



The Raven

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The V.S.O. Annual Meeting will be held at
Salem on April 27-28.

VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS - 1955

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Va. (Assateague Island south of Maryland line, Chincoteague Island and Causeway, Mattsville, Horntown, and part of western shore of Chincoteague Bay; open farmland 5%, pine and mixed woodlands 25%, scrub pine and bayberry 15%, brackish marshes and impoundments 15%, salt marshes 10%, sheltered bays 15%, dunes 3%, mud and sand flats 7%, ocean beach 5%). -- December 29; 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Overcast; temp. 24° to 34°; wind N, 0-6 m.p.h. Ground bare; flats, marshes, and ponds largely frozen. Eight observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 42½ (33 on foot, 6 by car, 3½ by motorboat); total party-miles, 121 (38 on foot, 70 by car, 13 by boat). Common Loon, 92; Red-throated Loon, 35; Red-necked Grebe, 4; Horned Grebe, 1703; Pied-billed Grebe, 163; Great Blue Heron, 58; American Egret, 2; Louisiana Heron, 3 (P.A.D., P.G.D., J.E.K., J.M.V.); Little Blue Heron, 1 (J.E.K.); Green Heron, 5 (reported by two parties - J.T., J.M.V.); Black-crowned Night Heron, 68; American Bittern, 3; Black Swan, 1 (seen in area several times during fall - not known for sure to be a wild bird - J.M.V.); Whistling Swan, 85; Canada Goose, 229; American Brant, 10,304; Snow Goose, 4,078; Mallard, 1,162; Black Duck, 8,712; Gadwall, 240; American Widgeon, 1,105; Pintail, 1,950; Green-winged Teal, 228; Blue-winged Teal, 2 (J.M.V.); Shoveller, 300; Redhead, 10; Ring-necked Duck, 200; Canvas-back, 1,450; Greater Scaup, 45; scaup (sp.), 6,948; American Golden-eye, 158; Buffle-head, 168; Old-squaw, 231; White-winged Scoter, 338; Surf Scoter, 3,525; American Scoter, 1,037; scoter (sp.), 2,000; Ruddy Duck, 152; Hooded Merganser, 90; Red-breasted Merganser, 144; Turkey Vulture, 4; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 5; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 8; Peregrine Falcon, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 10; Bob-white, 20; Clapper Rail, 13; American Coot, 215; Killdeer, 22; Black-bellied Plover, 110; Wilson's Snipe, 12; Greater Yellow-legs, 16; Lesser Yellow-legs, 13; Least Sandpiper, 7; Red-backed Sandpiper, 702; Long-billed Dowitcher, 3 (P.A.D., P.G.D.); Semipalmated Sandpiper, 48; Sanderling, 197; Great Black-backed Gull, 54; Herring Gull, 1,360; Ring-billed Gull, 146; Mourning Dove, 55; Belted Kingfisher, 11; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 38; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 5; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 10; Horned Lark, 4; American Crow, 10,000; Fish Crow, 100; Carolina Chickadee, 19; Tufted Titmouse, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown-headed Nuthatch, 36; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Brown Creeper, 17; House Wren, 1; Winter Wren, 26; Carolina Wren, 23; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 12; Mockingbird, 4; Catbird, 2; Brown Thrasher, 3; American Robin, 76; Hermit Thrush, 22; Eastern Bluebird, 8; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 17; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 4; Water Pipit, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 1; Common Starling, 129; Myrtle Warbler, 1,109; Pine Warbler, 6; House Sparrow, 105; Eastern Meadowlark, 91; Red-winged Blackbird, 651; Rusty Blackbird, 1; Boat-tailed Grackle, 678; Purple Grackle, 6; Brown-headed Cowbird, 49; Cardinal, 81; Common Redpoll, 1 (P.A.D., P.G.D.); American Goldfinch, 68; Eastern Towhee, 18; Savannah Sparrow, 27; Henslow's Sparrow, 1 (L.G.); Sharp-tailed Sparrow, 4; Vesper Sparrow, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 54; Field Sparrow, 30; White-throated Sparrow, 239; Fox Sparrow, 44; Swamp Sparrow, 189; Song Sparrow, 138. Total, 116 species; about 64,226 individuals. Sharply reduced numbers of some surface-feeding ducks may have been the result of the freezing of the refuge impoundments. The high numbers of some diving ducks on the other hand seem to indicate a movement into the area from Chesapeake Bay, perhaps a result of hunting pressure. The strange relative numbers of some small land birds (compare Chickadees, Titmice, Nuthatches, Creepers, and Wrens) is probably because most of the field work was carried out on Assateague and Chincoteague Islands, only a very small amount of time being spent on the mainland. -- P.A. DuMont, P.G. DuMont, L. Griffin, J.E. Knudsen, F.R. Scott (compiler), C.C. Steirly, J. Terborgh, J.M. Valentine.

Cobb Island, Va. (entire length of Cobb Island, Cobb Bay, and Sand Shoal Channel west nearly to Oyster; open bay 30%, sand dunes 30%, ocean beach 25%, salt marsh 10%, mud and sand flats 5%). -- December 28; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 23° to 32°; wind N, 10-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, flats and sheltered marshes partially frozen. Two observers in 1 and 2 parties. Total party-hours, 11 (8½ on foot, 2½ by motorboat); total party-miles, 34 (17 on foot, 17 by boat). Common Loon, 4; Red-throated Loon, 2; Horned Grebe, 135; Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Great Blue Heron, 4; American Bittern, 2; Canada Goose, 36; American Brant, 255; Black Duck, 30; American Golden-eye, 7; Bufflehead, 9; Old-squaw, 2; White-winged Scoter, 3; Surf Scoter, 275; American Scoter, 42; Red-breasted Merganser, 11; Turkey Vulture, 1; Marsh Hawk, 2; Killdeer, 1; Black-bellied Plover, 327; Red-backed Sandpiper, 3460; Western Sandpiper, 5; Sanderling, 14; Great Black-backed Gull, 8; Herring Gull, 485; Ring-billed Gull, 30; Horned Lark 30 (northern); Common Starling, 15; Eastern Meadowlark, 90; Ipswich Sparrow, 2; Savannah Sparrow, 36; Sharp-tailed Sparrow, 8; Song Sparrow, 3. Total, 33 species; about 5,333 individuals. -- F.R. Scott (compiler), G.C. Steirly.

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Chesapeake Bay, Va. (a strip census 15 miles long, taken from the Little Creek-Kiptopeke Beach Ferry just within the mouth of Chesapeake Bay; no closer than 2 miles to land; open water 100%). -- December 30; 10:10 to 11:25 a.m. Overcast with light rain and snow; temp. 38°; wind NE, 0-5 m.p.h.; water surface moderate. Two observers together. Total party-hours, 1.25 (by boat); total party-miles, 15 (by boat). Common Loon, 1; Red-throated Loon, 5; Horned Grebe, 41; scaup (sp.), 65; White-winged Scoter, 8; American Scoter, 11; scoter (sp.), 7; Great Black-backed Gull, 2; Herring Gull, 45. Total, 9 species; 183 individuals. -- F.R. Scott (compiler), C.C. Steirly.

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Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Va. (same area as in previous years; refuge and much of mainland of Princess Anne County; open farm land 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 20%, open beach 5%, marshes and inland bay 45%). -- December 26, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 31° to 39°; wind N, 28-0 m.p.h., strong until about 4:30 p.m.; ground bare and water open. Eighteen observers in four parties. Total party-hours, 39 (30 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles, 305 (15 on foot, 290 by car). Common Loon, 6; Red-throated Loon, 3; Horned Grebe, 12; Pied-billed Grebe, 8; Bannet, 36; Double-crested Cormorant, 8; Great Blue Heron, 7; Little Blue Heron, 1; American Bittern, 6; Whistling Swan, 5,200; Canada Goose, 5,375; Snow Goose, 465; Blue Goose, 5; Mallard, 44; Black Duck, 560; Gadwall, 1; American Widgeon, 275; Pintail, 460; Green-winged Teal, 55; Redhead, 6; Ring-necked Duck, 300; Canvas-back, 220; Greater Scaup, 1; Lesser Scaup, 1; Buffle-head, 15; Old-squaw, 4; White-winged Scoter, 45; Surf Scoter, 3; American Scoter, 27; Ruddy Duck, 2,500; Hooded Merganser, 12; American Merganser, 15; Turkey Vulture, 48; Black Vulture, 9; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 4; Red-shouldered Hawk, 11; Bald Eagle, 7; Marsh Hawk, 34; Peregrine Falcon, 1; Pigeon Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 84;

Bob-white, 16; King Rail, 2; American Coot, 9,500; Killdeer, 93; Black-bellied Plover, 4; American Woodcock, 1 (WFR, Dr. WGA, and others); Wilson's Snipe, 48; Greater Yellow-legs, 4; Pectoral Sandpiper, 1; Least Sandpiper, 1; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 3; Sanderling, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 50; Herring Gull, 556; Ring-billed Gull, 545; Bonaparte's Gull, 35; Mourning Dove, 97; Screech Owl, 1; Barred Owl, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 4; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 57; Pileated Woodpecker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 31; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 4; Hairy Woodpecker, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 15; Eastern Phoebe, 6; Horned Lark, 100; Blue Jay, 5; American Crow, 211; Fish Crow, 9; Carolina Chickadee, 59; Tufted Titmouse, 33; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Brown-headed Nuthatch, 69; Brown Creeper, 6; House Wren, 2; Winter Wren, 6; Carolina Wren, 53; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 6; Mockingbird, 78; Catbird, 37; Brown Thrasher, 17; American Robin, 1,400; Hermit Thrush, 26; Eastern Bluebird, 142; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 49; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 8; Water Pipit, 549; Loggerhead Shrike, 4; Common Starling, 4,700; Orange-crowned Warbler, 4; Myrtle Warbler, 5,500; Pine Warbler, 8; Palm Warbler, 5; Common Yellowthroat, 8; House Sparrow, 187; Eastern Meadowlark, 595; Red-winged Blackbird, 49,000; Rusty Blackbird, 13; Purple Grackle, 3,800; Brown-headed Cowbird, 3,950; Cardinal, 85; Purple Finch, 6; American Goldfinch, 1,048; Eastern Towhee, 61; Ipswich Sparrow, 2; Savannah Sparrow, 241; Slate-colored Junco, 407; American Tree Sparrow, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 7; Field Sparrow, 97; White-crowned Sparrow, 1 (LEB, GG); White-throated Sparrow, 956; Fox Sparrow, 39; Lincoln's Sparrow, 1 (RHP, Jr.); Swamp Sparrow, 122; Song Sparrow, 120. Total, 121 species; 98,581 individuals.

Although this is an excellent year for waterfowl, the weather conditions together with the low water level in Back Bay prevented the use of the boat, thus we were unable to get a count of the ducks, geese, and swan. -- Dr. & Mrs. W.G. Akers, Mr. & Mrs. S.E. Breneiser, Mrs. L.E. Burford, F.O. Ebird, W. Ebird, M.T. Griffin, Miss G. Grimm, H. Hespenheide, R.H. Peake, Jr., J.M. Perkins, W.F. Rountrey, P.M. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), Mrs. F. Steinbauer, Miss E. Thomas, E. Webster, Jr., J.R. Withrow (Cape Henry Bird Club).

Little Blue Heron, adult, seen by four observers at a distance of about 75 yards. American Woodcock (WFR, Dr. WGA, others); observed beside road at a distance of about 20 feet; broad head, short neck, reddish beneath. House Wren; species now well established as a winter resident as well as a breeder. Pectoral Sandpiper; seen by four observers at a distance of about 20 yards; yellow legs, sharp division between breast and belly. Least Sandpiper; seen by four observers at a distance of about 10 yards, with a group of three Semipalmated Sandpipers; very small, short bill, light legs. White-crowned Sparrow (LEB, GG); seen at a distance of about 20 feet with a flock of White-throated Sparrows; all field marks noted. Lincoln's Sparrow (RHP, Jr.); observer familiar with species; seen at a distance of about 5 feet; buffy breast with fine dark stripes.

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Little Creek, Va. (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius centering 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles NE of Kempsville, including Lynnhaven Inlet, Little Creek, eastern portion of Norfolk City, Stumpy Lake; open farmland 25%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland, 50%, salt marsh, sand beach, bay, rivers, 10%, city suburbs 5%). -- December 31; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 22° to 36°; wind SW, 3-18 m.p.h.; ground frozen and covered with 1 inch of snow, fresh water frozen, roads clear. Seven observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ (13 $\frac{1}{2}$ on foot, 15 by car), total party-miles, 194 (9 on foot, 185 by car). Common Loon, 1;

Red-throated Loon, 1; Horned Grebe, 43; Pied-billed Grebe, 69; Gannet, 1; Double-crested Cormorant, 7; Great Blue Heron, 16; Little Blue Heron, 1 (RHP, MTG); Black-crowned Night Heron, 3; Canada Goose, 18; Mallard, 12; Black Duck, 78; Gadwall, 1; Pintail, 10; Green-winged Teal, 61; Blue-winged Teal, 2; Wood Duck, 25; Redhead, 6; King-necked Duck, 800; Canvas-back, 45; Great Scaup, 90; Lesser Scaup, 25; American Golden-eye, 49; Buffle-head, 264; Old-squaw, 6; White-winged Scoter, 9; Surf Scoter, 7; American Scoter, 27; Ruddy Duck, 190; Hooded Merganser, 68; American Merganser, 60; Red-breasted Merganser, 142; Turkey Vulture, 21; Black Vulture, 13; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Red-shouldered Hawk, 8; Rough-legged Hawk, 1 (WFR, FCR); Bald Eagle, 6; Marsh Hawk, 3; Pigeon Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 52; Bob-white, 12; Clapper Rail, 1; American Coot, 100; Killdeer, 28; Black-bellied Plover, 3; American Woodcock, 1 (WFR, FCR); Greater Yellow-legs, 1; Purple Sandpiper, 1; Red-backed Sandpiper, 67; Sanderling, 54; Great Black-backed Gull, 6; Herring Gull, 1,500; Ring-billed Gull, 1,560; Laughing Gull, 1; Bonaparte's Gull, 253; Mourning Dove, 103; Belted Kingfisher, 6; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 87; Pileated Woodpecker, 10; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 25; Red-headed Woodpecker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 12; Eastern Phoebe, 4; Horned Lark, 2; Blue Jay, 5; American Crow, 119; Fish Crow, 9; Carolina Chickadee, 36; Tufted Titmouse, 9; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, 6; Winter Wren, 7; Carolina Wren, 33; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 54; Brown Thrasher, 18; American Robin, 127; Hermit Thrush, 3; Eastern Bluebird, 22; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 38; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 4; Water Pipit, 3; Cedar Waxwing, 5; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Common Starling, 650; Myrtle Warbler, 620; Pine Warbler, 2; Palm Warbler, 1; Common Yellowthroat, 3; House Sparrow, 127; Eastern Meadowlark, 308; Red-winged Blackbird, 2,280; Rusty Blackbird, 100; Purple Grackle, 202; Brown-headed Cowbird, 7,000; Cardinal, 93; Purple Finch, 1; Pine Siskin, 24; American Goldfinch, 159; Eastern Towhee, 42; Savannah Sparrow, 49; Sharp-tailed Sparrow, 5 (RHP, MTG); Seaside Sparrow, 6 (RHP, MTG); Slate-colored Junco, 274; Field Sparrow, 77; White-throated Sparrow, 866; Fox Sparrow, 83; Lincoln's Sparrow, 3 (RHP, MTG); Swamp Sparrow, 104; Song Sparrow, 116. Total, 115 species; 19,803 individuals. Birds seen not listed above: Green Heron, 1 (WFR, FCR); Florida Gallinule, 15; House Wren, 1; Yellow-breasted Chat, 1 (WFR, FCR). -- M.T. Griffin, H. Hespenheide, R.H. Peake, Jr., F.C. Richardson, W.F. Rountrey, P.W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), E. Webster, Jr. Little Blue Heron (RHP, MTG), adult; seen at a distance of about 10 yards. Green Heron (WFR, FCR); seen at distance of about 50 feet. Rough-legged Hawk (WFR, FCR), dark phase; flew directly overhead at a distance of about 50 feet. Florida Gallinule; present in small numbers in area since October. Woodcock (WFR, FCR); seen sitting on ice at a distance of about 50 yards. Yellow-breasted Chat (WFR, FCR); all field marks noted; seen at a distance of 35 feet. Sharp-tailed Sparrow (RHP, MTG); seen at a distance of about 6 feet; facial markings noted. Seaside Sparrow (RHP, MTG); seen at a distance of about 6 feet; facial markings and dingy color noted. Lincoln's Sparrow (RHP, MTG); seen at distance of about 10 feet; fine breast streaks, square tail, buffy on breast, eye-ring, wren like in actions. House Wren; species now well established as a winter resident as well as a breeder.

Norfolk County, Va. (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile radius centering approximately 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles NE of Wallaceeton, including eastern edge of Dismal Swamp, western part of Northwest River, Great Bridge, Butts Station, Fentress, Deep Creek; open farmland 30%, wooded swampland 24%, mixed woodland 30% deciduous woodland 5%, pine woodland 10%, marsh land 1%). -- December 28, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 25° to 34°; wind NE, 8-16 m.p.h.; ground bare and water frozen. Five observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 31 (9 on foot, 22 by car), total party-miles, 267 (8 on foot, 259 by car). Pied-billed Grebe, 4; Turkey Vulture, 75; Black Vulture, 14; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 3; Cooper's Hawk, 6; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Red-shouldered Hawk, 14; Marsh Hawk, 7; Sparrow Hawk, 44; Bobwhite, 3; King Rail, 1; Killdeer, 30; Herring Gull, 25; Ring-billed Gull, 40; Mourning Dove, 106; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 78; Pileated Woodpecker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 22; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 20; Eastern Phoebe, 5; Blue Jay, 22; American Crow, 4,000; Fish Crow, 22; Carolina Chickadee, 37; Tufted Titmouse, 27; White-breasted Nuthatch, 8; Brown Creeper, 1; Winter Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, 38; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 68; Catbird, 4; Brown Thrasher, 19; American Robin, 577; Hermit Thrush, 14; Eastern Bluebird, 17; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 3; Water Pipit, 20; Cedar Waxwing, 23; Loggerhead Shrike, 4; Common Starling, 4,000; Myrtle Warbler, 1,200; Pine Warbler, 1; Palm Warbler, 7; House Sparrow, 109; Eastern Meadowlark, 426; Red-winged Blackbird, 4,000,000; *Purple Grackle, 4,000,000; Brown-headed Cowbird, 100,000; Cardinal, 147; Purple Finch, 7; Pine Siskin, 61; American Goldfinch, 475; Eastern Towhee, 311; Savannah Sparrow, 133; Slate-colored Junco, 394; American Tree Sparrow, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 2; Field Sparrow, 89; White-throated Sparrow, 2,100; Fox Sparrow, 82; Lincoln's Sparrow, 2 (RHP, JKW); Swamp Sparrow, 405; Song Sparrow, 403. Total, 72 species; 8,115,766 individuals. Birds seen not listed above: House Wren, 7; Yellow-breasted Chat, 1 (PWS). Blackbirds observed for approximately an hour flying to roost somewhere in the Dismal Swamp. -- M.T. Griffin, R.H. Peake, Jr., W.F. Rountrey, P.V. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), J.R. Withrow. Yellow-breasted Chat (PWS); seen at a distance of about 10 feet in good light; all field marks noted, observed for about 5 minutes. Red-winged Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird-flock; observed for approximately an hour flying to roost somewhere in the Dismal Swamp. For the last 20 to 30 minutes the sky was thickly covered from one horizon to the other. The approximate proportion of Red-wings and Grackles was the same. Birds observed from county road (740) approximately 2 miles from Northwest and about 10 miles from locality where recorded on this count in 1954. Lincoln's Sparrow (RHP, JKW); found in same locality as where first recorded by RHP in 1953; observed at a distance of 6 to 10 feet in the remains of tree trunks and stumps piled along a drainage ditch; all field marks noted, wren like in actions. House Wren; species now well established as a winter resident as well as a breeder.

* Rusty Blackbird, 2.

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Newport News, Va. (7½ mile radius bounded by Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River and Grafton. Woodland 30%, open fields 30%, fresh water ponds 10% and waterfront 30%. -- December 26; 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. partly cloudy; temp. 32° to 45°; wind N, 0-20 m.p.h. ground bare, water open. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (22 on foot, 10 by car), total party-miles, 255 (22 on foot, 233 by car). Horned Grebe, 29; Pied-billed Grebe, 19; Double-crested Cormorant, 2; Great Blue Heron, 15; Black Duck, 68; Gadwall, 24; Mallard, 106; American Widgeon, 439; Green-winged Teal, 6; Redhead, 1; Ring-necked Duck, 2; Canvas-back, 1; Lesser Scaup, 167; American Golden-eye, 4; Buffle-head, 55; Old-squaw, 10; White-winged Scoter, 15; Surf Scoter, 2; American Scoter, 20; Ruddy Duck, 176; Red-breasted Merganser, 10; Turkey Vulture, 34; Black Vulture, 16; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Bald Eagle, 2; Marsh Hawk, 2; Pigeon Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 7; Bob-white, 24; Killdeer, 91; Black-bellied Plover, 2; Wilson's Snipe, 1; Red-backed Sandpiper, 50; Sanderling, 30; Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 508; Ring-billed Gull, 422; Bonaparte's Gull, 121; Mourning Dove, 43; Belted Kingfisher, 10; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 6; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Tree Swallow, 150; Eastern Phoebe, 2; Blue Jay, 3; American Crow, 101; Carolina Chickadee, 36; Tufted Titmouse, 23; *Brown-headed Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 1; Winter Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 20; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 44; Brown Thrasher, 3; American Robin, 362; Eastern Bluebird, 44; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 27; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2; Water Pipit, 6; Cedar Waxwing, 63; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Common Starling, 744; Myrtle Warbler, 277; Pine Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 63; Eastern Meadowlark, 55; Red-winged Blackbird, 475; Purple Grackle, 18; Cardinal, 26; Pine Siskin, 2; American Goldfinch, 122; Eastern Towhee, 17; Ipswich Sparrow, 1; Savannah Sparrow, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 343; Field Sparrow, 36; White-throated Sparrow, 180; Fox Sparrow, 17; Swamp Sparrow, 5; Song Sparrow, 84; Snow Bunting, 15. Total, 85 species; 5,960 individuals. -- John Grey, C.W. Hacker, M.E. Hathaway, S.C. Mitchell, N.A. Pope, Doris Smith, Sally Mae Smith, W.P. Smith (compiler), R.J. Nicke (Hampton Roads Bird Club).

