmelted in the shadow of the hills that border its course. For here, in midsummer, I find the shining foliage of sharp-lobed hepatica and bloodroot's elaborately indented palms at home on the rocky hillside, while in "the low-grounds," as we say down South, the painted trillium's double red berry appears, and clintonia lifts its deep blue fruit beside a mouldering log.

But the brook has a wealth of summer beauty, too, with rush of cool brown water over mossy rocks, and cardinal flowers nodding knee-deep in the swift current, or showy spikes of purple fringed orchis rising by the swampy border of some small tributary stream. And when I follow the winding cowpath up out of the woods to the hilltop farm house, I find the promise of beauty still to come in the spearlike buds of fringed gentian which line the old post road as it sleeps, grass grown, between its ancient stone walls.

Here at the farm the hayloft resounds with the sharp warnings of the barn swallows, as they dart through the open door and spy the intruder whom the piled hay raises so close to their precious nests under the roof, and outside, the eaves are decorated with the gourd-shaped mud houses of a colony of cliff swallows. Every pasture seems to have its pair of kingbirds, those self-appointed guardians of the farm, who make life so miserable for the heavy-winged crows that the big birds put forth their best speed to escape, while the attackers' war-cries and the victim's squawks can be heard several fields away. The sluggish marsh hawk is another favorite mark for these pugnacious flycatchers, but they meet their match when they tackle that monarch of the air, the red-shouldered hawk. Up and ever up, he soars in spirals, scarcely moving his wings, until he is almost lost in the blue; the kingbirds "skid" on the turns, and are one lap behind all the way up, but they are game, and stick to the chase until they, too, are nearly invisible, before returning, out of breath, to their post.

And now the migration season brings fresh family groups from northern nesting grounds to swell the ranks of the farm's bird residents, and new hosts of warblers drift through the treetops, escorted by cheery companies of chickadees or a friendly downy woodpecker. Loveliest of all, perhaps, are the redstarts, vivid as glowing embers driven by

the wind, their plumage combining the orange red of the live coal with the black and white of the charred cinder and clean wood ash, and each little bird so innocently vain of his own beauty, that he must be continually spreading his wings and tail fanwise to show it off. But superlatives seem ungracious where all is so lovely, and nothing could be daintier than the golden-winged warbler's clear gray plumage, black-and-white cheeks and throat, and sunny crown and wingbars, or the slate-blue Canadian warbler's necklace of glistening jet against a pure yellow breast.

All too soon, vacation over, I journey southward like the birds, though far less willingly than they; but returning for a brief midwinter's visit, I find tree sparrows twittering contentedly in the lee of the barn, and pine siskins scattering the snowflakes as they hang head-downward from the tips of the weed stalks, feasting on their store of seeds left from autumn's abundance. And still all paths lead me to the brook, and I find joy in its murmur under the ice, and in tracing the marks of many little furry feet in the crusted snow. More productive farms there may be, but none can possibly be richer in the living beauty of Nature unspoiled than this century-and-a-half old homestead, basking in air as clear and pure and cool as spring water, high up in the New England hills.

Hampton, Virginia.

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THE EXTENSION OF THE RANGE OF THE BLACK VULTURE

By J. J. Murray

An interesting field of research in ornithology is the recent extension of the ranges of certain species of birds, either because of the pressure of adverse conditions in their normal breeding range, or because of the development of suitable conditions in new territory, or because of other reasons which are not so apparent. A notable example of this is the northward advance of certain southern species. Of this type of extension of range into New England Forbush says: "There seems to be some evidence that in recent years the mockingbird....has increased in numbers to the northeast along the coastal plain.....But as it normally winters near its summer home, the severe winters of New England are likely to hold it in check, and prevent it from becoming common here." The same thing, he says, is true of the Carolina Wren, although its status fluctuates more, the bird becoming more common after mild winters and then decreasing again, since it cannot stand very cold weather. In the New York City region Griscom has stated that the Mockingbird is increasing slowly; that the Carolina Wren "periodically spreads northward," but that its numbers fluctuate; but that the Cardinal has decreased, because of the clearing of woods and thickets. In the latter case local conditions have tended to counteract a general tendency. In regard to Pennsylvania Sutton states that these three species seem to be moving northward, especially in the river valleys. This northward movement has been even more noticeable in the northern mid-west. In Minnesota, according to Dr.

T. S. Roberts, eleven breeding species have moved northward into the State within the past fifty years, among which the Cardinal has become "thoroughly established," and the Carolina Wren has become at least uncommon. There the Mockingbird is not yet established as a breeder. The same movement of southern birds into Wisconsin and Michigan has been noticed. In a similar fashion six species have moved into Minnesota from the west.