*White-breasted Nuthatch, 4.

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Waverly, Sussex County, Va. A purely local census of a section of Spring Branch and adjacent woodlands and pond including a bottomland, hardwood Winter Bird-Population Study Area that was worked over intensively. Fields, 10%; brushy pond and marshy backwaters, 11%; pine forest, 9%; upland hardwood forest, 10; bottomland hardwood, 60%. December 24; 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 42° to 56°; wind S, 3 m.p.h.; ground bare; most of pond frozen. One observer. Total hours 8½, all on foot; total miles, 8. Great Blue Heron, 1; Wood Duck, 2; Turkey Vulture, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 2; Bob-white, 6; Killdeer, 29; Woodcock, 1; Mourning Dove, 29; Kingfisher, 2; Flicker, 13; Piloted Woodpecker, 4; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 12; Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Phoebe, 2; Blue Jay, 4; Common Crow, 53; Carolina Chickadee, 8; Tufted Titmouse, 12; White-breasted Nuthatch, 10; Winter Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, 8; American Robin, 1; Bluebird, 21; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 6; Cedar Waxwing, 1; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Starling, 8; Myrtle Warbler, 49; Pine Warbler, 1; English Sparrow, 12; Meadowlark, 9; Redwing, 4,440 (est.); Rusty Blackbird, 16; Purple Grackle, 1,370 (est.); Brown-headed Cowbird, 30; Cardinal, 16; Evening Grosbeak, 1; Purple Finch, 5; Goldfinch, 21; Eastern Towhee, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 33; White-throated Sparrow, 71; Swamp Sparrow, 17; Song Sparrow, 11. Total, 48 species; 6,363 individuals. -- C.C. Steirly.

Hog Island State Waterfowl Refuge, Northeast Surry County, Va.

Census confined to the refuge area. Pine forest, 30%; marsh and marsh edge, 30%; field edges (brush), 15%; ponds, 10%; river shore, 10%; open fields, 5%. -- January 2, 1956; 6:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 25° to 60°; wind S 3 m.p.h.; ground bare except for small patches of snow; all small ponds and 80% of larger ponds frozen most of day. Two observers together. Total hours, 8½ all on foot; total miles 8. Great Blue Heron, 10; American Bittern, 1; Canada Goose, 4,100 (est.); Mallard, 66; Black Duck, 210; Green-winged Teal, 159; Canvasback, 2; Lesser Scaup, 70; American Goldeneye, 1; Ruddy Duck, 26; Hooded Merganser, 22; Red-breasted Merganser, 5; Turkey Vulture, 3; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Clapper Rail, 3; Coot, 1; Killdeer, 10; Wilson's Snipe, 6; Herring Gull, 13; Ring-billed Gull, 154; Great Horned Owl, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 4; Flicker, 5; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Blue Jay, 2; Common Crow, 68; Carolina Chickadee, 12; Tufted Titmouse, 1; Brown-headed Nuthatch, 31; Carolina Wren, 11; Mockingbird, 3; Robin, 51; Bluebird, 21; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Cedar Waxwing, 12; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Starling, 23; Myrtle Warbler, 95; Pine Warbler, 2; Eastern Meadowlark, 2; Redwing, 250 (est.); Cowbird, 2; Cardinal, 8; Goldfinch, 34; Red-eyed Towhee, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 8; Tree Sparrow, 5; Field Sparrow, 15; White-throated Sparrow, 4; Fox Sparrow, 1; Swamp Sparrow, 54; Song Sparrow, 114. Total, 57 species; 5,701 individuals. -- R.J. Beasley, C.C. Steirly (compiler).

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Brooke, Va. (triangular area with Brooke, Widewater, mouth of Potomac Creek at the 3 apices; waterfront, 20%; marsh, 10%; fields, 10%; hedgerows, 10%; mixed forest edge, 30%; slash, 5%; deciduous woods, 8%; pine woods, 7%). -- December 26; 7:10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy in a.m., clear in p.m.; temp. 34° to 38°; wind in a.m. only, NW, 13-18 m.p.h.; ground bare, water in Potomac River and tidal creeks open. Six observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 36½ (all on foot); total party-miles, 22. Great Blue Heron, 5; Whistling Swan, 50; Canada Goose, 6; Mallard, 35; Black Duck, 200; American Widgeon, 14; Ring-necked Duck, 2; Canvas-back, 200; Lesser (?) Scaup, 225; American Golden-eye, 8; Buffle-head, 50; Ruddy Duck, 600; American Merganser, 2,000; Red-breasted Merganser, 7; Turkey Vulture, 6; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 5; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Bob-white, 8; Killdeer, 9; Herring Gull, 50; Ring-billed Gull, 100; Mourning Dove, 20; Belted Kingfisher, 6; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 5; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 15; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 15; Eastern Phoebe, 2; Blue Jay, 11; American Crow, 50; Fish Crow, 4; Carolina Chickadee, 26; Tufted Titmouse, 8; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, 9; House Wren, 1 (A.A.B., E.T.M.); Winter Wren, 4; Bewick's Wren, 1 (L.B.L., W.W.R.); Carolina Wren, 30; Mockingbird, 30; American Robin, 100; Hermit Thrush, 3; Eastern Bluebird, 35; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1 (E.T.M.); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 15; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2; Cedar Waxwing, 80; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Common Starling, 100; Myrtle Warbler, 13; Common Yellowthroat, 1 (C.A.A.); House Sparrow, 20; Eastern Meadowlark, 25; Red-winged Blackbird, 500; Baltimore Oriole, 1 female or young male (A.A.B.); Cardinal, 70; Purple Finch, 5; American Goldfinch, 50; Eastern Towhee, 2; Savannah Sparrow, 3; Slate-colored Junco, 300; American Tree Sparrow, 55; Field Sparrow, 70; White-throated Sparrow, 500; Fox Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 27; Song Sparrow, 125. Total, 70 species; about 5,912 individuals. (Seen in area during count period: Long-billed Marsh Wren, Evening Grosbeak.) -- C.A. Anderson, A.A. Baker, Luna B. Leopold, Edwin T. McKnight (compiler), Thomas B. Nolan, W.W. Rubey.

Unusual birds: House Wren. Previously seen and identified at same locality on Nov. 24, by McKnight and Nolan; grayish brown color (compared to Winter and Carolina Wrens), lack of eyeline, house wren size and shape, tail longer than Winter Wren's and characteristic scolding notes noted on both dates; observed at close range on both dates; an accomplished skulker that allowed only momentary glimpses in ground cover of Japanese honeysuckle. Bewick's Wren. Small size, long tail, white eyeline, and nearly white underparts (no buff) noted by both observers. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Previously seen and identified within 500 feet of same locality on Nov. 24 by McKnight and Nolan, observed at leisure on both dates, and all distinguishing characteristics noted; both observers familiar with bird. Picked up first by characteristic notes. Yellow-throat. Previously seen and identified at same locality (a grass-grown gravel pit) on Dec. 11 by Anderson, McKnight and Robert L. Smith. Yellow throat, olive brown back and characteristic call note observed on both occasions. Female plumage. Baltimore Oriole. Observed at leisure while feeding on dried poke berries at eye level, 8x binoculars at about 20 ft.; orange yellow underparts, yellow olive back, gray wings with two conspicuous white wing bars, slender bill, and size about that of cardinal, all noted.

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Virginia part of the District of Columbia Census. (Areas include Alexandria, Arlington and Falls Church in Northern Va.) -- December 31; 5 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Part cloudy to clear, marshes and bays frozen; temp. 22° to 43°; wind NW, 0-5 m.p.h. Nineteen observers in 7 parties. Total party hours, 146.5 (129 on foot, 17.5 by car); total party miles, 143 (73 on foot, 70 by car). Common Loon, 2; Great Blue Heron, 14; American Bittern, 1; Mallard, 102; Black Duck, 128; American Widgeon, 210; Pintail, 160; Green-winged Teal, 15; Shoveller, 13; Lesser Scaup, 69; Bufflehead, 55; Ruddy Duck, 19; Hooded Merganser, 5; Common Merganser, 39; Turkey Vulture, 11; Black Vulture, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Red-shouldered Hawk, 6; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 3; American Kestrel, 6; Bob-white, 30; Coot, 1; Killdeer, 37; Snipe, 10; Herring Gull, 504; Ring-billed Gull, 520; Mourning Dove, 46; Barn Owl, 1; Horned Owl, 3; Barred Owl, 3; Kingfisher, 3; Flicker, 13; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 19; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 37; Blue Jay, 125; Common Crow, 96; Fish Crow, 16; Black-capped Chickadee, 3; Carolina Chickadee, 77; Tufted Titmouse, 46; White-breasted Nuthatch, 22; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 7; Brown Creeper, 3; Winter Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, 50; Marsh Wren, 6; Mockingbird, 95; Catbird, 3; Robin, 57; Hermit Thrush, 7; Bluebird, 44; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 18; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 17; Starling, 19, 312; Myrtle Warbler, 21; House Sparrow, 104; Meadowlark, 35; Red-wing, 1,244; Rusty Blackbird, 20; Purple Grackle, 5; Cowbird, 20; Cardinal, 143; Evening Grosbeak, 25; Purple Finch, 72; Pine Siskin, 14; American Goldfinch, 89; Towhee, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 323; Tree Sparrow, 298; Field Sparrow, 45; White-crowned Sparrow, 1; White-throated Sparrow, 242; Fox Sparrow, 1; Swamp Sparrow, 26; Song Sparrow, 148. Total, 82 species; about 24,666 individuals. -- J.M. Abbott, Mrs. A.T. Culbertson; Charles Dillon, Margaret Fowler, Pete Gregory; Ed Hayward, C.R. Hough, Sr., C.R. Hough, Jr., Adam Hubbell, Dr. Dan Keaney, Ed Kunze, Dr. C.W. Meade, Jim Meade, Jerry Mersereau, Bill Hall, Claud Slusher, George Trichel, Karl Trever, Joe Turner.

Fort Belvoir, Va. (Same area as in past years, except no coverage on the Maryland side of the Potomac River; tidal water 30%, deciduous woods 25%, pine woods 15%, pasture 10%, open fields 10%, town suburbs 5%, cattail marsh 5%). -- January 2; 5:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Overcast to clearing; temp. 19° to 45°; wind W to NW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, marshes, inlets and bays frozen, river channel ice-free. Twenty-three observers in 8 parties. Total party hours, 62 (48.5 on foot, 13.5 by car); total party miles, 199 (75 on foot, 124 by car). Horned Grebe, 2; Great Blue Heron, 4; Canada Goose, 9; Mallard, 50; Black Duck, 273; American Widgeon, 30; Green-winged Teal, 6; Scaup (sp.), 1; Bufflehead, 2; Ruddy Duck, 701; Hooded Merganser, 8; Common Merganser, 431; Red-breasted Merganser, 4; Turkey Vulture, 63; Black Vulture, 2; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 4; Red-tailed Hawk, 20; Red-shouldered Hawk, 10; Bald Eagle, 21; Marsh Hawk, 1; American Kestrel, 6; Bobwhite, 9; Killdeer, 22; Snipe, 1; Herring Gull, 83; Ring-billed Gull, 170; unidentified gulls (Herring and Ring-billed), 335; Mourning Dove, 33; Horned Owl, 4; Barred Owl, 4; Kingfisher, 4; Flicker, 88; Pileated Woodpecker, 11; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 52; Red-headed Woodpecker, 15; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 12; Hairy Woodpecker, 13; Downy Woodpecker, 92; Phoebe, 1; Horned Lark, 12; Blue Jay, 384; Common Crow, 381; Fish Crow, 7; Black-capped Chickadee, 4; Carolina Chickadee, 282; Tufted Titmouse, 234; White-breasted Nuthatch, 68; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 23; Brown Creeper, 18; House Wren, 1 (G.S. & B.M.); Winter Wren, 21; Carolina Wren, 116; Mockingbird, 124; Catbird, 1; Robin, 1,296; Hermit Thrush, 13; Bluebird, 69; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 34; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 13; Cedar Waxwing, 128; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; Starling, 468; Myrtle Warbler, 212; Palm Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 235; Meadowlark, 171; Redwing, 530; Baltimore Oriole, 1 (P.G.D. et al.); Rusty Blackbird, 212; Cowbird, 29; Cardinal, 227; Evening Grosbeak, 25; Purple Finch, 44; Pine Siskin, 13; American Goldfinch, 290; Towhee, 38; Savannah Sparrow, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 1,780; Tree Sparrow, 200; Field Sparrow, 123; White-crowned Sparrow, 6; White-throated Sparrow, 777; Fox Sparrow, 8; Swamp Sparrow, 37; Song Sparrow, 271. Total, 84 species; 11,415 individuals. -- J.M. Abbott (compiler), John Boyd, Bob Caswell, Dr. & Mrs. E.G. Davis, Dave Downing, Phil. G. DuMont, Paul A. DuMont, Margaret Fowler, Morgan Gilbert, George Golding, Ed Hayward, C.R. Hough, Sr., C.R. Hough, Jr., Ed Hull, Mr. & Mrs. I.C. Hoover, Dr. Dan Keaney, Bill Mull, George Sigel, Kark Stecher, Ruth Strosnider, Harriet Sutton.

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Hopewell, Va. (Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, Curles Neck, Richmond Battlefield Park, Shirley, Meadowville, Hopewell, Jordan Point; open farmland 30%, brushy fields 10%, marshes and river shore 10%, deciduous wooded swamp 10%, woodland 40%). -- January 1; 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 19° to 49°; wind NE, 1-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, marshes and ponds partially frozen. Four observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 27 (19 on foot, 5 by car, 3 by motorboat); total party-miles, 123 (13 on foot, 102 by car, 8 by boat). Pied-billed Grebe, 3; Great Blue Heron, 18; Canada Goose, 6,100 (est.); Snow Goose, 1; Blue Goose, 6; Mallard, 3,100 (est.); Black Duck, 950 (est.); Gadwall, 3; American Widgeon, 2; Pintail, 276; Green-winged Teal, 3; Shoveller, 3; Wood Duck, 225; Ring-necked Duck, 1; Lesser Scaup, 11; scaup (sp.), 2; Buffle-head, 4; Hooded Merganser, 1; American Merganser, 48; Red-breasted Merganser, 3; Turkey Vulture, 12; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 6; Bald Eagle, 5; Marsh Hawk, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 4; Turkey, 2; Killdeer, 8; Wilson's Snipe, 1; shorebird (sp.), 10;

Herring Gull, 10; Ring-billed Gull, 436; Mourning Dove, 118; Horned Owl, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 30; Pileated Woodpecker, 7; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 21; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 9; Hairy Woodpecker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 15; Eastern Phoebe, 5; Horned Lark, 1; Blue Jay, 24; American Crow, 123; Carolina Chickadee, 63; Tufted Titmouse, 42; White-breasted Nuthatch, 12; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 9; Brown Creeper, 11; House Wren, 1 (J.L.D.); Winter Wren, 2; Bewick's Wren, 1 (first record for area - J.L.D.); Carolina Wren, 40; Mockingbird, 31; American Robin, 129; Hermit Thrush, 17; Eastern Bluebird, 23; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 21; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 11; Cedar Waxwing, 11; Loggerhead Shrike, 5; Common Starling, 84; Orange-crowned Warbler, 5 (J.L.D.); Myrtle Warbler, 104; House Sparrow, 246; Eastern Meadowlark, 212; Red-winged Blackbird, 13; Brown-headed Cowbird, 57; Cardinal, 131; Evening Grosbeak, 1 (J.L.D.); Purple Finch, 29; American Goldfinch, 57; Eastern Towhee, 18; Savannah Sparrow, 13; Slate-colored Junco, 197; American Tree Sparrow, 2; Field Sparrow, 80; White-throated Sparrow, 289; Fox Sparrow, 13; Swamp Sparrow, 28; Song Sparrow, 119. Total, 81 species; about 13,992 individuals. -- Mr. & Mrs. J.L. DeLime, F.R. Scott (compiler), R.J. Watson.

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Charlottesville, Va. (same area and percentages as last year). -- December 31; 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 27° to 43°; wind W, 5-30 m.p.h.; ponds and river mostly frozen. Four observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (29 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 196 (30 on foot, 166 by car). Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Great Blue Heron, 1; Mallard, 57; Black Duck, 19; Turkey Vulture, 92; Black Vulture, 41; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 5; Sparrow Hawk, 5; Bob-white, 21 (2 coveys); Killdeer, 1; Dove, 128; Belted Kingfisher, 5; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 17; Pileated Woodpecker, 5; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 31; Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 38; Eastern Phoebe, 7; Horned Lark, 35; Blue Jay, 24; American Crow, 213; Carolina Chickadee, 75; Tufted Titmouse, 61; White-breasted Nuthatch, 22; Brown Creeper, 6; Winter Wren, 10; Carolina Wren, 49; Mockingbird, 65; American Robin, 53; Hermit Thrush, 6; Bluebird, 78; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 35; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 29; Loggerhead Shrike, 5; Starling, 3035; Myrtle Warbler, 35; House Sparrow, 15; Eastern Meadowlark, 20; Rusty Blackbird, 2; Cardinal, 221; Evening Grosbeak, 3; Purple Finch, 56; American Goldfinch, 82; Slate-colored Junco, 755; American Tree Sparrow, 21; Field Sparrow, 89; White-crowned Sparrow, 15; White-throated Sparrow, 239; Fox Sparrow, 6; Swamp Sparrow, 7; Song Sparrow, 165. Total, 55 species; 6,014 individuals. -- Mrs. C.O. Gregory, Kenneth Lawless, Charles E. Stevens, R.J. Watson.

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Warren (Albemarle County), Va. (same area and percentages as last year). December 26; 6 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 21° to 47°; no wind; Langhorne's Pond and James River open. Three observers in 2-3 parties. Total party-hours, 22 (18 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 142 (27 on foot, 115 by car). Mallard, 207; Black Duck, 40; American Widgeon, 17; Pintail, 6; Green-winged Teal, 8; Blue-winged Teal, 4 (first winter record for county - K.L.); Wood Duck, 2; Redhead, 2; Buffle-head, 2; Ruddy Duck, 1; Hooded Merganser, 4; Turkey Vulture, 37; Black Vulture, 28; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Red-shouldered Hawk, 2; Marsh Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 6; Bob-white, 8 (1 covey); American Coot, 1 (first winter record for county - K.L.); Killdeer, 5; Wilson's Snipe, 4; Mourning Dove, 168; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 12; Pileated Woodpecker, 1;

Red-bellied Woodpecker, 21; Spasucker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 24; Eastern Phoebe, 3; Horned Lark, 39; Blue Jay, 5; American Crow, 288; Fish Crow, 1; Carolina Chickadee, 82; Tufted Titmouse, 25; White-breasted Nuthatch, 13; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 5; Winter Wren, 10; Carolina Wren, 37; Mockingbird, 55; American Robin, 121; Hermit Thrush, 9; Eastern Bluebird, 105; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 31; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 7; Cedar Waxwing, 38; Loggerhead Shrike, 15; Starling, 932; Myrtle Warbler, 83; Pine Warbler, 1 (rare in winter - C.E.S.); House Sparrow, 40; Meadowlark, 186; Red-winged Blackbird, 10,251 (one flock estimated at 10,000 by K.L.); Rusty-Blackbird, 204; Purple Grackle, 1; Brown-headed Cowbird, 5; Cardinal, 139; Evening Grosbeak, 26; Purple Finch, 24; Pine Siskin, 1; American Goldfinch, 170; Slate-colored Junco, 713; American Tree Sparrow, 31; Field Sparrow, 71; White-crowned Sparrow, 62; White-throated Sparrow, 255; Swamp Sparrow, 14; Song Sparrow, 181. Total, 69 species; about 14,894 individuals. -- Kenneth Lawless, William F. Minor, Charles E. Stevens.

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Big Flat Mountain, Va. (section of the Blue Ridge lying mostly in the Shenandoah National Park in Albemarle and Rockingham counties including Big Flat Mountain, Blackrock, North Fork Moorman's River, and Sugar Hollow reservoir; deciduous woods, 75%, abandoned fields, 18%, hemlock groves, 5%, reservoir 2%). -- January 2; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 23° to 40°; wind SE-SW, 0-35 m.p.h. (on ridge); fog and ice-covered trees on ridge; reservoir partly frozen. One observer. Total party-hours, 10½ on foot; total party-miles, 19 on foot. Mallard, 2; Black Duck, 2; Turkey Vulture, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 4; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 5; Pileated Woodpecker 10; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Eastern Phoebe, 4; Common Raven, 2; American Crow, 52; Carolina Chickadee, 30; Tufted Titmouse, 6; Brown Creeper, 5; Winter Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, 9; Mockingbird, 5; American Robin, 136; Hermit Thrush, 4; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 14; Cedar Waxwing, 5; Starling, 325; Myrtle Warbler, 1; Cardinal, 27; Purple Finch, 8; American Goldfinch, 21; Slate-colored Junco, 90; American Tree Sparrow, 9; Field Sparrow, 45; White-throated Sparrow, 46; Song Sparrow, 2. Total, 35 species; 863 individuals. Several birds heard in some pitch pines were thought to be Red Crossbills but they could not be found. -- Charles E. Stevens.

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Sweet Briar, Va. (Sweet Briar College property and adjacent area, radius of 1½ miles; open fields 30%, scrub 30%, brushy creek bottoms 25%, mixed woodlands 10%, lake edge 5%). -- January 1; 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Sunny; temp. 28° to 46°; occasional NW wind, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare; ponds frozen. Three observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 8 (6½ on foot, 1½ by car), total party-miles, 14 (8 on foot, 6 by car). Turkey Vulture, 5; Black Vulture, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Killdeer, 2; Wilson's Snipe, 1; Mourning Dove, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 13; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 9; Eastern Phoebe, 3; American Crow, 69; Carolina Chickadee, 32; Tufted Titmouse, 18; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 10; Brown Creeper, 3; Carolina Wren, 8; Mockingbird, 18; American Robin, 13; Eastern Bluebird, 16; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Cedar Waxwing, 30; Common Starling, 13,027; Myrtle Warbler, 18; House Sparrow, 76; Eastern Meadowlark, 48; Brown-headed Cowbird, 1;

Cardinal, 43; Purple Finch, 5; American Goldfinch, 59; Eastern Towhee, 2; Savannah Sparrow, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 207; Field Sparrow, 58; White-crowned Sparrow, 159; White-throated Sparrow, 110; Song Sparrow, 67. Total, 40 species; 14,151 individuals. -- Miss Gertrude Prior, Bill Chambers, John R. Withrow (compiler).

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Rockingham County, Va. (within $7\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius from Ottobine.) -- December 26; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weather clear; 25° at start, 36° at finish. Two observers plus pointer dog; 5 miles on foot and 45 miles in car. Elevation 1160 to 3200 feet; habitats; cottonwood-sycamore river bottom, open farm land and farm woodlot, lawn and shade trees in town, mixed Appalachian conifers and hardwoods in mountains. Ground clear. Pied-billed Grebe, 6; Mallard, 264; Black Duck, 32; Gadwall, 27; Baldpate, 8; Pintail, 11; Ring-necked Duck, 3; Canvasback, 2; Hooded Merganser, 1; Turkey Vulture, 15; Sparrow Hawk, 4; Ruffed Grouse, 5; Bob-white Quail, 59 (5 coveys); coot, 11; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Killdeer, 2; Flicker, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 5; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Phoebe, 1; Horned Lark, 2; Blue Jay, 6; Crow, 121; Fish Crow, 2; Black-capped Chickadee, 5; Carolina Chickadee, 2; Tufted Titmouse, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Carolina Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 8; Robin, 2; Bluebird, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Migrant Shrike, 2; Starling, 125; English Sparrow, 59; Meadowlark, 2; Cardinal, 21; Goldfinch, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 35; Tree Sparrow, 2; White-crowned Sparrow, 7; White-throated Sparrow, 5; Song Sparrow, 10. Total, 45 species, 894 individuals. -- Harry Jopson, Leon Powell, Max Carpenter.

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Lexington, Va. (same territory as in recent years; open pasture, 30%, oak woods, 25%, cedar woods, 25%, scrub growth, 20%). -- December 26; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. 33° to 39°; ground bare, thawing; streams and ponds open; no wind. Eight observers in three parties. Total party hours, 30 (on foot, 25; by car, 5); total party miles, 77 (on foot, 26; by car, 5). Great Blue Heron, 1; Mallard, 33; Black Duck, 2; Turkey Vulture, 14; Black Vulture, 8; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Bob-white, 15; Killdeer, 12; Wilson's Snipe, 2; Mourning Dove, 84; Barred Owl, 1; Kingfisher, 5; Flicker, 7; Pileated Woodpecker, 6; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 12; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 7; Downy Woodpecker, 33; Phoebe, 5; Prairie Horned Lark, 55; Blue Jay, 19; Raven, 2; Crow, 473; Black-capped Chickadee, 3; Carolina Chickadee, 60; Brown Creeper, 4; Tufted Titmouse, 43; White-breasted Nuthatch, 22; Winter Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 40; Mockingbird, 67; Robin, 7; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 24; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 11; Cedar Waxwing, 23; Migrant Shrike, 4; Myrtle Warbler, 4; Starling, 7309 (small groups counted; several large flocks estimated); English Sparrow, 371; Meadowlark, 18; Cardinal, 112; Purple Finch, 43; Goldfinch, 50; Slate-colored Junco, 249; Tree Sparrow, 58; Field Sparrow, 35; White-throated Sparrow, 129; White-crowned Sparrow, 11; Song Sparrow, 50. Species, 54; individuals, 9,551. -- Robert P. Carroll, Robert Carroll, Jr., S.R. Evans, David Foster, Jack Lackmann, J.J. Murray (compiler), Charles Ritchey.

Roanoke, Va. (Murray's Pond, Carvins Cove, Woodrum Field Airport, Peters Creek Road, Salem; farmland 20%, open fields 40%, deciduous woods and pine woods 20%, creek bottom, lake and pond 20%). -- December 28; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fair; temp. 18° to 36°; calm; ground thawing in afternoon. Six observers in one party. Miles, 38 (on foot, 8; by car, 30). Mallard, 20; Black Duck, 7; Green-winged Teal, 2; Bufflehead, 3; Turkey Vulture, 5; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Coot, 40; Killdeer, 3; Rock Dove, 40; Mourning Dove, 80; Flicker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 5; Prairie Horned Lark, 9; Blue Jay, 5; Crow, 35; Carolina Chickadee, 19; Tufted Titmouse, 9; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Carolina Wren, 5; Mockingbird, 13; Bluebird, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Loggerhead Shrike, 2; Starling, 250; Myrtle Warbler, 1; English Sparrow, 112; Cardinal, 24; Goldfinch, 6; Junco, 42; Tree Sparrow, 6; Field Sparrow, 6; White-crowned Sparrow, 3; White-throated Sparrow, 18; Song Sparrow, 10. Total, 37 species, 790 individuals. 6 Evening Grosbeaks observed by Lewis, December 27. -- Dr. P.F. Kendig, C.H. Lewis, Mrs. W.J. Nelson, Miss Virginia Haller, Mr. & Mrs. A.O. English.

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Blacksburg, Va. (same area as 1953 and previous years; pasture and plowed land 20%, town and suburbs 10%, virgin white oak woodlots 20%, mixed pine and oak woods 20%, river and creek bottom 30%). -- December 26; 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Overcast; temp. 29° to 31°; wind none; ground bare; light snow around noon, melting by end of day; ponds mostly unfrozen. Eighteen observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 53½ (52 on foot, 1½ by car); total party-miles, 89 (64 on foot, 25 by car). Common Loon, 1; Pied-billed Grebe, 2; Canada Goose, 31; Mallard, 100; Black Duck, 21; American Bidgeon, 67; Pintail, 6; Redhead, 50; Canvas-back, 16; Lesser Scaup, 60; American Golden-eye, 45; Bufflehead, 71; Tuddy Duck, 2; Hooded Merganser, 14; Turkey Vulture, 3; Black Vulture, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 3; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 2; Pigeon Hawk, 1 (A.L.D.); Sparrow Hawk, 6; Ruffed Grouse, 7; Bob-white, 23 (3 coveys); American Coot, 1; Killdeer, 23; Wilson's Snipe, 4; Spotted Sandpiper, 1 (C.O.H. Sr., J.M.H.); Mourning Dove, 205; Screech Owl, 1; Horned Owl, 3; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 25; Pileated Woodpecker, 7; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 8; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 17; Downy Woodpecker, 41; Eastern Phoebe, 5; Horned Lark, 96; Blue Jay, 17; Common Raven, 1 (C.O.H. Jr.); American Crow, 867; Black-capped Chickadee, 8; Carolina Chickadee, 125; Tufted Titmouse, 102; White-breasted Nuthatch, 45; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 10; Brown Creeper, 10; Winter Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, 29; Mockingbird, 43; American Robin, 256; Hermit Thrush, 3; Eastern Bluebird, 41; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 58; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2; Loggerhead Shrike, 7; Common Starling, 1260; Myrtle Warbler, 15; House Sparrow, 357; Eastern Meadowlark, 103; Rusty Blackbird, 1; Purple Grackle, 2; Cardinal, 167; Evening Grosbeak, 1 (C.O.H. Jr.); Purple Finch, 5; Pine Siskin, 4; American Goldfinch, 153; Slate-colored Junco, 306; American Tree Sparrow, 4; Field Sparrow, 49; White-crowned Sparrow, 61; White-throated Sparrow, 13; Fox Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 102. Total, 78 species; about 5,191 individuals. (Seen in area December 25: Eastern Towhee). -- John Cooper, A.L. Dean, R.V. Dietrich, Cynthia Furttsch, M.C. Hale, C.O. Handley, Sr., C.O. Handley, Jr., J.M. Handley, Martha Kline, J.S. Lindsey, H.S. Mosby, J.W. Murray, G.M. Shear, Mr. & Mrs. E.A. Smyth, Allyn Smyth, Grace Smyth, R.J. Watson (compiler).

Glade Spring, Va. (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius centering on western edge of town and including part of Saltville, Va., and segments of the North, Middle and South forks of the Holston River; fields, pasture and fence rows 50%, deciduous farm woodlots 20%, deciduous woodland 15%, river bottom 10%, town suburbs, 4%, marsh and ponds 1%). -- January 1; 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. mostly clear; temp. 20° to 45°; wind W, 5-10 m.p.h. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 13 (9 on foot, 4 by car), total party-miles, 45 (5 on foot, 40 by car). Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Mallard, 11; Pintail, 1; Turkey Vulture, 9; Black Vulture, 4; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 3; American Coot, 4; Killdeer, 3; Wilson's Snipe, 8; Mourning Dove, 56; Horned Owl, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 3; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Blue Jay, 12; American Crow, 28; Carolina Chickadee, 4; Tufted Titmouse, 20; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Carolina Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 8; American Robin, 11; Hermit Thrush, 1; Eastern Bluebird, 11; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Loggerhead Shrike, 2; Common Starling, about 1100; Myrtle Warbler, 5; House Sparrow, 30; Eastern Meadowlark, 17; Red-winged Blackbird, 3; Purple Grackle, 1; Brown-headed Cowbird, 1; Cardinal, 12; American Goldfinch, 10; Eastern Towhee, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 34; Field Sparrow, 4; White-crowned Sparrow, 19; White-throated Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 12. Total, 43 species, about 1467 individuals. -- Jane Craig, Paul S. Dulaney, 100 Washington St., Portsmouth, Va. (compiler). Red-headed Woodpecker sighted every day during holidays except day of count. - P.D.

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BIRDS OF THE "NEU-GEFUNDENES EDEN", 1737

By W. L. McAtee

With a much longer title, characteristic of its age, a book was published in German at Bern, Switzerland, in 1737, which apparently was meant to encourage Swiss colonization in Virginia. For catalogue purposes, the Library of Congress cited this work as "Eine Kurtze Beschreibung von Virginia" - or, a short description of Virginia - "By William Byrd, translated by S. Jenner". Richard C. Beatty and William J. Mulloy, who published the original text and a translation at Richmond, Virginia, in 1940 (xxviii+95/109pp.), thought that they had established the authorship by Byrd of "the basic information which Jenner incorporated into his own account of the colony"; and they add, "The volume contains the most detailed account in existence of the natural history of colonial Virginia" (p.xxviii).

Whatever may be said of the authorship of the natural history text, it is certain that the compiler had before him, and freely copied or paraphrased from John Lawson's "A New Voyage to Carolina; Containing the Exact Description and Natural History of That Country", etc., London, 1709. The natural history, at least the bulk of it, therefore is not that of Virginia but of North Carolina. Hence there is no point in giving a modern synonymy of the birds for a Virginia publication. I have prepared a discussion of Lawson's birds, which has been submitted to The Chat, organ of "The Carolina Bird Club".

-- Chapel Hill, North Carolina

CHASE CITY BIRD SANCTUARY

Mention was made in the October-November, 1955, issue of The Raven that a group of clubwomen in Chase City, Virginia, had initiated a movement to make their town a Bird Sanctuary. Mrs. H.H. Braxton of the V.S.O. was the spokesman of the Fortnightly Club before the Chase City town council. At its meeting on December 12, the council approved the request of the club. As far as the Editor knows, Chase City is the first Virginia municipality to become a Bird Sanctuary. An area on the campus of Washington and Lee University in Lexington was made a sanctuary by the college; and an area about the campus of Sweet Briar College is a sanctuary. There may be other similar sanctuaries. If so, we should like to have the information for The Raven. The Chase City move might well be copied by many other towns. There are dozens of such town and city sanctuaries in North Carolina.

The ordinance adopted by the Chase City Council is as follows:

"Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Chase City (1) that the Town of Chase City, within its corporate boundaries, be declared a Bird Sanctuary for the protection of all birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, not including starlings or English sparrows; (2) that it will be unlawful for any person to shoot missiles of any description from any bow, sling, bean shooter, air rifle, spring gun, or any other instrument or weapon at such birds, or otherwise destroy such birds, their nests or eggs, within the corporate limits of said Town; (3) that anyone found guilty of violating any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be punished with a fine of not less than \$1, nor more than \$10.00; and (4) that it shall be permissible for any civic club to erect appropriate signs and for the town to install them on all highway entrances into Chase City indicating that Chase City has been declared a Bird Sanctuary."

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NOTES AND NEWS

Nest-Record Cards. Fred. R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia, states that he has a supply of 4x6 nest-record cards; that he will be glad to send a sample to anyone who requests it; and that he can probably sell them at 500 for \$5.00, if enough orders are received. These cards were invented in England by Julian Huxley and James Fisher, adapted with much editing by Josselyn^{Van}/Tyne for use in the United States, and further adapted for use in Virginia.

Golden Eagle. There have been two recent reports of the killing of Golden Eagles in Virginia. Harry G.M. Jopson reports one killed on Shenandoah Mountain, above Bergton, Rockingham County, by a farmer on January 9, 1956. He writes, "The eagle was feeding on a dead sheep at the time. The farmer had reported earlier losing lambs to some unknown predator. Was the eagle guilty? This specimen was turned over to the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, and it is understood that when prepared it will be displayed in the offices of the Division in Richmond. The bird had a wing spread of 7 feet, 2½ inches,

and weighed 12 pounds, 5 ounces." (It is almost certain that the eagle did not kill the sheep; and it would be very unfair to lay the loss of the lambs to the eagle, when so many other predators could be the guilty parties. - Editor). The other Golden Eagle was shot near Buchanan, Botetourt County, in January, 1956, about January 13. It is now mounted and is at the Rader Funeral Home in Buchanan.

Ring-necked Pheasant. R.J. Watson reports seeing a Ring-necked Pheasant standing by the side of Highway 229 in Culpeper County, about ten miles north of Culpeper, on October 30, 1955.

Avocet. Three Avocets were observed in the marsh at Back Bay Refuge on October 25, 1955, by Jack Perkins, R.J. Bartholomew, and C.C. Steirly.

Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher in Winter. Harry G.M. Jopson reports seeing a Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher at Bridgewater, Virginia, on December 14, 1955. He watched it for a minute at a distance of five or six feet.

Giant Redwing Blackbird, A New Race for Virginia. J.J. Murray picked up a dead male Redwing at Cameron's Pond, one mile north of Lexington, Virginia, on November 10, 1955. The bird seemed so large that a skin was made and sent to Dr. Alexander Wetmore, who identified it as the Giant Redwing Blackbird, Agelaius phoeniceus arctolegus Oberholser. Wetmore wrote: "It is somewhat intermediate but has the heavy bill that marks this race." This is the first record for Virginia; and apparently for the territory near our State.

Grackles and Starlings. Max Carpenter reports a large flock of Grackles and Starlings in a flight across Highway 29, about midway between Culpeper and Madison, on November 16, 1955. He writes: "I would estimate it took ten minutes after I had stopped for the birds to get across the highway above me. The trees across the valley were black with birds that never crossed the highway. It would be hard to estimate the number coming in to the roost but several thousand would be a conservative figure. I started to say 10,000 but I know how easy it is to be deceived by large flocks of birds ... I believe there were some Redwings among them, but it was near dusk and I could not be sure."

Evening Grosbeaks. There are indications this winter of an Evening Grosbeak invasion which, though smaller than in some recent winters, is general. A few are reported in the Christmas Counts. Scott has seen a few in Richmond, M.B. Cater saw 3 at his feeding tray in Clifton Forge on January 18. They have been present in Lexington through the month of January, beginning with 3 on January 5, then 12 on January 6, singles and couples at various times, and a flock of 40 on January 30. The Editor would like to have full reports on these birds from all localities when the season ends late in April.

Pine Grosbeaks. Mrs. Norman C. Scott identified a male and 3 female Pine Grosbeaks in her yard at Clifton Forge, Virginia, (812 Gardner Street) on January 3. She observed them closely and compared them with the color plate in the Peterson Guide. She eliminated Red Crossbills, because of the wing bars; White-winged Crossbills, because of the feather streaking on the back of the male; and Purple Finches, because of the lack of streaking in the females.

Lark Sparrow. C.C. Steirly reports that on The District of Columbia Audubon Society Eastern Shore Field Trip in August, 1955, a Lark Sparrow was observed on August 20 at the Parramore Island Coast Guard Station; and one on August 21 on Assateague Island.



The Raven

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J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
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THE VSO ANNUAL MEETING - SALEM, APRIL 27-28

Copy for The Raven (except Field Trip Reports and Local Club News) should be sent to J.J. Murray, 6 White Street, Lexington, Virginia

Field Trip Reports and Local Club News should be sent to Fred R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

Applications for membership and membership dues should be sent to the Treasurer, C.C. Steirly, Waverly, Virginia

Requests for change of address or for back issues of The Raven should be sent to Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar, Virginia

VARIATION IN LATE DECEMBER COUNTS OF WATER BIRDS IN CHESAPEAKE BAY

By F. R. Scott

Introduction

A careful strip census has been taken just inside the mouth of Chesapeake Bay twice each Christmas season for four years. Each count has covered a linear distance of approximately 15 miles, each has lasted from 1.17 hours to 1.25 hours, and the habitat covered has been identical each time, i.e., open bay water at least two miles from land. While this series of counts has had certain obvious inadequacies, especially the limited time spent on each, these limitations are at least partially offset by the accuracy of the strip-census method (as opposed to a grid-type coverage) and by similar coverage each strip.

The area covered, well known to readers of The Raven for many years, is part of the route covered by the Chesapeake Bay ferry between Little Creek, near Cape Henry, and Kiptopeke Beach, near Cape Charles. In spite of the fact that the count area ranges from two to nine miles from shore and is in part directly exposed to the ocean, it is not a true pelagic community, and there is relatively little similarity between counts here and counts 15 to 20 miles offshore. Most birds here are drawn from the immediate offshore community (shore to 2 miles out) plus a few from the bay and estuarine community. The only true pelagic bird that occurs here regularly is the Wilson's Petrel in summer.

Acknowledgments

The author acknowledges with appreciation the help he received from C.C. Steirly on four of these counts and from A.S. Messenger on one.

Over-all Population Density

There are several good objections in attempting to delimit an area for a strip census of this kind, but for any density calculations it is essential to do so. Thus I estimate that on the average all birds were counted $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on either side of the ferry, making a total census area of 7.5 square miles or 4800 acres.

As can be seen in the accompanying table, the computed over-all population density varied tremendously from census to census, ranging from 2 to 138 birds per 100 acres (mean 41, median 18). (In this paper population density is defined as the number of birds per unit area at any given instant.) The cause of this variation is probably a result of a number of factors, not the least of which are defects inherent in the counting method. Foremost among these latter is that it might be questioned whether or not a 4800-acre 1.25-hour count will give a satisfactory sample of birds that have such a wide and irregular daily feeding range. Perhaps the ideal way to answer this question would be to take two or four counts per day, instead of just one, and to compare these results. In any event, since the density figures indicate a much higher variation between counts taken in different years than between counts taken four days apart, it appears that counting deficiencies are not the entire answer.

FOUR-YEAR SUMMARY OF LATE DECEMBER BIRD COUNTS IN CHESAPEAKE BAY

Species	December	1952		1953		1954		1955	
		26	29	26	29	27	30	27	30
Common Loon		2	3	17	1	1	4	1	1
Red-throated Loon		-	2	1	1	-	-	2	3
Horned Grebe		14	20	212	4	6	10	2	41
Pied-billed Grebe		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Gannet		4	19	-	6	15	5	-	-
American Brant		5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black Duck		-	-	-	-	72	-	-	-
Scaup (sp.?)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
Oldsquaw		-	16	-	4	2	8	4	-
White-winged Scoter		2	3	1	7	6	3	-	8
Surf Scoter		4	340	4700	6500	372	124	1	-
American Scoter		-	15	250	3	-	-	-	11
Scoter (sp.?)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Red-breasted Merganser		-	5	-	-	-	-	1	-
American Coot		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Great Black-backed Gull		1	-	-	-	2	3	1	2
Herring Gull		900	600	185	75	230	380	85	45
Ring-billed Gull		10	4	36	5	20	11	-	-
Bonaparte's Gull		-	21	42	18	1	16	-	-
Forster's Tern		-	-	104	-	-	-	-	-
Royal Tern		7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total species		10	13	11	11	11	10	8	9
Total individuals		949	1049	5549	6626	727	564	97	183
Density per 100 acres		20	22	116	138	15	12	2	4

One factor affecting over-all abundance in these counts is the irregular presence of late fall transients. During years when migration is early, such as 1954 and 1955, the counts may be considered to give a true picture of mid-winter conditions. In years of late migration, however, transient birds may complicate the count. Probably a very important local factor controlling winter bird densities here is the presence or absence of the preferred food of each species, and this in turn may be related to such factors as temperatures and salinity of the water. Thus far, poor weather conditions have not hindered the counts as much as might be expected. As a matter of fact, the clearest day had the lowest density of all. Rainy and windy weather appeared to cause more activity in the birds, thus more than compensating for any decrease in visibility.

The densities reported here should be considered preliminary figures only. Instead of being a definitive study, they are really a groping attempt to find a meaningful method of describing density variation from year to year.

Discussion of Species

One of the most amazing aspects of this study is that while a total of 20 different species has been recorded on the eight counts, only three have been seen every time, the Common Loon, Horned Grebe, and Herring Gull. Of the rest, the Forster's and Royal Terns can be marked as late migrants (both were in flocks flying southward). Six more could probably be described as accidental stragglers: Pied-billed Grebe, American Brant, Black Duck, Scaup (sp.), Red-breasted Merganser, and Coot. The mergansers may be rare but regular in winter here, or, along with the rest, may have been late migrants or birds frightened into the open bay by hunting pressure, low-flying airplanes, etc. All of them are common winter residents in other habitat types in eastern Virginia.

In addition to the three species recorded every trip, 9 more have been seen on 50% or more of the counts and may be considered characteristic if somewhat irregular winter visitors. These are the Red-throated Loon, Gannet, Oldsquaw, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, American Scoter, Great Black-backed Gull, Ring-billed Gull, and Bonaparte's Gull.

As a simple classification of wintering birds of lower Chesapeake Bay (two or more miles from shore), we might follow the example of Cruickshank (Birds Around New York City, 1942) and separate them into two groups according to their regularity and abundance. Considering the limited fieldwork, we can tentatively divide them as follows:

Dominant:

Common Loon	Surf Scoter
Horned Grebe	Herring Gull
White-winged Scoter	

Subdominant:

Red-throated Loon	Great Black-backed Gull
Gannet	Ring-billed Gull
Oldsquaw	Bonaparte's Gull
American Scoter	

During the migration season this classification would change considerably as well as vary more from day to day. In spite of its great variation the winter bird population is a great deal more stable than during the spring and fall.