The tendency which we are discussing is much more noticeable in the case of southern and western forms moving northward or eastward than in the case of northern forms moving southward. This seems to be due to the fact that these movements, at least the northward movement, are the result of man-made changes in the environment. Such changes are in general in the direction of the settling and clearing of the land and the creation of more open and therefore of warmer conditions, which are favorable to the Austral species. Apparently there has been a decrease in the area occupied by northern forms in the southern mountains. The clearing of the mountain forests and particularly of the coniferous forest militates against the presence of northern forms and favors the northward and upward movement of Austral forms, such as the Yellow-breasted Chat, the Prairie Warbler and the Cardinal. The Chestnut-sided Warbler alone of Transition species may be on the increase in these mountains, because of its preference for second-growth thickets. The effect of these changes in mountain territory is very noticeable on Elliot Knob, a high mountain in the central part of the Valley in Augusta County, Virginia. The effect of the drought years, a natural cause working in the same direction to the disadvantage of northern forms, can be seen on White Top Mountain.

A different type of range extension is the case of the Prairie Horned Lark, which has been moving east and south. While the apparent rapidity of the extension of the known range of this bird may be due in part to the increase in the number of observers and to better work on their part, there has undoubtedly been a definite and rather rapid extension in the range of this bird. As we in Virginia are on the border line of this extension, the advance of this bird has been very noticeable among us.

Such movements are **always** best studied along the border of the line of movement.

After this long introduction we may come down to the study of a specific case. A species in which I have long been interested and which in recent years has shown a marked and rather puzzling extension of its breeding range is the Black Vulture. Since the Black Vulture is a large bird with great powers of flight there have long been instances of its accidental or casual occurrence out of its normal range. Even in Michigan, Maine, Arizona, Quebec and Nova Scotia it has been recorded. But I shall disregard such occurrences and confine myself to the areas where it has become established as a breeder.

In the 1895 A. O. U. 'Check-List' its breeding range was given as: "South Atlantic and Gulf States, north regularly to North Carolina and the lower Ohio Valley, west to the Great Plains, and south through Mexico," etc. In the 1931 'Check-List' the only significant additions were: "Virginia, and southern Maryland," but the words "Tropical and Lower Austral Zones" still formed the general statement of its range. By this time, however, the bird was abundant in most of the Upper Austral in Virginia, and fairly common even in the Transition.

When Dr. William C. Rives prepared his book, "A Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias," in 1890, he had to put the Black Vulture on the hypothetical list. The first published record for the State was by John W. Daniel, Jr., in 'The Auk,' 1902, July, p. 397. He then reported it as a not uncommon summer resident in Nansemond County, and probably also in Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties. By 1913 it was breeding throughout the lower James River Valley. The first record, so far as I know, west of the Blue Ridge was made by Dr. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., at Blacksburg, October 8, 1909. By 1927 he was seeing it "at irregular but frequent intervals." By 1919 it was nesting in Rockbridge County. Charles C. Handley, at that time, found a nest on House Mountain at 3400 feet, the highest nesting place ever recorded for this species. Ten years later I reported a nest on the same mountain ('The Auk,' 1929, July, p. 385). In the same issue of 'The Auk', C. Brooke Worth reported a nest on the Potomac above Washington. It is now a common bird in Rockbridge County. I have seen small flocks at Abingdon and Wytheville in southwest Virginia.

There are a few breeding records for southern Maryland. Mr. Handley has reported it in summer in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, and I have seen it in the same county in late fall. It is a fairly common resident and breeder in the mountains of northeast Tennessee. I have never seen it in the higher mountains of North Carolina, where I go each year in August, but Thos. D. Burleigh, who was located during 1930-1934 at Asheville, N. C., writes me that he "found the Black Vulture a regular but rather scarce summer resident there." None were seen in winter, February 1st being the earliest date. No nest was found, but "several pairs undoubtedly nested on those mountain ridges. There was not any perceptible increase in the numbers of these birds seen during this five year interval. This would suggest that even an elevation of 3,000 feet was a handicap that this species found it difficult to overcome." To sum up, the breeding range of the Black Vulture now covers the Carolinian area of all the south-eastern States, and it has pushed into practically all of the Transition territory in these states.

So much for the northward and upward extension of the range of this bird. Is it a real extension of range, or only an extension of our knowledge? As to other states I cannot be sure, but as far as Virginia is concerned, the extension is real; and I think this is true of the other states. What are the factors behind this movement? The answer to

that is difficult, and I am not able to give it. I do not see that it can be explained - as in the case of the Mockingbird, Carolina Wren and Cardinal - to more favorable conditions now than formerly to the north of its old range. In part it is probably due to the decline of the food supply in the south and the consequent strenuous competition, not only between the two species of vultures but, what is probably more important, among individuals of this species. Undoubtedly there are fewer large carcasses available for vultures, since it is now customary to bury animals that were formerly dragged away and left in the woods. And the spread of the Black Vulture has been coincidental with more sanitary methods in the disposal of carrion. As just one instance of this change, it was common twenty years ago to see long lines of vultures resting on the roof of the old market in Charleston, South Carolina, waiting for the butchers to throw scraps into the streets. Now they are not seen in the city. Mr. Alexander Sprunt writes me: "I think you are right as to the disposal of carrion having an effect on the vulture's extension of range. Certainly it is a factor anyway. As to the year when scraps ceased to be an attraction at the old market here, I cannot be sure of the exact date, but it was about 1914 or 1915. I haven't seen a buzzard about the market for twenty years, that's sure." Probably the greater strength and virility of the Black Vulture has given it an advantage over the other species in the struggle for food. Since Wilson's day observers have noted that at their horrid feasts this species usually fares better than its rival. It would be interesting to know whether there has been a decline in the numbers of the Turkey Vulture in the South in this period. That same virility may be one of the factors that fitted the Black Vulture to move on and conquer new territory. This is a field for further research.