A few additional remarks might be made about the birds in the list above. During the winter of 1953-54 large flocks of Surf Scoters were seen in the count area as early as late November and as late as early April. Apparently these were part of the wintering flock that normally occurs farther north on Chesapeake Bay. Flocks of comparable size have not been recorded here in other years at all. Large flocks of Herring Gulls are often seen following boats in the Bay. Although such flocks may tend to give a bias to the total counts, they are nevertheless an integral part of the ecology of the area, and they appear to be made up of birds that are in the census area anyway. The Ring-billed Gulls recorded on these counts were all seen in flocks of Herring Gulls following the ferries and nowhere else. Furthermore they all seemed to originate from shore, and most would turn back before the ferry got five miles from shore. Since this is an abundant bird along the Bay shore, the few birds recorded in the count area might be regarded as late migrants or stragglers rather than characteristic winter visitors.

-- Richmond, Virginia

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WINTER BIRD-POPULATION STUDY Bottomland Hardwood Forest

By C. C. Steirly

A Winter Bird-Population Study was conducted in a bottomland hardwood forest area along Spring Branch in Sussex County near Waverly. A 16 acre census area was established such that Spring Branch ran approximately through its center. External boundaries were surveyed so that the entire area was within the bottomland hardwood forest habitat. Spring Branch is a tributary of the Blackwater River.

Trees were of course the dominant vegetation. A frequency count was made of trees six inches in diameter at breast height and upwards on a sample portion with the following results on a per hundred tree basis: red birch (*Betula nigra*) 24, red maple (*Acer rubrum*) 18, white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) 14, American elm (*Ulmus americana*) 10, sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) 10, blue beech (*Carpinus caroliniana*) 9, red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) 6, sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) 3, bald-cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) 3, hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) 1, yellowpoplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) 1, water oak (*Quercus nigra*) 1. Scattered loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) occurred within the area but did not occur on the frequency plots. The secondary layer consisted for the most part of reproduction (sapling stage) of the above species plus holly (*Ilex opaca*), spice bush (*Benzoin aestivale*) and elder (*Sambucus racemosa*). Much of the ground was covered with a dense growth of Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera tartarica*), blackberry (*Rubus* spp.), greenbrier (*Smilax* spp.), poisonoak (*Rhus toxicodendron*), and poisonivy (*Rhus radicans*) was found growing

on many of the trees. Jewelweed (*Impatiens biflora*) is found throughout the more open areas during the summer. In portions of the area there are sizeable patches of reeds or switch cane (*Arundinaria tecta*).

It should be noted that this area is classed as bottomland hardwoods and not swamp hardwood since the latter is characterized by an abundance of tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) and is subject to prolonged inundation.

A series of eight census trips was made through the area during the period December 17, 1955 - January 28, 1956. Dates of these trips were December 17, 24, 26, 31, January 7, 14, 22 and 28. Temperatures ranged from 30° F to 52° F. On one trip, that of December 31, there was snow on the ground.

The bird census or number per average trip is as follows (the figures in parenthesis refer to the density, or number per 100 acres of habitat): Myrtle Warbler, 30 (185), Purple Grackle, 22 (146), Common Crow, 12 (76), White-throated Sparrow, 10 (61), Goldfinch, 8 (48), Carolina Chickadee, 7 (42), White-breasted Nuthatch, 6 (39), Tufted Titmouse, 6 (36), Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 5 (31), Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4 (27), Slaty Junco, 4 (27), Downy Woodpecker, 3 (21), Winter Wren, 3 (21), Robin, 3 (21), Bluebird, 3 (21), Yellow-shafted Flicker, 3 (19), Carolina Wren, 2 (15), Cardinal, 2 (15), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1+ (9), Hairy Woodpecker, 1+ (9), Kingfisher, 1+ (8), Pileated Woodpecker, 1+ (6), Brown Creeper, 1+ (6), Bobwhite, 1 (6), Hermit Thrush, .8 (5), Towhee, .8 (5), Purple Finch, .6 (4), Blue Jay, .6 (4), Great Blue Heron +, Wood Duck +, Turkey Vulture +, Black Vulture +, Red-shouldered Hawk +, Barred Owl +, Phoebe +, Golden-crowned Kinglet +, Cedar Waxwing +, Loggerhead Shrike +, Evening Grosbeak +, Pine Siskin +, Song Sparrow +. Total birds per trip: 141. Density per 100 acres: 881.

Birds whose occurrence rate, when reduced to numbers per average trip, is less than one half are indicated by a plus sign. Figures used above, with few exceptions, have been rounded off to the nearest whole numbers.

-- Virginia Division of Forestry
Waverly, Virginia

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THE BACK BAY TRIP OF 1955

By C. C. Steirly

The annual winter field trip of the VSO was held at Back Bay and the Virginia Beach vicinity on December 10 and 11, 1955. A number of the participants started the trip the night before by the roaring fireplace in the inn.

Some seventy members and guests assembled at Sandbridge on the cold morning of December 10 and by truck travelled down the beach to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Along the route the ocean offered its usual sights of American Scoters, Common Loons, Gannets, Great Black-backed Gulls and so forth,

and the small flocks of Sanderlings running along at the water's edge completed the typical seaside picture. At least two truck loads of people had an excellent view of a Pigeon Hawk perched on a stake among the dunes within easy binocular range, the bird remaining long enough for careful checking and the noting of field marks in the bird guides.

At the refuge headquarters the large group soon dispersed into smaller parties, some going by boat on the bay and some down into the marshes, while others roamed over the sand dunes. Unfortunately, the Snow Geese were not readily visible en masse; however, scattered small flocks were observed by everyone, there being many persons for whom this species was a life list item. Widgeon, Canvasbacks and Red-heads at times covered the sky and gave everyone the thrill that always goes with the sight of great masses of waterfowl. Among the rather large number of Whistling Swans some were fortunate enough to see a specimen of the Black Swan; this bird had no doubt escaped from a private collection, since the Black Swan comes from Australia (this or another one has also been seen at Chincoteague Refuge). Several Bald Eagles and Marsh Hawks added variety to the ever changing scene. For once the great flocks of Coot were not observed, nor were any of the Herons much in evidence.

Along the beach a most cooperative Oystercatcher was approached quite closely by most of the group. There is no telling how many pictures were taken of this stately and attractive bird. A dead Red-throated Loon and a dead Horned Grebe gave a number of persons a chance to observe important recognition points of these two offshore species, although it amazes the writer the way some ornithologists can instantly name a small dark object bobbing up and down on the water at a great distance, yet when handed a dead specimen it takes a number of minutes for them to make up their minds as to its identity.

A small flock of Green-winged Teal was observed offshore associated with a number of American Scoters. Several Royal Terns and Gannets offshore gave beginners an opportunity to study flight patterns.

After an excellent meal at Princess Anne the group dwindled down to manageable size and spent the afternoon at Stumpy Lake where a number of species were added to the list. Most of these were waterfowl and birds of the shrubs and thickets.

The evening at Virginia Beach was devoted to the usual fellowship where the conversation was quite birdy and the events of the day were recounted.

On the morning of December 11 a group of 17 visited Seashore State Park and enjoyed a four-mile walk along woodland trails in the vicinity of cypress lagoons where the spanish moss (Tillandsia usenoides) at its most northward range hangs in great festoons. Here botany was combined with ornithology as this area (an isolated bit of deep southern flora) is of great interest to botanists. Red bay, wild olive, and other plants of the deep south are to be found here among the live oaks and cypresses. The birds in this area were mostly small wintering and resident passerines typical of the shrub and woodland habitat. A bit of open water contained the usual Pied-billed Grebes and Great Blue Herons.

This was the first VSO trip on which the new trip fee collection was employed. Each participant was assessed 25¢ as a trip fee. The money thus collected will be used to defray the cost of publishing the trip announcements and the cost of the hot coffee that was served at the refuge headquarters. All agreed this was a good idea, and all agreed that this had been an excellent trip owing to the painstaking planning and attention of Jack Perkins.

-- Waverly, Virginia

UNUSUAL VIRGINIA RECORDS

Anhinga. John R. Withrow, of Lynchburg, reports that he and Dr. Sam Guss and other Lynchburg observers saw a single Anhinga at Lake Drummond in the Dismal Swamp on Easter of 1952 (April 13) and 1953 (April 5). Dr. Guss is well acquainted with the species.

Wood Ibis. There are two recent unreported records for the State, both in July, 1955. Ruskin S. Freer says that Mrs. Myriam P. Moore of Lynchburg saw two at her summer place on Purgatory Creek in Botetourt County in early July, 1955. She watched them at a distance of twenty feet with glasses. A neighbour later found one of them dead, but did not keep any part of the body. Dr. Henry S. Mosby states that Dr. R.V. Dietrich of the V.P.I. Geology Department saw one on July 8, 1955, around a farm pond, about three miles north of Meadowview, Washington County. There had been a heavy wind storm about a week prior to this date. Dr. Dietrich actually had the bird in his hand. It was an immature, with the down feathers not completely shed on the head. The bird was slightly injured and died a few days later, according to the lady on whose farm it occurred. Dr. Mosby has also furnished a somewhat indefinite report of a Wood Ibis seen near Hog Island Refuge in September, 1955.

Iceland Gull. J. Kenneth Wright, who is based at Portland, Maine, with the Coast Guard, reports an Iceland Gull seen off Cape Charles. To quote his letter: "On January 26, 1956, we were operating 60 miles east of Cape Charles. I was on watch and equipped with 7x50 B. and L. glasses when an Iceland Gull passed the bridge and joined the Herring Gulls that were following the ship. It was almost pure white: a few light-brown markings on the breast and mantle were all that remained of the first-year plumage. It was near the size of the Herring Gulls, only slightly smaller, but the wings appeared long and thin. About 300 Herring Gulls circled around the ship that morning (we were refueling with a navy tanker); three Bonaparte's Gulls and two Great Black-backs were the only other species I saw. Even at 60 miles out Herring Gulls were always regular, but never as numerous as they were that day. Gannets were common, and some days 30 or 40 would be in sight at once."

Pine Grosbeak. Mrs. Norman C. Scott reported a male and three female Pine Grosbeaks in her yard at Clifton Forge, January 3, 1956. Her yard joins a wooded ravine. She checked the field marks carefully with a color plate, eliminating other red finches, such as Purple Finch, Red and White-winged Crossbills.

Lark Sparrow. Ruskin S. Freer states that Mrs. John Capron of Locust Hill, an old plantation home beyond the Peakland section of Lynchburg, saw a Lark Sparrow at one of her feeding areas at Locust Hill on December 6, 1955. It stayed about two weeks, feeding with White-throated Sparrows, and was seen by Mr. and Mrs. Freer during this time.

1955 RED-HEADED WOODPECKER REPORTS

There have been only a few responses to the request for reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers seen in 1955.

C.C. Steirly reports as follows: Bryant Pond, near Waverly, Sussex County: January 16, 2; February 5, 1; February 27, 3; March 26, 2; April 2, 2; April 9, 2; April 23, 2; May 29, 1; June 16, 2; September 11, 2 adults, 2 immatures; all being adults except the last; Gray's Creek, Surry County: 1 on March 7 and 21; Shingleton, near Waverly, Sussex County: 1 on May 8.

F.R. Scott saw none at Richmond, although they had been almost common in the previous winter and spring.

In the Alexandria area J.M. Abbott reported single individuals on 7 September and October dates.

Barnett Disney reports that he has observed the birds around his Richmond home for the past several years, usually only one bird at a time, but two or three adults and two or three young in the spring of 1955. The young birds came to his feeders.

J.F. Kundt of Lawrenceville lists one at Fitzhugh, near Meherrin River on February 4; one at Lawrenceville on February 2 and 3; and 2 at Lawrenceville on April 2 and 3.

Max Carpenter saw one near Centerville on May 4, and one on top of Shenandoah Mountain, near Reddish Knob, on October 16. He says, "I am always surprised when I see a Red-head, as they are uncommon up here."

J.J. Murray did not see one in Rockbridge County during the year. However, Joshua Womeldorf saw one on September 15, and R.P. Carroll saw one on the Christmas Count on December 26.

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BALD EAGLE SURVEY

The Audubon Society of the District of Columbia has recently established a Bald Eagle Survey Committee. The objective of this Committee is to collect data on the eagle population in the Middle Atlantic region (roughly, that area bounded by the Hudson River, the Appalachian Mountains and the Virginia-North Carolina boundary).

The initial goal will be the location of all eagle nests, Golden Eagles as well as Bald, in the area, and to make annual observations of each nest in order to determine the number of young raised each year. Up until recently the Bald Eagle has been considered a common bird in the Chesapeake Bay country and along the lower reaches of the rivers in the region described above. Apparently it is on the decline although we have little exact information as to how great is the decline in our area.

The data desired in this survey includes: for each nest, the date, state, county, exact location, general description of the nest site, year nest first known to have been used, years used and not used, number of eggs and of young successfully raised each year.

Members of the VSO who live in the nesting areas or who can visit them will be glad to cooperate in this survey. Data should be sent to J.M. Abbott, 814 13th Street, New Alexandria, Virginia. Final reports should go in by July 1 of each year.

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CONSERVATION NOTES

Danger at Parramore Island. From Virginia Wildlife Federation News-Record (Bayside, Virginia, Bill Newsome, Editor). "The Navy is back again, gunning for Parramore Island. Unless we can throw a lot of weight around they are going to get it too."

We can understand why they want Parramore Island. It is the best one left anywhere, for the low level jet bombing range, or for anything else. We wonder why a second rate island would not do just as well."

(The remaining quotes are from Conservation News, organ of the National Wildlife Federation)

1956-57 Federal Duck Stamp Design. "A black and white watercolor featuring a pair of American Mergansers flying low over fog-bound water has been chosen as the design for the 1956-57 migratory bird hunting stamp. Edward J. Bierly, Arlington, Virginia, is the artist who drew the winning design for the seventh annual 'duck stamp' competition sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This will be the 23rd stamp to be issued in the Federal duck stamp series. Mr. Bierly was runner-up in last year's contest." (December 1, 1955)

Eight Young Whooping Cranes Aid Survival Fight. "The Whooping Cranes have won another round in their battle for survival. Twenty adults with eight of their young have winged proudly into the Aransas refuge and vicinity, safe from their perilous journey across the face of two nations. And those eight young birds, the hope of the race, make up the largest crop of youngsters since the Aransas refuge was established on the Gulf of Mexico nearly 20 years ago. Officials of the Fish and Wildlife Service which with Canada's Wildlife Service has a stewardship over the whooping cranes, are hopeful that the long, long lane is turning ... There were 21 birds at Aransas when the final winter count was made last January. Twenty adults have returned and it may be assumed that these are 20 of the group which have wintered there for so many years ... Since the birds make their flights in small groups it is entirely possible that the missing bird may still arrive." (December 1, 1955)

Will Oil and Wildlife Mix? "A recent proclamation by Secretary of the Interior, Douglas McKay, amended the code of federal regulations to lay down new rules for oil and gas leasing and exploration on the National Wildlife Refuges. A Department of Interior release described this as 'a move to strengthen protection of wildlife refuges for wildlife purposes'. While the order purports to set up adequate safeguards, it does in effect invite application for oil development on wildlife refuges. With the most honest interest can the Fish and Wildlife Service resist the pressure of politicians and the oil interests with this turn of events in refuge management? The Fish and Wildlife Service in recent discussion with them gave assurance that they could.

The new policy, which was signed by Secretary McKay December 2, provides certain safeguards only for the few refuges which may be designated as 'indispensable for the preservation of rare or endangered species, remnant big-game herds and irreplaceable examples of unique animal or plant ecology'. Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia, much of which is a Federal refuge, appears safe from the oil drillers under this provision. So does Aransas refuge on the Texas coast, winter home of the rare whooping crane.

In addition to Okefenokee and Aransas, McKay listed only these eight other examples of such protected areas: Wichita Mountains in Oklahoma; Red Rocks Lakes, Montana; Patuxent Research Refuge, Maryland; National Bison Range, Montana; National Elk Range, Wyoming; Fort Niobraro Refuge, Nebraska; Sullys Hill Game Preserve, North Dakota; and certain of the Aleutians and Hawaiian Island groups. Beyond these special exceptions and others not so definite because they are open to interpretation, and once its legal verbiage is cleared away, the McKay ruling appears to open the refuges to oil and gas exploration and drilling.

The National Wildlife Refuges, some 260 different areas in 45 states, Alaska and Hawaii, totaling about 18 million acres, have been established over a long period of years in a variety of ways. They are the meager fruits of victory of a long series of bitter battles by the conservationists ...

If America is so poverty stricken that these scattered, small wildlife lands must be ravaged for the private profit of a few, then we are in pretty bad shape." (December 15, 1955)

Scouts Get \$50,000 for Conservation. "The National Council of the Boy Scouts of America has received a grant of \$50,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation toward support of a five-year program in conservation education, according to a recent announcement by Dr. Arthur A. Schuck, chief scout executive. The funds are to be used to provide the full-time services of a conservation expert who will give leadership to a newly-expanded program. Ted S. Pettit, who headed the 1954 National Conservation Good Turn, has been named to direct the new program." (January 15, 1956)

New Booklet, "Our Endangered Wildlife". "The National Wildlife Federation has available a new illustrated booklet entitled "Our Endangered Wildlife" which will be distributed in connection with 1956 National Wildlife Week, March 18-24. Separate chapters are written by leading biologists dealing with factors that threaten fourteen species: Grizzly bear, whooping crane, sea otter, lake sturgeon, Key deer, trumpeter swan, Everglade kite, Eskimo curlew, grayling, ivory-billed woodpecker, lake trout, California condor,

Attwater's prairie chicken and bighorn sheep. Extra copies are available at 15¢ each." (February 1, 1956) (This booklet can be secured from the National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C.)

National Park Service Launches "Mission 66". "In 1966 the National Park Service will observe its golden anniversary. In the same year it hopes to complete a ten-year program of rehabilitation and improvement and to be ready to handle 80 million visitors annually at the 181 areas under its jurisdiction.

More than fifty million visitors - recreationists, campers, anglers, bird-watchers, scientists, and just plain sightseers - visited the National Parks and Monuments last year. That was two million over the 1954 count and exceeded by some 28 million the number ten years ago." (March 1, 1956)



The Raven

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
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THE 1956 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

By Robert J. Watson, Secretary

President Jack Perkins opened the 1956 annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology at 10:00 A.M. on April 27, 1956, in the Laboratory Theater of Roanoke College, in Salem, Virginia. The meeting began with a business session lasting until 11:30. The first item on the agenda was a report from Mr. C.C. Steirly, the treasurer, showing a balance on hand of \$657.89 on April 22, 1956; this included \$75.10 in the Trip Fund, but did not include the Publications Fund, which amounted to \$253.70. The president then appointed Mr. Arthur Fast and Mr. Raymond Stevens to constitute a committee to audit the treasurer's accounts. He also appointed a resolutions committee consisting of Mr. James Eike, chairman, Miss Evelyn Watkins, and Mr. Frederic Scott.

The president informed the members of the defeat of the bill to protect hawks and owls, which was presented before the last session of the state legislature. Defeat of the bill resulted from a tie vote in the Senate Committee on Fish and Game. A short discussion of this subject showed general agreement that there is need for an educational campaign concerning the value of birds of prey, in preparation for another attempt to have this bill passed.

Brief reports on two local chapters - Northern Virginia and Richmond - were presented by Mr. Eike and Mr. Scott, respectively. Mr. Perkins commented that the time has come to have some news of the chapters published in The Raven. Mr. Steirly summarized plans for the 1956 foray, which will be held at Skyland on June 14-16. Several other sites were suggested by members as possibilities for next year's foray. Mr. Watson called attention to a scrapbook of clippings, pictures, and other items concerning VSO activities, which the Executive Committee has recently authorized him to establish and maintain. Mr. Perkins reported that a new typewriter has been purchased for use in publishing The Raven; this step was necessary because the old typewriter had worn out.

Mr. Steirly reported a total membership of 311, of whom 278 are located in Virginia. Dues in the Virginia Wildlife Federation will be based on the latter figure. About 50 former members have been dropped for non-payment of dues. Mr. Perkins called attention to the need for increasing membership, with special attention to high school and college teachers and students. Mrs. C.L. Burgess, of Lynchburg, reported that she is attempting to publicize the VSO among the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs. Mr. A.L. Dean, of Blacksburg, explained his efforts along this line with Virginia 4-H club members. It was agreed that some extra copies of The Raven would be printed for distribution by Mrs. Burgess and Mr. Dean.

Mr. Perkins reported that the Executive Committee had recently approved the raising of dues to \$2.00 for active members and \$3.00 for sustaining. This step was necessary because previous dues were not adequate to provide for extraordinary expenses, such as the recent purchase of a typewriter. Members expressed general approval of this, but final action was postponed, because of the small attendance at the morning session.

Mrs. Burgess reported that Lynchburg College plans to tear down the old science building, in which the VSO was founded in 1929, and replace it with a new structure. She suggested that the VSO place some sort of memorial in the new building in honor of Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, who furnished the principal impetus in the establishment of the Society. Dr. Murray suggested that the Society donate a memorial plaque recording the fact that the VSO was established on that spot, under Dr. Freer's leadership; this plaque would be placed in the new building, along with the present plaque placed in the old building by the Society in 1954. General agreement was expressed with this suggestion. President Perkins will appoint a committee to make plans for this event.

The president called attention to a threat to Seashore State Park, which has been closed since it became the subject of litigation involving the question of segregation. The danger is that the park may be sold by the state to private interests for wholesale commercial development. He reported that the Izaak Walton League of Norfolk has offered to purchase it for a sanctuary, and suggested that members write their state representatives urging that the portion of greatest natural interest (the area thus far undeveloped) be preserved in some way.

The afternoon session, devoted to the reading of papers, began at 1:00 P.M. Dr. Perry Kendig, Dean of Roanoke College, extended greetings on behalf of the president of the college, Dr. H. Sherman Oberly. Mr. Ray J. Beasley presented the first paper, entitled "Photographing Birds". He described his method of bird photography, and then illustrated his remarks with a number of his excellent colored slides.

Mr. Arthur H. Fast, who recently made a trip to St. Croix, in the Virgin Islands, spoke on winter birds of this area. Despite the small size of this isle (about 84 square miles), he saw 51 species in a short stay. Herons, egrets, doves, and hummingbirds were of greatest interest, along with a number of wintering warblers from North America. Dr. J.J. Murray read a short tribute to Mr. W. Edwin Miller, former treasurer of the Society, who died on August 10, 1955. This will be published in The Raven.

Mr. C.C. Steirly, in a paper entitled "Studies in Bird Populations", urged members to undertake serious study projects. He suggested a winter bird population study as an excellent project to begin with, and described the study of this type which he has been making in the Waverly area, near his home. A breeding bird census, he felt, would be another excellent idea. He mentioned several types of habitat in Virginia where such studies are particularly needed. Mr. Perkins, in commenting on this paper, pointed out that such activities would be excellent projects for a local chapter.

Mrs. James W. Wiltshire's paper, "Experiences with Birds", was a description of bird life on some of the coastal islands of Peru, which she recently visited. These islands are the source of guano, which is produced mainly by the White-breasted Cormorant. She showed colored slides which gave a vivid picture of the almost incredibly large population of cormorants on these islands.

Dr. Murray drew on the Bible for the title of his talk entitled "The Time of the Singing of Birds". This was a general discussion of bird song, describing the method by which songs are produced, their biological significance, and the relation of bird music to outside forces such as weather and seasons. The speaker devoted special attention to certain aspects of bird song, such as "whisper songs", singing at night, and singing while on the nest. In reply to a suggestion from the floor that this paper merited publication, Dr. Murray pointed out that it was scheduled for publication in Virginia Wildlife.

"Changes in Back Bay Habitat", by Mr. Perkins, was a description of the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge and the changes it has undergone since its establishment. The refuge covers some 9,000 acres, of which half is open water. Its main purpose is to provide a sanctuary for waterfowl, which may number as many as 250,000 during the height of the season. Mr. Perkins described efforts which have been made to improve the area for wildfowl by increasing the growth of aquatic vegetation, and pointed to increased populations of certain species, such as the Snow Goose and the Whistling Swan, which may be attributed partially (though not entirely) to these improvements.

The meeting recessed at 3:00 P.M. to give members a chance to attend a tea given by Dr. and Mrs. Oberly at "Rose Lawn", their beautiful home on the college campus. Following this pleasant interlude, the session reconvened, with Mr. C.H. Lewis, of Salem, showing some of his slides. Next, the meeting broke up into three discussion groups, each led by a different member. Mrs. Luther Machen led the session on "How to Begin Studying Birds"; Dr. Murray and Mr. Scott, that on "Some Field Problems in Virginia"; and R.J. Watson, that on "How to Keep Notes and Records".

The annual banquet took place in the Commons Room of the college. In a short business session, the question of raising dues was submitted for final action. The Society voted to increase dues to \$2.00 for active and \$3.00 for sustaining members, effective next year. No change was made in dues for other classes of memberships. Mr. English, chairman of the committee on local arrangements, then described field trip plans for the next day, and introduced members of his committee who had assisted in planning the meeting.

At the evening session, Max Carpenter, of Dayton, presented a movie entitled "Wings Over the Salt Marshes", distributed by the Virginia Commission on Game and Inland Fisheries. The featured speaker was Mr. Philip A. DuMont of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. He described his recent trip to the island of Midway, in the Pacific, to study the large albatross population which constitutes a potential threat to airplanes using this island. His talk was profusely illustrated with photographs of the island and of the albatross colonies.

The field trip got underway at 7:00 A.M. on Saturday, April 28. Under the leadership of Mr. English and Mr. Lewis, members travelled by car to Mason's Knob, which was thoroughly explored for bird life. The trip terminated at "Yearly Haven", a resort near Bennett Springs, where lunch was served.

In the business meeting following the lunch, President Perkins again commented on the danger to Seashore State Park. He stated that if there were no objection, he would direct the secretary to write a letter to the State Park Service, urging the latter to preserve the undeveloped part of this park for its botanical interest. No objections were offered. Dr. Murray suggested that the letter should recommend that the park be held by the state if possible, but that, if sale becomes necessary, it should be sold to a group such as the Izaak Walton League.

For the resolutions committee, Mr. Eike presented a resolution tendering thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Oberly, Dr. and Mrs. Kendig, Mr. and Mrs. English, and all the members of the local committee who had assisted in preparing the meeting. This was approved by acclamation. Mr. Fast reported that the auditing committee had found the treasurer's accounts in order. On his motion, the treasurer's report was approved.

Miss Gertrude Prior, chairman of the nominating committee (which had been appointed by the president in October, 1955), presented the following nominees for office for 1956-57: President, Jack Perkins, Back Bay; vice-president, W.F. Rountrey, Norfolk; secretary, R.J. Watson, Arlington; treasurer, C.C. Steirly, Waverly; 1959 Class on the Executive Committee, Miss Evelyn Watkins (Harrisonburg), Mr. Leigh Hawkins (Roanoke), and Mr. Frederic R. Scott (Richmond). All these officers were elected.

Mr. Watson reported that, at the direction of the Executive Committee, he had written all the Virginia congressmen and senators concerning the desire of the Navy to take over Parramore Island, on the Eastern Shore, as a bombing range, and that he had received a reply that the House Armed Services Committee had directed the Navy to seek another site for this purpose.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 P.M.

-- 912 N. Wayne Street
Arlington, Virginia

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VSO ANNUAL MEETING FIELD TRIP, 1956

By Leigh Hawkins

On Saturday, April 28, from 7:30 until 11:30 a.m., 43 members attending the annual meeting of the VSO participated in the field trip. The day was clear and warm.

It was an impressive gathering, and the weather could not have been better. Weeks of winter-like temperatures had held the season back, but on this day spring got properly dressed for April-close-to-May; and birds were suddenly everywhere!

A total of 98 species were positively identified.

The chief area of our count was the north slope of Mason's Knob, from the waters of Back Creek to the crest of this 3200-foot segment of the Blue Ridge, located to the south of Salem, on the Roanoke County-Franklin County line.

A dawn party of early risers had already scored the birds at Hollins Pond (35), which is located to the northeast of the county near the Roanoke-Botetourt line.

It was blossomtime for redbud, apple, and dogwood. Tame azalea blazed from lawn and garden, and multicolored tulips were in flower.

The flowing sound of the vernal morning was in delightful symphony. The aria of the wood thrush came with flute-like clarity. White-throated Sparrows, looking north, murmured pensive little ditties. Happy shivers of wren music swelled in from the orchard. A Yellow-breasted Chat added dash and ardor to its yit-yit-yit. From the craggy woodland, Ovenbirds chanted to the liquid cadences of mountain water.

There was color-on-wings! And for that kind of natural art, there is nothing to equal the palette of North American Wood Warblers; and this was a warbler-rewarded day: Black and White, Worm-eating, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, Chestnut-sided, Pine, Prairie, Ovenbird, Louisiana Water-thrush, Yellow-throat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Hooded, Redstart.

The other identifications were: Green Heron, Blue-winged Teal, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Bob-white, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellow-legs, Mourning Dove, Whip-poor-will, Chimney Swift, Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Horned Lark, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Bewick's Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Olive-backed Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Rusty Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Red-eyed Towhee, Vesper Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

-- Roanoke, Virginia

W. EDWIN MILLER: GOOD FRIEND

By J.J. Murray

The Virginia Society of Ornithology has never had a more devoted member than it had in W. Edwin Miller, who died at his home in Richmond on August 10, 1955.

Mr. Miller grew up in Richmond, receiving his education at the old Richmond High School, fore-runner of the present John Marshall High School. He was also a graduate of the American Institute of Banking.

In 1905 he entered the employment of the old Planters National Bank of Richmond as a 'runner'. Thirteen years later in 1918 he became an assistant cashier, continuing in that position when Planters and the State and City Bank and Trust Company were consolidated as the State-Planters Bank and Trust Company. In 1947 he was elected assistant Vice-President, retiring with that status on October 1, 1952.

He was active in banking circles, as educational adviser of the Richmond branch of the American Institute of Banking, as secretary of Group 2 and chairman of the Clearing House Committee of the Virginia Bankers Association, and as a member of the Richmond and State Chambers of Commerce. His masonic career included membership in Strict Observance Lodge No. 207; Dalcho Consistory; and Lafayette Royal Arch Chapter No. 43.

In his religious life he was simple, sincere and consecrated. For 57 years he was a member of Laurel Street Methodist Church, and for 40 years Chairman of the Board of Stewards. He wrote the centennial history of the church, which was published in 1949.

Ed Miller was a member of the VSO for ten years. He served as Treasurer from his election in 1947 at the Charlottesville meeting to 1954. He and Mrs. Miller attended the meetings regularly, going on the field trips even when walking became very difficult for them. Everyone who met him at these meetings was impressed by his unfeigned geniality and his loyalty to the group.

He always had a particular enthusiasm for the Cardinal. His letters were nearly always adorned with a small colored picture of his friend; and he had great success in attracting these birds to his yard. His happiness knew no bounds when the Cardinal was adopted by the General Assembly as the State bird of Virginia.

Surviving him are his wife, Mrs. Essie D. Miller; a daughter, Mrs. Marion Stuart Peyronette; and a son, W. Edwin Miller, Jr., all of Richmond; two grandchildren; and a brother, Lee O. Miller, of Norfolk. The funeral service was held at Laurel Street Methodist Church on August 12, with burial in Riverview Cemetery.

-- Lexington, Virginia

RECENT CHANGES AT THE BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

By Jack E. Perkins

For those of you who have not had an opportunity to visit the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on one of the regularly scheduled V.S.O. winter field trips, I would like to explain that it is located along the coast in the extreme southeast corner of the state. The refuge was established in 1938 by the Fish and Wildlife Service and consists of some 9,000 acres, about half of which are open water, the remainder being fresh and brackish marsh, sand dunes, a small amount of woodland and about 50 acres of cultivated fields. There are no roads leading to the refuge, access being only by water or six miles of beach driving.

The primary purpose of the refuge is to provide a safe resting and feeding area for transient and wintering waterfowl, though all wildlife is protected. Because of the variety of habitats the refuge is an excellent place for the observation of birds. During the peak of the waterfowl season, in the middle of winter, as many as 250,000 ducks, geese and swans may be observed on the marshes and waters of the refuge. In the late summer, and to a lesser degree in spring, a great variety of shorebirds can be seen along the beach and in the marshes. The trip down the beach to the refuge is rewarding in the numbers of oceanic birds, gulls, terns, sea ducks, loons, grebes, etc. that may be seen. The woods and fields play hosts to large numbers of the smaller song birds.

A number of changes have taken place both in the habitat and in bird populations since I first talked to this group about the refuge. Even before the refuge was established certain actions had been taken which would result in vast habitat changes. In 1918 the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal connecting Chesapeake Bay and Currituck Sound was widened and the locks removed. This resulted in large amounts of polluted saline water to enter Currituck Sound and thence into Back Bay with disastrous results to the aquatic plants therein. In 1932 the locks were replaced. Following the hurricanes of 1933, when large amounts of ocean water washed across the beach into the bay, work was started by W.P.A. to build a series of sand dune, or sand fence, along the beach to prevent salt water from entering the bay. This job was brought to completion by C.C.C. between 1938 and 1941 and since that time the maintenance of this sand fence has been the responsibility of the refuge staff. The results of the building of the sand fence and the replacement of the locks in the A & C Canal have only become very apparent within the past few years. Aquatic food plants have gradually increased as the bay waters have freshened and cleared until now boat travel is almost impossible without specially equipped boats. With the increase in food there has been a corresponding increase in the number of waterfowl, particularly such birds as the whistling swans, Canada geese, the diving ducks and widgeon.

A large area of the refuge between the dunes and the bay was left as a barren, saline flat by the hurricanes of 1933 and 1936. The Wash Flats were an area where we sought snow buntings and horned larks and some shore birds on early V.S.O. trips. A series of low dikes were constructed all over these flats resulting in the conversion of the area to one of a series of shallow pools which have revegetated and become suitable habitat for many shorebirds as well as ducks, geese and swans.

Unfortunately, all changes have not been for the better. Through the natural process of plant succession, given impetus by a series of dry summers, the beach marshes are very rapidly changing into brush land. This is beneficial to the song birds but not to the waterfowl, our primary concern, so we are at present engaged in a program of burning and disking, in an effort to reverse this process and convert it back to marsh suitable for geese and ducks.

Some of the changes in bird populations have been spectacular. The greater snow goose, which only a few years ago was reduced to a total population along the Atlantic Coast of about 5,000 birds, has now, by the latest figures increased to about 60,000. The whistling swan, which year after year maintained a population of about 4,000 in the Back Bay area, last year increased by 50%. Other waterfowl species also showed substantial increases. The large increase in waterfowl last season was primarily the result of favorable conditions in the breeding grounds, but it was fortunate that food conditions in Back Bay were improved so there was ample food to take care of the increased numbers of waterfowl.

The great black-backed gull, which only a few years ago was considered a rare winter visitor this far south, is now a common winter resident and in fact can be found in small numbers all through the year. As many as 100 can be found in one flock on the refuge during the winter. In fact they are, with the herring gulls, becoming something of a problem by preying on coots during the winter.

When I first came to the refuge I saw V.S.O. members chasing all over the Wash Flats to see a single snow bunting in a flock of horned larks. In the past few years it has not been unusual to find these same birds in flocks of 50 or more.

A small breeding colony of great blue herons and American egrets was found last year on the refuge. It is hoped that this colony will continue and expand. It is thought there is also a breeding colony of night herons on the refuge but as yet the nests have not been found.

In the past few years a number of birds have been added to the refuge list or observed much more frequently than formerly. Glaucous and Iceland gulls are observed almost each spring. The buff-breasted sandpiper, the purple sandpiper, the avocet and the woodcock are shorebirds seen during the past few years for the first time. The roseate tern, kittiwake, puffin, dovekie and razor-billed auk are sea birds which have, within the past few years, been added to the refuge list. The wood ibis and glossy ibis have been observed recently and seem to be extending their range into the area. Other birds, like the Florida gallinule, appear to be much more abundant in the area than they were thought to be. More work, I am sure, will show the presence of many of the migrant warblers and other song birds. Incidentally, a refuge bird list is now in the process of preparation and will soon be available to anyone interested. Already there are available bird lists on most of the National Wildlife Refuges in the country.

Some specific records for the Refuge are as follows:

Brown Pelican: July 17, 1955; May 12, 1956.

Cattle Egret: April 29, 1956, Romie Waterfield.

Glossy Ibis: April 15, 1956, Green Branch, near Sandbridge, Mrs. Maurine Perkins; May 7, 1956, 10 flying over Refuge headquarters, Romie Waterfield.

Wood Ibis: 4 at Green Branch, near the Refuge, July 8, 1955, where 14 had been reported.

Black Rail: 4 flushed on May 9, 1956, Waterfield.

Florida Gallinule: present in small numbers, summer of 1955.

Long-billed Curlew: April 30, 1956, Perkins.

Iceland Gull: April 13, 1956, Waterfield.

Glaucous Gull: Either one bird seen several times, or several birds, second year plumage, almost completely white; dates: April 20 and 26, May 1 and 7, all in 1956.

-- Route 1, Box S-24
Princess Anne, Virginia

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A NOTE ON THE FOOD HABITS OF THE BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH

By C.C. Steirly

On February 22 while observing ducks on the edge of a marsh in northeast Surry County, my attention was drawn to several brown-headed nuthatches in the pines above my hiding place. When I observed that they were working around the cones of the pine trees I devoted my full attention to them and proceeded to unshoulder my pack and eat lunch there in that typical brown-headed nuthatch habitat.

The pines were of course loblolly pines (Pinus taeda), rather scattered or somewhat open-grown, being on the edge of the giant cord grass marsh. Such places seem to be the most logical spots in which to look for brown heads. Owing to the scattered nature of the rather short bodied pines, each of the trees had well developed crowns and as a result each was fairly heavily laden with cones.

Close observation revealed that the nuthatches were extracting the remaining seed from the cones. Normally most of the seed of the loblolly pine falls from the cones during the period from mid-October to late December. One particular bird was followed with care as it kept flying from a pine tree top to an old pine stub about fifteen feet in height. This stub had been broken off squarely so that it formed a flat topped perch. Here the nuthatch would bring its pine seeds and tap on them several times, usually about three times with straight downward thrusts of its bill. It could then be seen to eat the seed itself dropping bits of the seed coat or integument

over the side. Upon completing its work on one seed, it would fly back to a pine and probe around the cones until it found another seed and repeated the process on the flat-topped pine stub.

Seeds of the southern pines are listed as items of its diet along with various pine woods insects in the literature; however, no reference could be found wherein this preparation of the seed for eating was mentioned. Normal loblolly pine seeds are about five millimeters in length. The seed coat is rather thin with a few rough ridges. Two seeds are generally to be found under each scale of the cones.

The brown-headed nuthatch is seldom found in any habitat other than the loblolly pine forest, having a decided preference for the more open stands.

-- Virginia Division of Forestry
Waverly, Virginia

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GLOSSY IBIS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

By Jackson M. Abbott

At 7:00 a.m. on the clear, sunny morning of 30 April, 1956, I was standing in the open by the edge of a woods about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Alexandria on the Mount Vernon Boulevard. This site is called Woodland Valley and it is less than 100 yards from the shore of the Potomac River, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Fort Hunt. A few migrating warblers were present and as I stood scanning the tree tops a fairly large all-dark bird flew into view about 100 feet above the trees. It was flying north along the shore of the river. Its steady, flap-sail flight with shallow wing strokes and its long, outstretched neck dismissed my first thought that it was a crow. The bird came on and passed directly overhead, affording me a superb view of its long down-curved bill and glossy purple plumage readily apparent in the sunlight. I now realized I was watching an Eastern Glossy Ibis (Plegadis falcinellus). I watched the bird as it flew out of sight, heading towards the extensive marsh at Dyke. The bird was flying over Virginia soil, not over Maryland water.

I spent half the day trying to relocate the bird at Dyke and in the Hunting Creek marsh with no success.

According to "A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia" and supplements thereto, there are two other recent sight records for Virginia: one bird seen by E.O. Mellinger on 8 May, 1953, and 5 seen by John Terbourg on 11 June, 1953, both at Chincoteague.

-- 814 13th Street
New Alexandria, Virginia

EASTERN GLOSSY IBIS IN SURRY COUNTY

By C.C. Steirly

On May 19, 1956 while studying a flock of mixed shorebirds in a small marshy pond on Hog Island State Waterfowl Refuge in northeast Surry County, the writer observed an Eastern Glossy Ibis, Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus. The bird was observed from a distance of less than thirty feet for at least a half hour. Associated with it were a pair of blue-winged teal, two greater yellowlegs, twelve semipalmated sandpipers, a green heron, two ringed plover and a pair of redwings.

This pond was quite marshy and less than one-fourth acre in area. On one side it bordered a field with a small zone of marsh grasses between it and the field. On the other side there was an extensive area of groundsel (*Baccharis halimifolia*). All of the birds in the pond, including the ibis, were actively feeding. The ibis was observed to consume what seemed to be a small salamander. Throughout the period of observation the ibis remained close to the blue-winged teal which were continuously feeding in the shallow water.

-- Waverly, Virginia

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FIELD NOTES FROM A TRIP TO EASTERN SHORE

By John M. Irvine, Jr.

On May 11, 1956, two Parasitic Jaegers were observed from the Little Creek - Kiptopeke ferry by F.R. Scott, C.C. Steirly and the writer. The birds were flying north and passed the ferry about twenty minutes apart with quick, strong wingbeats. One bird paused long enough to attack a Herring Gull, overtaking the gull with ease. However, it made no effort to dive for the food which the gull dropped. Both birds were adults in the light phase.

The following day, May 12, an adult Iceland Gull was seen on the beach at Assateague Island in the company of a flock of adult and immature Herring Gulls. The bird was carefully observed by the manager of the Chincoteague Federal Wildlife Refuge, Jacob M. Valentine, and the three observers named above. The bird was quite tame and permitted good observation, both in flight and standing on the beach. The bill and eye were the only black on this pure white gull, and the legs were pink. The bird was the same size as the adult Herring Gulls among which it stood, and the wings extended well beyond the tail when at rest. This is the fourth record of this species for the State.

A total of eight Gannets were seen on these two days, in the localities mentioned above. All were immature but one.

The party discovered a Gadwall's nest containing seven eggs on Assateague Island. This was the first actual nest found in the state, although young have previously been recorded.

There appears to have been a flight of White-crowned Sparrows, unusual for the Eastern Shore, on May 12. Seven different individuals were seen in four widely separate locations on Assateague and Chincoteague Islands. These locations varied from open sand dunes to pine-oak forest. Three birds were seen by the observers named above, and four others by a party from Washington, D.C., led by Mr. E.T. McKnight.

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ICELAND GULL AT ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

By Philip A. DuMont and Jackson M. Abbott

On April 7, 1956, an Iceland Gull was identified by DuMont on Hunting Creek, on the southern edge of Alexandria. The bird was in second year plumage, entirely white, and with a black tip to the bill. It was studied for 15 minutes with 20 x scope and compared in size directly with both adult and immature Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. This gull was about the same size as the Herring, with a smaller bill, and the greater length of the wings - extending beyond the tail while at rest - was easily noticed. The unmarked wing tips seemed the whitest part when in flight.

This bird was seen by Lois Morgan, Louise Berry, and DuMont at that time, while Jackson Abbott and several others who were notified saw it directly thereafter. Abbott learned that the same bird evidently had been present from April 2d, when it was seen by Adam Hubbell, who failed to report it because it seemed to him so unlikely to occur.

Previous records of the Iceland Gull for Virginia consist of two birds at Cape Henry, January 11, 1934 (Helmuth); one in Thimble Shoal Channel, November 24, 1944 (Drury); an immature seen on the Potomac River near the 14th Street Bridge, Arlington, March 12, 1945 (Robbins); another in immature plumage, where Hunting Creek empties into the Potomac (at the same spot where ours was found), November 22, 1952 (Wright and Abbott); one on the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, January 29, 1953 (Perkins); and one 60 miles off Cape Charles, January 26, 1956 (Wright).

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EVENING GROSBEAKS IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

By Mary N. Spratley

For the past two winters Mrs. Samuel S. Rosendorf, Jr., who lives on University Drive, Richmond, Virginia, has fed and provided cover for a large flock of Evening Grosbeaks and a smaller one of Purple Finches. The flock of Evening Grosbeaks during both winters numbered at least seventy-five, the flock of finches, about forty. The grosbeaks arrive about the first week in January, the females first, the males later. They remain until early in May, the males leaving first. The male Purple Finches leave the second week in April and a week later, all have disappeared.

Mrs. Rosendorf's home is located in what was once a pine and mixed hardwood forest and many of the original trees remain, as they do in a large section surrounding her home. This locale seems to provide the cover necessary to make the grosbeaks and finches happy. The James River and the lake at the University of Richmond are nearby, which may influence their choice of winter headquarters.