Lexington, Virginia.

(This paper was read at the 1937 meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.)

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ANOTHER VIRGINIA RECORD FOR HENSLow'S SPARROW

While driving along the state highway from New London in Bedford County to Evinston which is in Campbell County, on June 25, 1937, Mrs. Freer and I found a small colony of Henslow's Sparrows, near the county line. Several singing males were heard over three adjacent abandoned fields, and one was closely studied through the glasses. Two other visits were made to the place, the last about July 15, when the males were still in song. This is a new species for my Lynchburg list.

Ruskin S. Freer,
Lynchburg.

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

The 1938 Annual Meeting of the V. S. O. will be held at Lexington, Virginia. The date has not yet been definitely set by the Executive Committee but it will probably be near the end of April. It is not too early to begin to make plans to attend the meeting and to prepare a paper for the program.

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VIRGINIA NOTES IN OTHER ORNITHOLOGICAL JOURNALS IN 1937

'The Auk' for 1937 has not had as many short notes about Virginia birds as in most years, but it has had some very interesting longer articles that concern our State. The July issue has a very important paper, "Behavior of Black Skimmers at Cardwell's Island, Virginia," by Olin S. Pettingill, Jr., pp. 237-244. Dr. Elsa G. (Mrs. A. A.) Allen's paper, "New Light on Mark Catesby," (pp. 349-363) is an admirable piece of research and throws light on some obscure places in Catesby's life. William J. Rusling (p. 395) reports the finding of the remains of a Bicknell's Thrush at Kiptopeke, at the southern tip of the Eastern Shore, thus giving us a new bird for the Virginia list. In the same issue, by the way, is one of the most important articles on ornithology that I have seen recently, "The Companion in the Bird's World," by Konrad Z. Lorenz. No serious student can afford to miss this paper. In the October issue, Allen J. Duvall's article, "Birds Observed on the Coast of Virginia and North Carolina" (pp. 461-463), furnishes notes on eleven species at Pungo in 1936. J. Southgate Y. Hoyt reports the European Teal (p. 533) and Saw-whet Owl (p. 539) at Lexington, Va.; and Wetmore and Murray (pp. 540-541) report the collecting of a specimen of the Southern Winter Wren on Mt. Rogers and the consequent addition of another form to the State list.

The only Virginia item in the 'Wilson Bulletin' for 1937 (the December number has not yet appeared) is a short paper, "Further Notes on the Water Birds of Rockbridge County, Va.," by J. J. Murray, in the March issue, pp. 48-49.

'Bird-Lore,' in the Jan.-Feb. number, presents Christmas censuses from Amelia, Blacksburg, Lynchburg, and Washington's Birthplace. On page 27, in a survey of the Snow Geese on the Atlantic coast, 4,500 of these birds are reported from the Eastern Shore of Virginia. In "The Season" in every issue except Jan.-Feb. there are always interesting notes from the Washington region, compiled by Dr. H. C. Oberholser. The first report of the Breeding-Bird Census appears in the Sept.-Oct. issue, with a census from Sweet Briar College by Martha Clark (pp. 384-385). This census was reported in more detail in the July-August issue of THE RAVEN.

A new Virginia periodical (printed) made its appearance in September, much to the gratification of all who are interested in conservation in our State. 'Virginia Wildlife' is published monthly at Blacksburg by the Virginia Wild Life Federation. It is full of conservation material and costs only 25¢ per year. V. S. O. members

should not fail to subscribe to it.

The mimeographed journals of neighboring states are always of interest to V. S. O. members. 'The Redstart,' organ of the Brooks Bird Club, Oglesbay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia, is now entering its Fifth volume. The Brooks Bird Club is very active in an important region that is neither north, east, west nor south in its faunal characteristics but that presents an interesting and puzzling mixture of all these elements. As its territory borders ours its papers are of interest to Virginia readers. Sometimes it contains Virginia notes, and always it is kind in its reference to the V. S. O. and THE RAVEN.

The year has seen the appearance of 'The Chat,' bulletin of the North Carolina Bird Club, organized March 6, 1937. The V. S. O. is proud to claim some part in the inspiration of this group, which is very active and which has already passed our mark in its membership. Since of all our neighboring states, North Carolina is most like Virginia in its bird life, 'The Chat' should be of special interest to our members, and no doubt some of us will wish to be subscribers. There have been no Virginia notes as yet but 'The Chat' has contained many items of interest, particularly a paper by Earle R. Greene on the "Birds of Lake Mattamuskeet," to which the whole Sept.-Oct. issue is given.

J. J. M.