These birds consume quantities of sunflower seeds, which are always available. In addition to the sunflower seeds, the Purple Finches eat quantities of peanut butter.

Mrs. Rosendorf believes that the Evening Grosbeaks first came so far south because of the extremely cold winter in the northeast which was experienced in 1955 and returned to her grounds in the winter of 1956 because she had provided food for them the previous year.

Seeing the spectacular and very tame Evening Grosbeaks and the smaller but colorful Purple Finches with many other more common birds feeding on her grounds, in her porches and windowsills is a sight to delight any birdlover.

-- Ellerson, Virginia

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VIRGINIA NOTES

Jack Perkins and the Emperor Penguin. It may not be generally known that our President, Jack E. Perkins, is the only member of the VSO who can include the Emperor Penguin on his life list. As a member of the 1939-41 Byrd Antarctic Expedition, he had charge of bringing back for the National Zoo the first of these birds to be seen alive in any American collection. The Editor had the pleasure of being introduced to these birds in their air-conditioned room at the zoo shortly after their arrival.

Cattle Egret. First Virginia Spring Records. Jacob M. Valentine, Jr., Manager of the Chincoteague National Wildlife, made the first spring record for Virginia for the Cattle Egret, when he saw one on the Refuge on March 31, 1956. Romie Waterfield, assistant at Back Bay Refuge, saw one on that refuge on April 29, the second spring record and the first State record away from Chincoteague.

Wood Ibis. Virginia records for this bird have been piling up within the past twelve months. The latest is that of three birds seen on the western side of Back Bay on April 20, 1956, by C.E. Gilchrist of the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. We now have fuller information on the two records reported in The Raven for March-April, 1956, page 29. Dr. R.V. Dietrich, Associate Professor of Geology at V.P.I. writes that the date on which the bird was seen in Southwest Virginia was July 9, 1955, not July 8. It had come down in one of a series of storms on preceding nights. The exact spot was in Washington County, north of Meadowview, and 6.5 miles southwest of Plasterco, on county road number 745. The bird was in white plumage, but the head was covered lightly with brownish down. C.C. Steirly writes that the record of the bird seen near Hog Island Refuge in September, 1955, is correct. The observer was Haskell Taylor, Manager of Hog Island State Waterfowl Refuge, Surry County.

Ring-necked Pheasant. Captain Roswell H. Blair, of Cobham, referring to R.J. Watson's report in the January-February, 1956, issue of The Raven, of a pheasant seen near Culpeper, states that he has seen birds in the same area in the past four or five years, once a cock and hen, and once a hen.

Killdeer. Joshua Womeldorf, whose farm fish pond near Lexington, has turned up some very interesting records in recent years, has furnished some worth-while data on the incubation period and second nesting of the Killdeer in the Valley of Virginia. This spring he found a nest with three eggs on April 7th, and consequently was able to know definitely that the fourth egg was laid on April 8. Two eggs hatched on May 4; which indicates a period of 26 days from the laying of the last egg to the hatching of the first egg. This pair and a pair which had a nest not far away successfully brought off the first brood; and on May 26 each pair had another nest containing an egg.

Baltimore Oriole and aged Slate-colored Junco at Arlington. Arthur H. Fast reports that on February 27, 1956, he banded a Baltimore Oriole. It was first observed on February 24. It appeared almost daily (some days many times) thereafter until late March and then less frequently until it was last noted on April 24. It fed exclusively on peanut hearts. It was trapped a second time on March 15 and thus positively identified as the same bird. Dr. John W. Aldrich identified it as probably a female or possibly a young male. It was in unusually dark plumage. On February 1, 1947, Fast banded a Slate-colored Junco. It has returned to the place of banding each winter, except one. It was last trapped and released in apparent good condition on December 11, 1955 - on which date it was more than 9 years of age. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service advises that this is one of a few of the oldest Juncos of which they have any record. Both birds were trapped on the Fast home place, 4924 Rock Spring Road, Arlington.

Summer Tanagers on apartment window feeder in Arlington. Mr. and Mrs. Jean P. Jaquette report that beginning in early May for each of the past 5 or 6 years, a male and female Summer Tanager have been regularly feeding on peanut butter at the Jaquette apartment window lunch counter at 2873 South Abingdon, Arlington. These Summer Tanagers and their young of the year have been coming regularly to this feeding station until approximately mid-August. On May 10, 1956, these birds put in their annual appearance, apparently very much at home and evidently preparing to follow the usual family routine.

Evening Grosbeaks, 1955-1956. The past winter has been another good season for the Evening Grosbeak in Virginia. The birds have appeared all over the State, generally in small flocks, but sometimes in good counts; such as, Richmond, up to 75; Buena Vista, up to 60; Lexington, up to 50; and Clifton Forge, up to 60 or more. At Clifton Forge, Mrs. Norman Scott reports a total of 14 males and 11 females occurring regularly at her feeding station, with simultaneous flocks at the homes of two of her friends of 15 and 11 respectively. Birds began to appear on the Christmas Counts: Waverly, 1; Alexandria-Arlington area, 25; Fort Belvoir, 25; Hopewell, 1; Charlottesville, 3; Warren, 26; Roanoke, 6 on December 27; Blacksburg, 1. The latest reported were 6 birds at Lexington on May 16. Twenty-one were seen at Bellehaven, on the Eastern Shore, on April 21, by Philip and Paul DuMont.

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CONSERVATION NEWS

(These items are abstracted from Conservation News, organ of the National Wildlife Federation)

Among the recommendations adopted at the New Orleans meeting of the National Wildlife Federation in March were:

1. Urging Congress to provide roads to the boundaries of public lands and waters, where access is now blocked by private holdings.
2. Calling upon Congress to enact protective legislation against pressures for oil and gas development or other exploitative invasions which would impair the usefulness of National Wildlife Refuges.
3. Endorsing legislation to set aside 10 per cent of the receipts from National Forests for developing public recreation facilities and improving wildlife habitat.
4. Endorsing legislation to require the use of a greater proportion of Duck Stamp receipts for the acquisition of waterfowl areas, and to speed up completion of the national system of waterfowl refuges.

5. Endorsing legislation to require that hunting and fishing on military reservations must be in accord with State or Territorial game and fish laws.

6. Calling for a 'soil bank' program to take unneeded agricultural lands out of production, and making it possible to use such land for wildlife conservation purposes.

The first wildlife postage stamp, showing a Wild Turkey in flight, was released on May 8 at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Two others, depicting the pronghorn antelope and the king salmon will be issued this year. The artist is Bob Hines of the Fish and Wildlife service.

A bill (H.R. 10371) has been introduced by Representative Clair Engle of California to curb the increasing efforts of the Department of Defense to take over for military purposes, often without sufficient reason, public lands, which have been or might better be used for conservation purposes. The bill provides that except in time of war or national emergency, no area of public land or water exceeding 5000 acres can be withdrawn or reserved for defense purposes except by act of Congress.

Another bill (H.R. 10332) has been introduced by Representative Charles E. Bennett of Florida to establish a National Key Deer Refuge. Efforts made with private funds have brought up the numbers of this vanishing species from 35 animals four years ago to a current population of something over 100. A National Refuge should make it possible to save this endangered species.

One of the greatest threats to wildlife protection is the proposed Bricker-Dirksen amendment to the Constitution, which would limit the treaty-making powers of the federal government. One of the results of such an amendment, a result deliberately sought by some of the proponents, might be to abolish the whole Migratory Bird Act and put the whole burden of the protection of wildlife upon the states. Experience has shown that this would mean the end of real protection for migratory birds. It would probably soon mean that there would be very little duck hunting available in the United States. It would also probably mean the loss of the federal wildlife refuges that have done so much for the protection of all kinds of birds and particularly of game birds and the larger species. Altogether aside from other aspects of the proposed amendment, its passage would be a death blow to wildlife protection.

NEW VSO MEMBERS

Cox, Frank (S)	361 Day Ave., S.W.	Roanoke, Va.
Cox, Miss Martha W.	617 Fairfax Ave.	Norfolk 7, Va.
Deitrich, Dr. R.V.	Oak Drive	Blacksburg, Va.
Eastham, Mrs. B.G.	Spring Hill	Warrenton, Va.
Fife, Francis H.	207 Cameron Lane	Charlottesville, Va.
Hamm, George S.	1117 Park St.	Charlottesville, Va.
Johnson, J. Enoch	Ravensworth Road	Annondale, Va.
Jones, Miss Christine	Box 426	Williamsburg, Va.
Miller, Miss Trecla (J)		Inwood, West Va.
Sheerin, Rev. Charles		Herndon, Va.
Smyth, Mrs. E.A.	Box 144	Blacksburg, Va.
Valentine, Jacob M.	Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge	Chincoteague, Va.
Walther, John R.	Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, Route 2	Chester, Va.
Weindenfeld, Miss Henrietta	3720 Brookside Rd.	Richmond 25, Va.
Woodside, Mrs. C. Scott	Box 150, Route 2	Warrenton, Va.



The Raven

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J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
LEXINGTON, VA.

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Copy for The Raven (except Field Trip Reports and Local Club News) should be sent to J. J. Murray, 6 White Street, Lexington, Virginia.

Field Trip Reports and Local Club News should be sent to Fred R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia.

Applications for membership and membership dues should be sent to the Treasurer, C. C. Steirly, Waverly, Virginia.

Requests for change of address or for back issues of The Raven should go to Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar, Virginia.

BREEDING BIRD CENSUS

By C. C. Steirly

During the 1956 breeding season a breeding bird census was conducted in a loblolly pine forest near Waverly in Sussex County. This same area was chosen for a winter bird population study two years ago and was reported on in The Raven (April, 1955). Much of Eastern Virginia's large area of forest land is destined to be converted into loblolly pine forest through the widespread application of the principles of forest management. To some this may seem like the man-made creation of thousands of acres of biological desert. For a number of years the writer has been quite interested in birds in relation to their habit, and after passing through the novitiate bird study stage of merely listing and counting birds, has begun undertaking a series of winter and breeding bird population studies in a variety of habitats. The writer of course has a professional interest in the changes of bird population caused by man's control and alteration of the various forest environments since he is a practicing forester in the Coastal Plain pine region.

The area chosen was a convenient unit of loblolly pine that had established itself following a part cutting and is therefore a forest-origin stand rather than an old field stand. It is a pure pine forest since over 80% of the dominant vegetation consists of loblolly pine. This type is, ecologically speaking, a temporary type as it is destined to be replaced by one of oak and hickory during the long plant successional process. The aim of good forestry practices will of course be to circumvent nature's objectives and retain the area as one pure pine stand which of course can be done provided appropriate forest management steps are taken.

Habitat data in connection with this study is as follows:

Dominant Vegetation: Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*) 35-40 year age class. Height of average dominant tree 66 feet, breast high diameter of average pine 8.7 inches. Average density of pine: 430 stems per acre. Scattered hardwoods of similar size were found throughout the stand.

Secondary Layer: Sapling growth of various hardwoods including in relative order of abundance: Sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), Southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), Yellow poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Hickory (*Carya alba*), Holly (*Ilex opaca*), and Red maple (*Acer rubrum*). Few of these were over four inches in diameter at breast height.

Understory Layer: In the understory were relatively abundant growths of brush species including Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) and High bush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). Scattered Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) and Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) were also present. Much of the understory was occupied by seedling growths of the above-mentioned hardwoods. Part of the area supported patches of the Blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*).

Herbaceous Layer: The herbaceous layer was rather sparse. In places which were low and wet there were sphaynous growths and within these areas there were small patches of reed (*arundinaria tecta*) and *Smilax* spp. Elsewhere, and in no great abundance were Christmas ferns (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), Club moss (*Lycopodium flobelliforme*), Spotted wintergreen (*Chimaphyla macilata*) and its close relative (*Chimaphyla umbellata*), Elephant foot (*Elephantopus tomentosa*), Ladies slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), Whorled pogonia (*Isotria verticillata*). Poisonivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) was present on the area but in rather insignificant amounts.

A sixteen acre block of this timber type was surveyed and set up as a census area by running a series of north-south and east-west compass lines across the area. This broke the area up into a number of blocks of convenient sizes and enabled the observer to know at all times exactly where he was on the area. A woods road, indicated on the maps as a broken line greatly facilitated coverage.

Field trips were made over every portion of this area on April 8, 14 and 22; May 5, 20 and 26; June 3, 5, 9, 10 and 26, 1956. All trips were made in early morning between 6:00 and 9:00 A.M. A total of 17 man hours were spent in the field.

Singing males of the several species were followed up and carefully located on the map which was reproduced in a simple letter size form and mimeographed such that one map could be used for each species. After three or four trips the map, thus marked, revealed that the males were consistently singing in the same general areas. At the conclusion of the study estimated limits of territory were drawn on the map. In this manner an estimate of the number of breeding territories was obtained and through a simple arithmetical process reduced to terms of density or breeding territories per 100 acres of similar habitat.

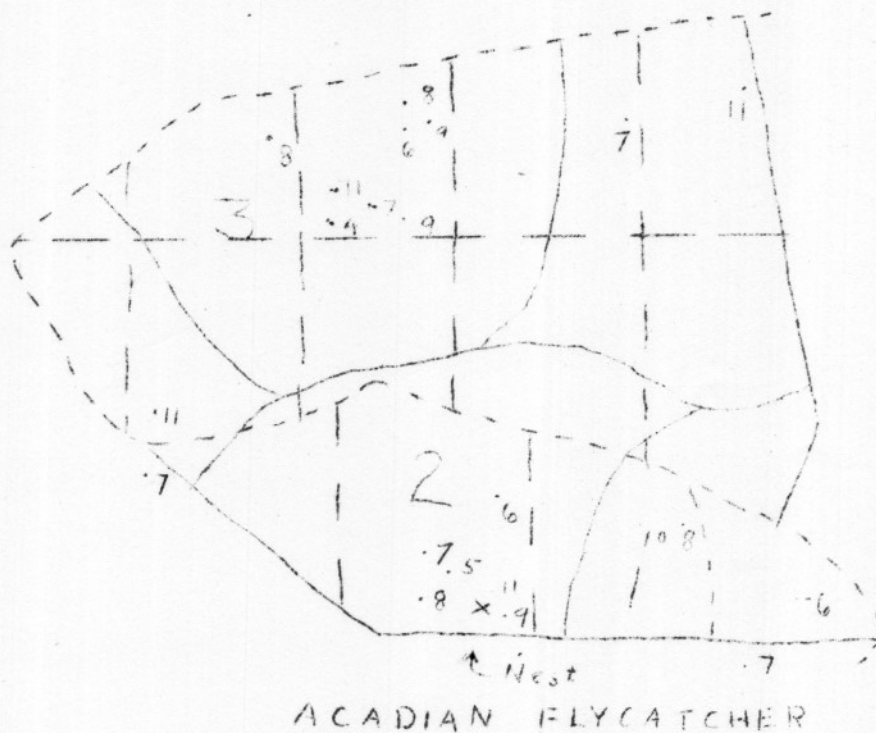
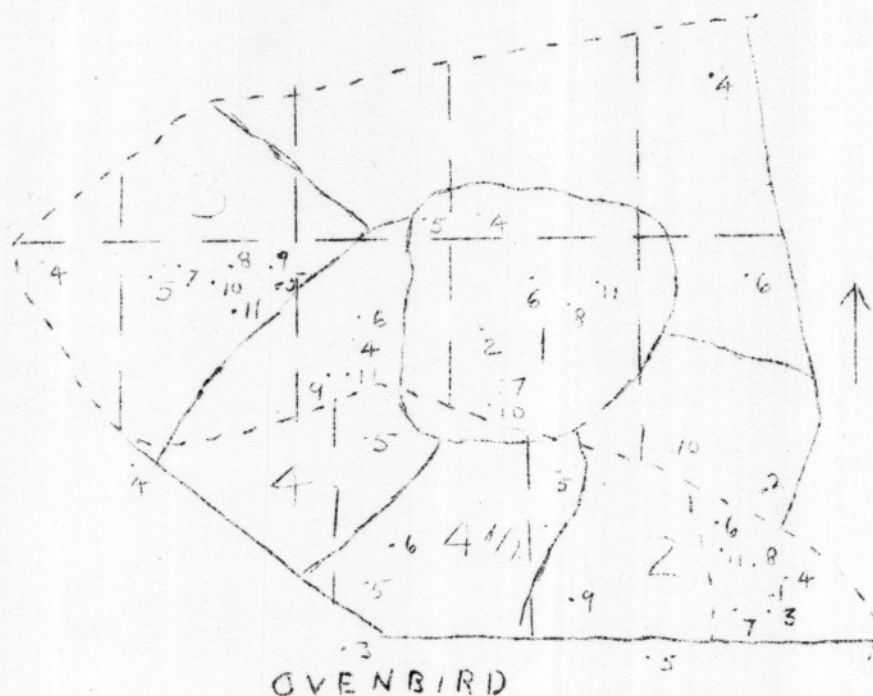
Results obtained were as follows:

Red-eyed Vireo	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ territories	28.1 per hundred acres
Ovenbird	4 territories	25.0 per hundred acres
Hooded Warbler	3 territories	18.7 per hundred acres
Acadian Flycatcher	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ territories	15.6 per hundred acres
Pine Warbler	2 territories	12.5 per hundred acres
Tufted Titmouse	2 territories	12.5 per hundred acres
Towhee	2 territories	12.5 per hundred acres
Carolina Wren	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ territories	9.3 per hundred acres
Hummingbird	1 territory	6.2 per hundred acres
Total	22 $\frac{1}{2}$ territories	140.0 per hundred acres

Dates:

- 1 April 8
- 2 April 14
- 3 April 22
- 4 May 5
- 5 May 20
- 6 May 26
- 7 June 3
- 8 June 5
- 9 June 9
- 10 June 10
- 11 June 24

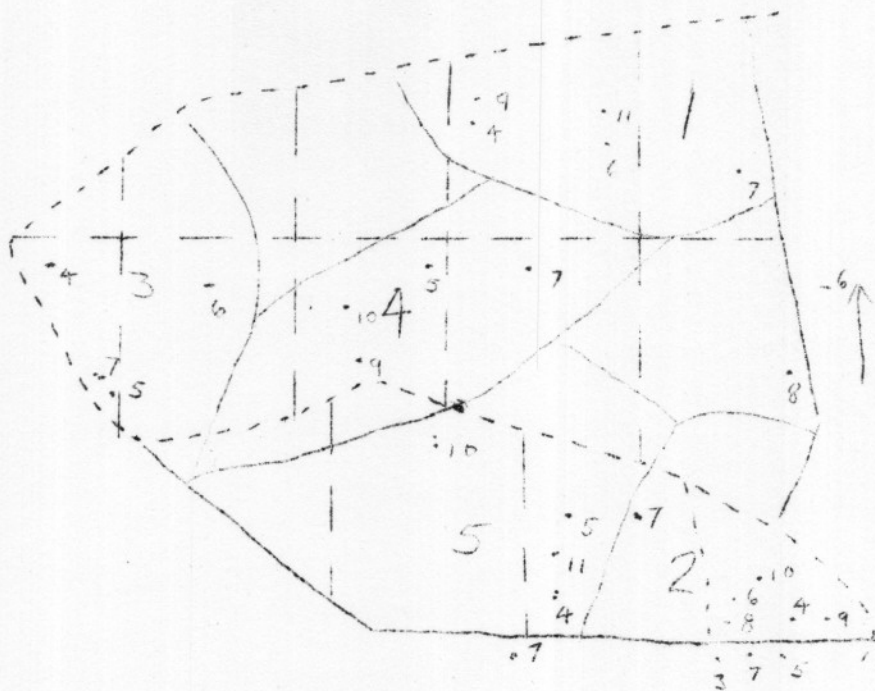
SCALE 1"=264 feet



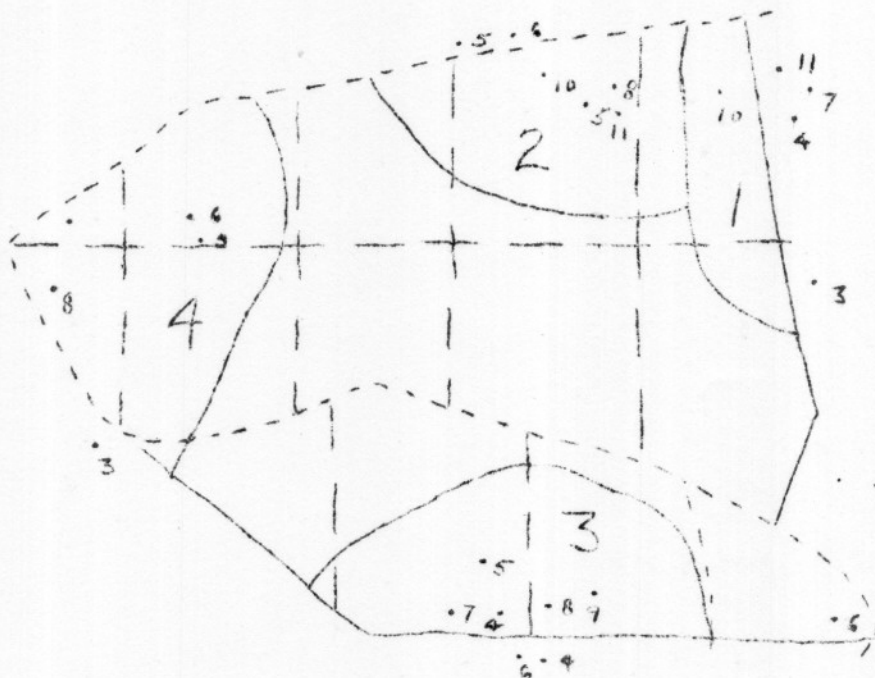
Dates:

- 1 April 8
- 2 April 14
- 3 April 22
- 4 May 5
- 5 May 20
- 6 May 26
- 7 June 3
- 8 June 5
- 9 June 9
- 10 June 10
- 11 June 24

SCALE 1" = 264 feet



RED-EYED VIREO



HOODED WARBLER

The record of the hummingbird is based on the quite accidental finding of a nest at the intersection of two compass lines. Fractional territories reported are based on the logical assumption that portions of certain territories extended beyond the boundaries of the study area, judging by the closeness of the concentration of observations to the boundaries of the area.

Four territorial maps showing the distribution of the more numerous species are reproduced herewith at half the scale of the field sheets. The dots indicate the location of the singing males for the date marked next to the dot. The boundaries of the territories are drawn as matters of speculation based on the relative concentration of the singing males on the several days. For example, on the map for the Red-eyed Vireo the dot for June 3, on the boundary between territories 2 and 5 must have been the male from either territory as it was observed to be singing a short time after the singing males of territories 2 and 5 had been recorded. One or the other had moved up toward the edge of the territory. Areas not shown within the confines of one of these speculative territorial limits might perhaps be regarded as neutral areas, for none of the species was heard consistently singing within them.

Other birds observed in the area included: Bobwhite, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Wood Peewee, Wood Thrush, Yellow-throated Warbler, and White-eyed Vireo. The behavior of none of these indicated breeding within the study area.

-- Waverly, Virginia

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LEAST TERNS NESTING ON LOWER JAMES RIVER

By F. R. Scott

On July 22, 1956, the writer found a colony of Least Terns, Sterna albifrons Pallas, nesting at the intersection of College Creek and James River, James City County. The site is about three miles east of, and in sight of, Jamestown Island. It is also almost due north across the river from Hog Island State Refuge, Surry County.

Since most of the birds had apparently concluded nesting, the size of the colony could not be determined. One nest with two eggs was found, an adult was seen feeding a downy young, and there were a number of flying young of the year in the vicinity. In all, there appeared to be about 60 adults around the nesting area. Unfortunately, there was not time to make a detailed census of eggs and downy young.

The site of the colony is interesting enough for comment regarding its possible history and future conservation. It is situated on the northern side of a recently dredged sand fill on which the Colonial National Monument Parkway extension is being built, and the birds must have been exposed to constant traffic of heavy road-building machinery all spring. Since the fill is new, it seems improbable that the colony has been at this spot for more than two years. With the opening of the Parkway extension to the public scheduled for next spring, positive measures should be undertaken to insure the perpetuation of the colony. These measures will have to include (1) persuasion of the Parkway administration not to plant grass or other vegetation on the nesting site, and (2) discouraging the public from using the area as a picnic ground. Residents of the Williamsburg area might sound out the Parkway administration on these proposals. Even if perfect cooperation can be obtained from Parkway personnel, it remains to be seen whether or not such a colony can survive constant nearby vehicular traffic or natural revegetation of the area. It scarcely needs to be added that excess publicity of such an easily accessible colony would result in its certain destruction. The nest with eggs was not 100 feet from the freshly laid concrete roadbed.

Although the Least Tern is normally thought of as a strictly coastal bird, at least along the Atlantic, there are records of several other nesting colonies away from the ocean. One colony was discovered on the James at Norfolk at the mouth of Lafayette River in May and June 1941 by Dr. and Mrs. John Grey and Mrs. Colgate Darden, but the Navy took over the area subsequently, and there has been no more recent information on this colony (Mrs. A.C. Reed, Raven, 13: 47, 1942; J.H. Grey, Raven, 21: 73, 1950). On the Potomac River a colony was found on Hollis Marsh Island in Westmoreland County on July 10, 1955, by a group from the Washington area (J.M. Abbott, Raven, 26: 103, 1955).

Three nesting sites have been found in recent years on Chesapeake Bay. These are Seaford, York County, first found in 1949 and visited almost every year since; near Diggs, Mathews County, found by the writer on July 11, 1953; and Savage Neck (Cherrystone Inlet), Northampton County, where the writer found a colony exhibiting nesting behavior on June 18, 1953, though no eggs or young were found.

The above six colonies seem to be the only known nesting sites in Virginia away from the ocean, though there is no reason why there shouldn't be others in the Chesapeake area wherever suitable habitat occurs.

-- Richmond, Virginia

1956 BLUE RIDGE FORAY

By C. C. Steirly

The trip committee once again lived up to its claim of producing Ravens, Veeries, Blue-headed Vireos, Black-throated Blue Warblers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks on the annual Blue Ridge Foray. This event was held at Skyland in the Shenandoah National Park on June 15, 16 and 17.

Most of those attending arrived on the evening of the 14th and were briefed on the plans for the weekend by the trip committee. As has been the practice in recent years, a series of standard trips were planned, although those wishing to do as they pleased were free to do so.

Almost at the start of the ascent of Hawksbill Mountain on the first day, most of the group had an excellent view of a full grown bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) which sauntered along the trail for some distance before disappearing into the forest. The hike up Hawksbill Mountain, the highest point in the park (4,049 feet) was done in a leisurely fashion which gave everyone an opportunity to observe the birds of this particular habitat, including the Canada Warbler, the Ruffed Grouse, the Veery and the Carolina Junco, and to botanize. Dr. R.J. Watson proved to be a competent botanist and he was in constant demand to identify and interpret the vegetation along the trails. Nests of Wood Thrushes, Canada Warblers and Carolina Juncos were found.

In the afternoon a different habitat, that offered by Big Meadow, was visited. This area is always certain to produce the Raven and the Vesper Sparrow. In this vicinity is the Dark Hollow Falls Trail. It, too, was visited in a leisurely manner.

On the following day an all day hike down the White Oak Canyon Trail was undertaken. This charming area produced the Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Parula and Hooded Warblers as well as the Veery, Wood Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, Louisiana Water Thrush, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Wood Peewee, etc. The nest of an Acadian Flycatcher was found in a hemlock in the Limberlost Area, and is thought to be an altitudinal record for this species since the elevation of this area is in the neighborhood of 3,200 feet. Some of the party also had the pleasure of observing a Louisiana Water Thrush feeding its young and others found the nest of a Phoebe with its four eggs on a rock ledge near the falls.

Leading elements of the group reached the second falls and lunched at the foot of it. Then began the long trek back to Skyland, thus ending a pleasant field day of birds, botany and fellowship. That evening Dr. Alexander Wetmore, who had spent the day with the group, gave a most interesting lecture to the entire group on his recent ornithological expedition to Panama. Dr. Wetmore discussed his investigations of the avifauna of Coiba, an island off the west coast of Panama which is the Republic's penal colony. This island had been detached from the South America mainland in remote geologic ages past and reflected this in its avifauna which differed greatly from that of the mainland.

The third day was devoted to a leisurely stroll up Stonyman Mountain with a return trip over a segment of the Appalachian Trail. From the top of this, the second highest peak in the park, the group spent considerable time watching a Broad-winged Hawk and four Ravens riding the thermals or warm air currents over the ridges and valleys below. Botany, Geology and Ornithology captured the attention of the group on this trip.

The entire trip was pronounced eminently successful and enjoyable by all who attended. Perfect weather conditions prevailed and although no very large list of birds was recorded, everyone had ample opportunity to observe and study the feathered specialties of the region.

The following is a list of the species observed by most of the party: Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Black-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Whip-poor-will, Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Acadian Flycatcher, Wood Peewee, Blue Jay, Raven, Common Crow, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Veery, Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Parula Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Water Thrush, Yellow-throat, Hooded Warbler, Canada Warbler, Cowbird, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Towhee, Carolina Junco, Vesper Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch is perhaps a first summer record for this species. It was observed on top of Stonyman Mountain by F.R. Scott.

-- Waverly, Virginia

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NOTES FROM PINE RIDGE

By Mrs. Elizabeth D. Peacock

At dusk, on April 17, I took a bird from my all-purpose trap which at first glance seemed to be a junco - with a white throat! Being on my way to choir practice, I hastily put it in the basement for the night, grabbed PETERSON along with my hymnal and went to church. At each lull in the soprano part I leafed through the E. Field Guide feverishly. I practically read it through. When I came home, likewise I searched through POUGH and a borrowed copy of Birds of America. I suspected every thing from a Green-tailed Towhee to western races of the junco. After dreaming about it all night, I admitted that I was whipped and called Dr. Aldrich as soon as the National Museum was open. When he said that HE could not place it, I began to feel that I must be seeing things and I said that it looked as if it were a cross between a White-throated Sparrow and a Slate-colored Junco, not dreaming such a thing could happen. Whereupon Dr. Aldrich told me to bring it in, that there was some evidence of such a hybrid.

My peculiar bird was measured and compared with skins from the museum's files by Dr. John Aldrich, Dr. Alexander Wetmore and Mr. Frederick C. Lincoln, who all agreed that it was a hybrid between the White-throated Sparrow, Zonotrichia albicollis, and the Slate-colored Junco, Junco hyemalis. Only two previous specimens have been found.

For further comparison not possible with the museum skins, I took the bird to Mr. Arthur Fast's in Arlington to compare it with live birds from his traps. We held the hybrid between a White-throated Sparrow in high plumage and a male Slate-colored Junco and made the following observations in bright sunlight:

1. The hybrid was intermediate in length between the two species.
2. The bill was white.
3. The head was gray with a patch of brown feathers on the tops and nape.
4. Above each side of the upper mandible was a little tuft of white feathers like that of the white-throat and above this a yellow bloom on the feathers in the same location as the yellow spot of the white-throat.
5. The wings and back were that of a white-throat except that the underlying color was gray rather than brown, causing the back stripings to appear finer.
6. The throat was that of a sub-mature white-throat with only the central portion of the throat white. In full sunlight the broader outlines could be seen clearly.
7. The tail was that of the junco.
8. The color of the eyes was identical to that of the white-throat.
9. The color of the legs, and the dark feet were like the junco, but the feet were much larger.

I took the bird back to my place, banded it with a #1 FW band, #55-09264, and released it in good condition at 12:00 N. on April 18, 1956.

As if this were not enough excitement for one day, I stopped by to return Birds of America to my neighbor and to show her the new close-focusing binoculars I had just purchased from the Reicherts' when what should be feeding in the pines only about 8 feet from her window, but a flock of American Crossbills which I had been trying to see for 10 years.

In the field the hybrid appeared to be an over-sized White-throated Junco, with the back and wings of a sparrow. It did not occur to me to photograph it, as I do not have a suitable camera.

The next morning (7:30 A.M., April 19) I observed my hybrid at close range with binoculars. It was feeding on the lawn side by side with a white-throat in medium plumage and trailing along 4 or 5 feet behind was a male junco. When I called Dr. Aldrich to report this further development and also to tell him about the flock of crossbills, he forsook his usual scientific approach and started quoting poetry to me!

Every day thereafter my White-throated Junco came to the window tray of my next door neighbor, Mrs. Richard Rule. On April 23, I trapped him again at which time he gave the distress call of the white-throat. Also both Mrs. Rule and I heard him give the "seet" call of the white-throat.

He (?) was a most cooperative and happy little bird which endured the unusual interest of his human brothers with detached nonchalance. He was last seen at Mrs. Rule's feeder on April 30, and we hope he will find a suitable mate and return safely next year to Wood Thrush Hill.

As to Crossbills, as many as 32 were seen by Mrs. Rule and me on April 27 and thereafter in varying numbers through May 28 when a mixed flock of males and females was seen by Mrs. Rule feeding on pine cones in her yard. (About 15 were counted with binoculars.)

-- Wood Thrush Hill, Pine Ridge
Route 2, Fairfax, Virginia

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FIELD TRIP TO HOLLIS MARSH HERONRY

By Jackson M. Abbott

Fifteen members of the D.C. Audubon Society visited the Hollis Marsh Island heronry (see The Raven, Aug.-Sept. 1955) on the 24th of June, 1956. Three rowboats with outboard motors took the group across Currioman Bay to the island. On the way across a Double-crested Cormorant, a Gadwall, and a Ruddy Duck were seen. According to Dr. Murray's A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia there is no Virginia summer record for the Gadwall. A Red-breasted Merganser flew away from the beach as we landed the boats on the shore of the east pond.

The heronry was quite active but appeared in general to be occupied by fewer birds than were estimated to be present last July. The most numerous species was the American Egret (about 300), next the Little Blue Heron (about 200), then Black-crowned Night Herons (about 150), Great Blue Herons (10), Snowy Egret (6), and Green Heron (only 3 seen). Dr. Dan Keaney had visited the heronry in May this year and said that at that time there were many more Great Blues and Black-crowned Night Herons and fewer American Egrets. This is logical since Great Blues start nesting in February and March, and Night Herons in April. The others do not normally nest until May. However, there always seem to be some of each species nesting at much later dates than is normal.

We found eggs and young of all ages of the Little Blue and young in all stages of Night Herons and American Egrets. Two young Snowy Egrets were observed.

Those of us with cameras had a field day and Mr. Reggie Bolton was able to band about 30 herons.

-- New Alexandria, Virginia

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VSO SUMMER FIELD TRIP TO WACHAPREAGUE

By F. R. Scott

Twenty-one members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology met at Wachapreague the night of Friday, August 3, 1956, for the second VSO-sponsored field trip to Cedar and Parramore Islands. Good weather, fellowship, and excellent leadership by Trip Master C. C. Steirly combined to make this an unusually rewarding trip.

On August 4 an all-day boat trip took the group first to the southern end of Cedar Island, where they had an opportunity to study a colony of Black Skimmers still with eggs and downy young. A set of Common Tern eggs in this colony offered an excellent comparison with those in nearby Skimmer nests. Also here the group discovered a pair of the rare Baird's Sandpipers, which were watched for some 20 minutes through 20x telescope. Trip Master Steirly was complimented on his farsighted planning in arranging this exhibition. Following a swim and lunch, the boat left the group at Parramore Island for several hours.

A new idea was attempted on August 5, and a morning boat trip was provided through the salt marshes between Parramore Island and the mainland. This trip yielded two Laughing Gull colonies and one of Forster's Terns, all of which still had some eggs and downy young. In the remains of a Green Heron colony two nests with eggs and many young birds were found. The trip officially ended at noon on August 5.

On both days several birds were seen which were of especial interest to many members of the group. Hudsonian Curlews were seen constantly in the marshes, and many Louisiana Herons and Oyster-catchers were observed on both days.

While birds received primary attention during this trip, the things that will make it remembered for a long^{time} were entirely different: the abundant good food served family-style by the Hotel Wachapreague and the late afternoon gatherings on the third-floor veranda overlooking the marshes and the town waterfront.

The following species were observed on August 4 and 5: Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, American Egret, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron, Little Blue Heron, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Mallard, Black Duck, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Bob-white, Clapper Rail, Oyster-catcher, Ringed Plover, Killdeer, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Hudsonian Curlew, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Willet, Great Yellow-legs, Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Eastern Dowitcher, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Sanderling, Herring Gull, Laughing Gull, Gull-billed Tern, Forster's Tern, Common Tern, Least Tern, Royal Tern, Black Tern, Black Skimmer, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Kingfisher, Flicker, Kingbird, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Crow, Fish Crow, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Prairie Warbler, Northern Water-thrush, Yellow-throat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Boat-tailed Grackle, Purple Grackle, Cardinal, Red-eyed Towhee, Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Seaside Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

The following VSO members participated in the trip:

J. E. Ames, Driver
Mrs. J. E. Blick, Portsmouth
Miss Jane Craig, Richmond
Miss Katrine DeWitt, Va. Beach
P. S. Dulaney, Portsmouth
James W. Eike, East Falls Church
Dr. and Mrs. S. B. Guss, State
College, Pa.
L. M. Hawkins, Roanoke
C. H. Lewis, Salem
Mrs. W. A. Porter, Norfolk

Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar
C. J. Riddick, Driver
F. R. Scott, Richmond
C. C. Steirly, Waverly
Miss Betsy Stephens, Norfolk
Paul Sykes, Norfolk
Miss Elizabeth Thomas, Norfolk
R. J. Watson, Arlington
Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Wells, Charlottesville

— Richmond, Virginia

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THE 84TH CONGRESS AND CONSERVATION

Natural resources management in its various aspects was a subject of major importance in the 84th Congress. Some bitter issues were fought to a decision before the final gavel fell at the stroke of midnight July 27. Other issues equally important were left pending for debate during the coming political campaign and for possible action in the next national legislative assembly.

On the credit side, conservationists within and outside of Congress could point with pride to the following positive accomplishments:

Soil Bank Legislation. The nation's farm problem has been aggravated by over-expansion of the agricultural plant during and since the boom-price years of World War II. Congress took a plan designed to whittle down farm surpluses by paying farmers to take croplands out of production, and wrote a law that spelled out comprehensive objectives in "soil, water, forest and wildlife conservation." For the first time in general farm legislation the inseparable relationship of wildlife resources to land and water management was recognized.

Water Pollution Control. By passing the Blatnik bill the 84th Congress gave the Public Health Service a stronger hand to deal with stubborn problems of interstate water pollution. By appropriating funds under the Blatnik Act for grants to cities for construction of sewage-treatment works, and grants to help the States and interstate agencies build up their own abatement programs, the 84th Congress may have turned the tide in the long fight against the pollution-destruction of vital water resources.

Strengthening the National Park System. The defeat of Echo Park dam, proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation for construction in Dinosaur National Monument, has been described as a "negative" though momentous victory for conservationists. In a sense it was one of the great, positive conservation gains in the 84th Congress, constituting reaffirmation by the Congress of the purpose and the integrity of the National Park System. It was a demonstration of public support that in large measure paved the way for the successful initiation of "Mission 66," a ten-year program of rehabilitation and improvement of the national parks and monuments. Congress boosted Park Service appropriations by some \$11 million over budget estimates to start the ten-year plan, which is designed to protect and conserve the natural resources of the parks and to put them in shape to accommodate 80 million visitors annually by 1966.

During the session just ended Congress also added four new units to the National Park system, authorizing establishment of the Virgin Islands National Park, the Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas, the Horseshoe Bend National Military Park in Alabama, and the Book T. Washington National Monument in Virginia.

Two important park bills, introduced too late for action in the recent session, will find prominent places on the conservation agenda of the 85th Congress. One, sponsored by Senator J. Glenn Beall and Congressman DeWitt S. Hyde of Maryland, would establish the historic and scenic Chesapeake & Ohio Canal along the Potomac River as a National Historical Park. The other, by Congressman Wayne N. Aspinall of Colorado and John P. Saylor of Pennsylvania, would make a full-fledged National Park out of the spectacular canyon country of Dinosaur National Monument.

Fish and Wildlife Service Elevation. A drive by commercial fishing interests to split the Fish and Wildlife Service and establish a separate and independent fisheries commission precipitated one of the bitterest, see-saw battles of the 84th Congress. The result was the compromise Bonner bill, or Bonner-Magnuson bill, which appears to be one of the more important achievements of the session. The new law elevates and strengthens the whole fish and wildlife program. It creates an assistant secretary of Interior for fish and wildlife; hitherto wildlife matters have had to compete for the attention of an assistant secretary over-loaded with all public land matters. It retains the Fish and Wildlife Services headed by a "Commissioner" as an over-all

agency, but creates within the service two distinct bureaus, one for commercial fisheries, the other for sport fisheries and wildlife. It gives the Secretary of Interior administrative leeway to integrate and coordinate the over-lapping and related functions pertaining both to fish and wildlife,

Appropriations for Conservation

In the practical and necessary business of securing appropriations, the National Park Service, skillfully publicizing its Mission 66, continued to set the pace for increases among conservation agencies. The Service outstripped its sister agencies last year with a 40% increase. This year Congress voted the Park Service \$68,020,000 for fiscal year 1956-57, a sum approximately 52% above the 1955-56 total of \$45,029,300 and nearly \$11 million over budget estimates.

The Fish and Wildlife Service got a 33% boost in direct appropriations over last year, climbing to a new high total of \$23,516,500.

The Forest Service received a total of \$106,898,500 in regular appropriations for fiscal year 1957. This compares to \$93,824,414 last year.

The Soil Conservation Service got a substantial increase for its small-watersheds program under Public Law 566 - a total of \$17½ million, which is about \$5½ million more than for fiscal year 1956. For its flood prevention activities on designated watersheds, an older program, the SCS got \$12 million, an increase of \$2 million.

And Some Bills That Didn't Pass

In addition to the Dinosaur and C. & O. Canal park bills mentioned above, these conservation bills were not acted on, or failed of final passage:

The Engle bill to curb excessive military land withdrawals and require compliance with State game and fish laws on military areas. This is a significant reform measure growing out of investigations conducted by the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The Committee report on the measure (House Report No. 2856) is a powerful document, a substantial achievement in itself. The Engle bill passed the House unanimously in the closing days but too late for committee clearance and floor action in the Senate.

A bill to establish a 1000-acre national wildlife refuge for the little herd of Key deer in Florida passed the House, was reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce but was not called up for floor action in the Senate. It is reported that opposition by one or two landowners and real estate operators in the Florida keys was instrumental in blocking final passage.

(Taken from Conservation News, organ of the National Wildlife Federation, Vol. 21, No. 14, August 1, 1956)

NEWS AND NOTES

Back Bay Winter Trip. The date for the Back Bay trip has been set for December 8. Further details will be announced later, or may be obtained from C. C. Steirly, Waverly, Virginia.

Pied-billed Grebe in Summer. One was seen on North River, near Bridgewater by H. G. M. Jopson on July 14.

American Merganser. Jopson saw a male in flight over Dry River at Montezuma (3 miles west of Dayton), Rockingham County, June 23. As it flew it uttered the harsh, guttural 'quack' typical of the species. This observer has reported the breeding of this species in Rockingham County (The Auk, 1956, April, p.285).

Late Nest of Yellow-billed Cuckoo. John F. Kundt reports the finding of a late Yellow-billed Cuckoo nest on September 11, 1956, in a pine forest near Elberon, Surry County. The nest was five feet above the ground in a nighbush blueberry. It contained two eggs. The adult remained in the presence of the observer for some time.

Additional Reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers. Our request for reports on this species has brought in other reports. Monroe Couper reported from Waynesboro an adult on September 25 and 28 and an immature on October 2, 1955, and an adult on May 20 and October 3, 1954. Max Carpenter saw an adult and two immatures above Blue Grass, Highland County, September 5, 1956. Jopson saw a pair excavating a nesting hole on May 31, 1956, at the Paul Craun farm in Augusta County, 4 miles south of Bridgewater. Young were still in the nest on July 21.

Late Cliff Swallow Brood. Joshua Womeldorf reported Cliff Swallows hatching on July 27, 1956, in a nest in the barn at his farm.

Correction on Eastern Black-capped Chickadee. In The Raven, February-March, 1955, p.42, Murray reported that a chickadee collected in Rockbridge County on November 30, 1954, had been identified as the Eastern Black-capped Chickadee. However, Dr. Alexander Wetmore writes that on re-examination the specimen should be referred to the Appalachian race, Parus atricapillus praticus. There are still, therefore, no Virginia specimens except from the vicinity of Washington.

Blue Grosbeaks at Blacksburg. Allen J. Stickley, Jr., saw a pair of Blue Grosbeaks in a weedy field on the V.P.I. College Farm at Blacksburg on July 14, 1956. They scolded as if in a nesting area. Several days later one of the wildlife students saw at the same place what he took to be a young Blue Grosbeak.

Audubon Screen Tours at Williamsburg. Dates are as follows:

- November 7 - "Wild America" - Roger T. Peterson
- December 10 - "Forgotten Country" - Bert Harwell
- January 7 - "American Birds and Big Game" - Cleveland P. Grant
- February 9 - "Penguin Summer" - Olin S. Pettingill
- March 29 - "Western Discovery" - Laurel Reynolds

All events at 8:00 P.M. in Washington 100, College of William and Mary. Season tickets, \$4.00; Family Season tickets, \$7.50; single events, \$1.25; children under sixteen, Season, \$1.50; singles, 50¢. Tickets can be obtained by mail from Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr., Department of Biology, William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia; or at the door.



The Raven

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J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR
LEXINGTON, VA.

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(Error: The last issue should have been numbered 7, 8, & 9)

THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE VSO

By R. J. Watson

The establishment of a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology in Northern Virginia stemmed largely from the meeting of the VSO held in Arlington in 1953. This meeting indicated the existence in this area of a surprisingly large number of VSO members who had not previously been able to attend meetings held in other parts of the state. Some of these members, brought together for the first time, felt that contacts thus established should be maintained, and that the best way of accomplishing this objective was to organize a local group of some sort.

Consequently, during late 1953 and early 1954, VSO members in this area started a program of informal meetings and field trips. The group was led by Mr. and Mrs. James W. Eike, who threw open their home for meetings and led most of the field trips. The response to these activities, and the discussions resulting therefrom, confirmed members in the conclusion that establishment of an organized group was practicable and desirable. The final enactment by the VSO (at the 1954 meeting) of bylaws providing for affiliation of local chapters furnished an additional incentive.

On November 26, 1954, a meeting was held at the Eike residence, at which the Northern Virginia Chapter of the VSO was officially activated (subject to later confirmation by the VSO Executive Committee). The meeting was attended by eleven persons. James W. Eike was elected president and R.J. Watson secretary-treasurer. Dues were set at 50¢ per person (later raised to 75¢ for adults, the 50¢ figure being retained for junior members). Formal approval as a chapter of the VSO was received from the Executive Committee several months later.

The establishment of a chapter in this part of Virginia presented a special problem not likely to be encountered in most other regions of the state. This was the proximity of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, one of the outstanding local ornithological societies of the country, which draws members from all over the Washington area. Members of the newly formed chapter at once recognized that they could not, and should not, attempt to compete with this group but should rather seek to complement it by operating in a different sphere and by meeting a somewhat different group of needs and objectives. They decided, therefore, to emphasize the status of the new chapter as a small, closely knit, informal group, keeping the organization as simple as possible (with no written constitution and a minimum of officers); to hold meetings in members' homes, drawing on members to present programs of an informal nature, instead of seeking speakers from outside for formal talks; to emphasize personal contact as a means of obtaining new members; and to encourage members to cooperate with the field projects sponsored by the D.C. Audubon Society, such as the Christmas Bird Count and the spring count in the Washington area.

The success of the chapter has shown the wisdom of this policy and has confirmed the belief that a group organized on these lines could meet a real need. The thriving condition of the chapter is shown by the membership figures, which, in less than two years, have climbed from the original 11 to a total of 59 (as of September, 1956). A large part of this success may be ascribed to the good fortune of the chapter in having among its membership a number of excellent speakers who have provided outstanding programs. In keeping with the informal nature of the chapter, the same officers have continued to serve since their election.

Meetings of the chapter are held about once a month from autumn to spring. Evening meetings, held in members' homes, usually feature a short talk by one of the members on some aspect of his experience in the field of ornithology. In addition, frequent outdoor meetings are held, generally in connection with field trips and usually accompanied by some particular feature of interest, such as a display of banding by one of the active bird banders of the region. Activities of the parent VSO are given full publicity at meetings of the chapter, and members of the latter are urged to join the VSO. The object of these meetings is to bring together those who share an interest in bird study and to seek to stimulate their interest as much as possible.

One of the objectives of the VSO in adopting its program of local chapter affiliation was to increase the knowledge of Virginia bird life through systematic field studies which, it was hoped, would be undertaken by the local chapters. In this field of activity, it must be admitted, the Northern Virginia Chapter has faced the same difficulties encountered by any similar group. These difficulties spring from the inability of most members of the group - because of lack of time, training, or inclination - to attempt the serious (and time-consuming) studies necessary for this purpose. However, we have hopes that some such studies may be undertaken in the near future. In the meantime the chapter is conducting field trips to nearby areas; is cooperating, as already described, with the D.C. Audubon Society in the projects undertaken by the latter; and is encouraging members to increase their field work and to contribute their results to journals such as the Atlantic Naturalist or The Raven.

-- Arlington, Virginia

KITTIWAKE (*RISSA TRIDACTYLA*) AT HUNTING CREEK,
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

By Jackson M. Abbott

About 9 a.m. on the morning of 28 October 1956, I was standing on the north shore of the Hunting Creek inlet, about 100 yards west of U.S. route #1. This is the site which was frequented by an Avocet from the 13th through the 22nd of October and where a Curlew Sandpiper had been closely observed and heard calling by Jim Moran and Joe Mersereau on the 16th of October, 1956.

A strong, gusty north wind was blowing and it was overcast. Several Ring-billed Gulls and Forster's Terns were circling the inlet for food. As the gulls beat upwind, towards me, one bird which I at first took to be an adult Ring-bill showed a dark, crescent-shaped patch on the ear coverts behind the eyes. I inspected the bird more carefully through my 7x50 binoculars and saw that its bill was solid, unmarked, greenish-yellow. As the bird drifted past at a distance of not more than 50 feet I was electrified to see that it had black feet! Then I noticed that the black wing tips were cut straight across, as if they had been dipped in black paint, and that there were no white spots visible in the black areas. Obviously this was an adult Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) in winter plumage - which accounts for the dark patch on the ear coverts. The bird swung past, gaining altitude, and bucking the strong wind, flew out of sight heading up the Potomac towards the District of Columbia.

Dr. J.J. Murray's "Check-list of the Birds of Virginia" lists two previous records for the Kittiwake in Virginia, both coastal. One is for a sick bird (which later died) picked up in Norfolk by Cooper Barefield on 3 January 1953. The second is for a dead bird picked up near Back Bay by E.K. Stone on 18 January 1953.

-- New Alexandria, Virginia

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PRELIMINARY NOTES ON A SUSSEX COUNTY HERONRY

By C. C. Steirly

On March 18, 1956 while exploring that portion of the Blackwater River which forms the boundary between Sussex and Surry Counties, a number of Great Blue Herons and American Egrets attracted the writer's attention. The river was high at the time and further exploration of the area was impossible, thus no count of the nests could be made. On an April 7 field trip to this area, a number of herons and egrets were observed carrying sticks to the general area which still could not be reached owing to the high water. Finally, the water subsided, and on May 20 the writer was able to get into the area and make an estimate of the nests. A total of 71 were actually counted and there were no doubt many more, for counting was extremely difficult because of the dense

foliage which by that time was out in full. When a dead tree fell over the noise frightened virtually all of the adults. A rough estimate of these adults indicated that about two-thirds of them were Great Blue Herons and one-third were American Egrets. At the time of this visit scores of egg shells of both species were found on the ground.

This heronry was in a mature bald cypress-tupelo gum swamp forest through which the Blackwater River runs as a stream normally thirty feet wide. The ground is generally quite muddy, owing to frequent inundation as the shrub layer is rather sparse. Old moss covered logs are to be found throughout the area. In openings created by occasional windthrows the shrub layer and regeneration of tupelo gum, red maple and white ash is fairly well developed.

Most of the nests were placed near the tops of the tallest tupelos and cypresses. All were of rather flimsy construction and at least six had fallen to the ground at the time of the May 20 visit.

The heronry is located down the Blackwater River about one and a half miles, following the meanders of the swamp edge, from the bridge on Route 603 or about two miles (air line) west of Dendron, in Surry County.

-- Waverly, Virginia

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WESTERN KINGBIRD AT BROOKE, VIRGINIA

By Edwin T. McKnight

We wish to report a sight record of a Western Kingbird on October 20 in our Christmas count area near Brooke, Virginia. The specific locality is at Marlboro Point, on the north side of the mouth of Potomac Creek where it runs into the Potomac River. Marlboro Point forms the east corner of Stafford County.

The bird was examined at leisure with binoculars by all five observers for 10 or 15 minutes as it perched on a low power wire, also on a white "horse" fence that encloses a summer cottage overlooking the first bay in Potomac Creek. Several times it flew down into the grass after insects, much after the manner of a bluebird, so that a complete description could be obtained. Points noted were the light gray head and upper breast, darker gray band through the eye, yellow lower breast and belly, black tail, narrow white lateral tail border, and wings darker gray than the back. Some of us approached to within perhaps 30 feet when it was perched on the fence, for it was not at all shy. Four of the five observers had seen this Kingbird in the west, and we were aware of its rarity in the east so that all of the distinguishing marks were noted.

In the end, it took to the trees, and when last seen, was attempting to drive all the Myrtle Warblers out of the tall trees on the point - a rather ambitious undertaking considering the abundance of Myrtle Warblers that day.

The observers, all of whom got a good look at the bird, were C.A. Anderson, E.T. McKnight, T.B. Nolan, W.W. Rubey and Robert L. Smith.

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CAGE-REARED WOOD DUCKS NEAR UPPERVILLE, VIRGINIA

By Arthur H. Fast

For several years, Mr. and Mrs. William Grayson have reared Wood Ducks in an outdoor cage on their 500 acre farm near Upperville, Virginia. This outdoor cage is roughly triangular 80' x 60' x 60', 8' high, and contains a pool of water. In 1956, they reared approximately 30 Wood Ducks, comprising 3 broods. They put in a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that 25 of their total of 37 Wood Ducks be banded - the remaining 12 to be retained as breeders. The request for banding was referred to Arthur H. Fast of Arlington. How were the Ducks to be captured for banding? On August 11, Fast, equipped with a dip net and a teen-age boy to operate it, drove to the Grayson farm. Ralph E. Lawrence of Washington, D.C., the nature photographer who showed one of his color films at the Arlington annual meeting of the V.S.O., accompanied the expedition. On the previous night, Mr. Grayson had captured the Ducks and put them in small cages; he did not get to bed that night until 3:30 A.M. Thus the 25 birds were banded without delay, and were released on the farm pond. Some of them swam to cover; others flew away. Mr. Lawrence took some colored film of the banding operations and of the release of the Ducks. The Graysons treated all present to a bountiful lunch. A short visit ended a pleasant and profitable day.

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THE MAMMALS OF SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK A REVIEW

The Mammals of Shenandoah National Park, by Richard H. Manville. Illustrated with color cover and many photographs, 69 pages, \$1.00, from Shenandoah Natural History Association, Shenandoah National Park, Luray, Virginia. This is the second of a series of bulletins on the natural history of the Park, the first having been The List of the Birds of the Shenandoah National Park, by Alexander Wetmore. It is an attractive publication, profusely and beautifully illustrated, with a cover picture in color of a fawn and with a photograph of some feature of the scenery of the Park or of one of the mammals on almost every page. The author, an experienced mammalogist, spent the summer of 1952 as a seasonal ranger in the Park. With a general introduction the nature and habits of mammals, he then takes up systematically the list of mammals found in the area, discussing the status and habits of each species. Within its scope, the bulletin is admirably done.

-- J.J. Murray

NEWS

1957 Annual Meeting. At the fall meeting of the Executive Committee of the VSO, it was decided to hold the 1957 Annual Meeting on May 3 and 4 at the Wachapreague Hotel on the Eastern Shore. The VSO has never met across the Bay, and this should be a most interesting experience. All meetings and meals will be held in the old hotel, which has such a reputation for good food. Overnight quarters will be available at nearby motor courts as well as in the hotel itself. The field trip should be outstanding.

Jack Perkins Transferred. The VSO has suffered a great loss in the transfer of President Jack Perkins from the Back Bay Refuge to the Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Arthur, Louisiana. His friends are glad to see him get this recognition, but regret that it involves his leaving Virginia. He has always been a loyal worker for the VSO. It is largely his work that has made possible so many pleasant trips for our groups to Back Bay. He has been for two years the efficient President of our Society, and for many more years a worker in other capacities. With Mrs. Perkins he has been a gracious host to visiting members. They will be greatly missed.

Award of a Year's Membership in the VSO. An item of interest is the awarding of a year's membership in the VSO to Stanley E. Heatwole, Pratts Woods, Waynesboro, Virginia. The award was presented by William T. Keeton, Director of Instruction of the Nature Camp of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs at Vesuvius, Virginia. Heatwole was awarded this prize because of his outstanding work in bird study during the 1956 high school session of the Nature Camp.

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VIRGINIA NOTES

By J. J. Murray

Hog Island Heronry. In June Fred Scott visited the Hog Island heronry which had been discovered by John Terborgh. He estimated the following number of nests: American Egret, 10; Snowy Egret, 500; Little Blue Heron, 60; Louisiana Heron, 400; Black-crowned Night Heron, 50.

Pied-billed Grebe in the Valley in July. On July 14, 1956, H.G.M. Jopson saw a Pied-billed Grebe on North River at Bridgewater. This is a noteworthy date.

Canada Geese at Hampton. Mrs. L.W. Machen saw 14 Canada Geese in Hampton Creek, Hampton, from April to July. One pair had four goslings; another pair had two.

American Merganser in the Valley in June. Jopson saw a male American Merganser in flight over Dry River at Montezuma, Rockingham County, three miles west of Dayton, on June 23, 1956. It uttered the harsh, guttural 'quack' typical of the species. This is near where he had seen a female with young on May 30, 1953 (Cf. The Auk, 1956, 285).

Hawk Count. Max Carpenter spent the mornings of September 22 and 23 on High Knob, in the Shenandoah Mountains, watching hawks. The counts were small. On September 22, from 8:30 to 1:30, cloudy 20 m.p.h. west wind: Cooper's Hawk, 1; unidentified Buteo, 1; Osprey, 1. On September 23, 9 to 12:30, hazy, filmy clouds, 25-30 m.p.h. west wind: Turkey Vulture, 14; unidentified hawks, 16.

Marsh Hawk at Hog Island. In June, while on the visit to the Hog Island heronry mentioned above, Scott says that he wandered into the territory of a pair of apparently nesting Marsh Hawks. They were right behind the outer dunes. The enraged hawks dive-bombed him.

Soras Killed by Wires. On September 18, following a night with a cold front moving in and rather strong winds, Romie Waterfield found an estimated 75 Soras dead along the Sandbridge road, near Back Bay Refuge. The birds were presumably killed by flying into telephone and power lines.

Curlew Sandpiper at Alexandria: New Bird for the Hypothetical List. Joseph Mersereau (3218 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington 16, D.C.) writes that in company with Mrs. Mersereau and Mr. and Mrs. James Moran he saw a Curlew Sandpiper (*Erolia Testoceo* (Pallos)) at Hunting Creek, Alexandria, Virginia, on October 16, 1956. He at first passed it up as a Red-backed Sandpiper, but Mr. Moran, who had had experience with Curlew Sandpiper in Massachusetts, pointed out that its bill was down-curved throughout its length and that the rump was white. Its long legs and slender head and neck distinguished it from the White-rumped Sandpiper. This makes a new record for the hypothetical section of our Virginia list.

Northern Phalarope. Jack Perkins found a dead Northern Phalarope on the Sandbridge road, near Back Bay, on September 18, at the same place where the Soras mentioned above were found. It seemed to have been killed in the same way. It and two of the Soras were donated to the Norfolk Museum.

Pomarine Jaeger. On June 7, 1956, Jack Perkins picked up a sick Pomarine Jaeger on the beach at Back Bay. It was donated to the Norfolk Museum. On September 22, Romie Waterfield, who had seen the first jaeger, saw another in flight along the beach at Back Bay.

Ground Dove. Charles Perkins found a dead Ground Dove, which had apparently flown into the clothes line, at the Back Bay Headquarters on June 21, 1956. It also was presented to the Norfolk Museum. It is the second specimen and the fifth record for Virginia.

Late Nest of Yellow-billed Cuckoo. C.C. Steirly states that John F. Kundt found a late nest of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo with two eggs near Elberon in Surry County. The nest was five feet above the ground in a highbush blueberry in a pine forest. The adult remained in the presence of the observer for some time.

Late Ruby-throated Hummingbird at Lexington. J.J. Murray saw a very late Ruby-throated Hummingbird in his yard at Lexington on November 12, 1956. The bird appeared suddenly at a patch of Nicotiana flowers, paused to feed at only two or three flowers, and then darted swiftly away. So far as has been discovered, this is the only November record in the United States north of the Gulf States. There is a record at New Orleans on November 1. In fact, the only November record for Florida given in either Howell (Florida Bird Life, p.265) or Sprunt's revision of Howell is for November 7, 1914. Howell states that in Florida it is "a not uncommon winter resident in the southern part, and rarely as far north as Orlando." There are three December records in South Carolina (Sprunt, South Carolina Bird Life, p.323). There is a December record in North Carolina (Pearson and the Brimleys, Birds of North Carolina, p.211). Winter records in Louisiana are few (Lowery, Louisiana Birds, p.339).

Red-headed Woodpecker. Scott states that there are an encouraging number of recent occurrences around Richmond. R.J. Watson reports one at Arlington on May 6; Mrs. C.L. Burgess saw one at Lynchburg on May 10 and May 22; and Jopson observed young in a nest hole in Augusta County, just over the county line from Bridgewater, on June 30, and still there on July 21.

Cliff Swallow. Joshua Womeldorf found young hatching in a late nest on his barn on July 27.

Nest of Worm-eating Warbler near Deerfield. Mrs. W.J. Perry of Staunton saw a nest of the Worm-eating Warbler with three eggs near Deerfield, Augusta County, in July, 1955. The eggs hatched successfully.

Brewer's Blackbird at Princess Anne Courthouse. P.S. Dulaney of Portsmouth reports seeing about 50 Brewer's Blackbirds in a flock with a few Redwings, Cowbirds, and Starlings at Princess Anne Courthouse on November 16, 1956. He spent about twenty minutes watching them at close range, noting the greenish cast on the body and the purplish head.

Evening Grosbeak. Mrs. W.J. Perry states that there was an unusual visitation of Evening Grosbeaks at Staunton in the spring of 1956, the birds arriving on January 22, reaching a peak of 20, and the last two pairs leaving on May 1.

Correction. In the report of Evening Grosbeaks in the May-June, 1956, issue of The Raven, it was stated that 21 of these birds were seen at Bellehaven, on the Eastern Shore. Fred Scott advises the Editor that the place was probably not the Bellehaven of the Eastern Shore, but a locality so called near Washington.

Oregon Junco at Falls Church: Another New Bird for the Hypothetical List. In the Atlantic Naturalist, Vol.10, No.5, May-August, 1955, p.278, Dr. Edwin G. Davis writes: "Mrs. Lucile N. Still's feeder in Falls Church has been frequented for several months by a junco with pinkish sides and a gray head which contrasts sharply with the back. A check with skins has convinced several observers including your reporter that the bird is a race of Junco oreganus and, as such, is a first Virginia record. Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to entice the bird into a banding trap, and the record must remain hypothetical." Arthur H. Fast has been trying, but without success, to get further information.

MEMBERS OF THE V S O

(S) - Sustaining Member

(J) - Junior Member

Abbott, Jackson M.	814 13th St.	New Alexandria, Va.
Adams, Berkley M.	600 W. 29th St.	Richmond 25, Va.
Adams, Mrs. H.E.	Box 56	Covington, Va.
Akers, Dr. W.G.	1138 Bolling Ave.	Norfolk 8, Va.
Allen, Miss Cleo	1207 W. 47th St., Apt. 2	Richmond, Va.
Allen, Mrs. Harry, Jr.	c/o Mrs. W.N. Travenack,	21 Tavanna Rd., Richmond, Va.
Alston, Miss Edith Gaynor	43 Prospect Pkwy.	Portsmouth, Va.
Ames, J.E. (S)		Drivers, Va.
Artz, Miss Lena		Waterlick, Va.
Bailey, John W. (S)	27 Willway Rd.	Richmond, Va.
Barefield, Cooper (J)	108 Lake Terrace	Norfolk 2, Va.
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Bartch, Dr. Paul (S)	"Lebanon"	Lorton, Va.
Bartholomew, R.J.	206 Cypress Road	Portsmouth, Va.
Bass, Mrs. Charles		Stephens City, Va.
Baugh, Miss Birdie May	Birdland Farm RFD	Powhatan, Va.
Beasley, Miss Evelyn A.	209 N. Jefferson St.	Petersburg, Va.
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Bentley, Mrs. H.C.		Ellerson, Va.
Bentley, Mary (J)		Ellerson, Va.
Bentley, James (J)		Ellerson, Va.
Bentley, William (J)		Ellerson, Va.
Blair, Capt. R.H.	East Hundred	Cobham, Va.
Blick, Mrs. J.E.	12 Greenbrier Rd.	Portsmouth, Va.
Bliss, Miss Laura	225 South Princeton	Lynchburg, Va.
Boatwright, Mrs. John	Dan's Hill	Danville, Va.
Bradshaw, Dr. T.C.	1st Nat'l. Bank Bldg.	Blackstone, Va.
Braxton, Mrs. H.H.	138 Walker St.	Chase City, Va.
Breneiser, Eliot	1321 West 50th St.	Norfolk, Va.
Broadhurst, William	2 North Lewis St.	Lexington, Va.
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Claiborne, Mrs. Frank T.	508 Tyler St.	Williamsburg, Va.

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Clement, Mrs. Rutledge C.	208 Hawthorne Dr.	Danville, Va.
Cobey, Dr. & Mrs. William	314 North 12th St.	Richmond 19, Va.
Cocke, C.F.	28 Cardinal Rd.	Roanoke, Va.
Coleman, Mrs. Hawes H., Jr. (S)	108 Gaymont Rd.	Richmond 26, Va.
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Dean, Prof. A.L. (S)	V.P.I.	Blacksburg, Va.
Deignan, H.G. (S)	Smithsonian Institution	Washington 25, D.C.
Deitrich, Dr. R.V.	Oak Drive	Blacksburg, Va.
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Dennis, John V.	17 Liberty St.	Nantucket, Mass.
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Efrid, William	3720 Buckingham St.	Norfolk 13, Va.
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Eike, Mrs. James W.	3307 N. Tuckahoe St.	Falls Church, Va.
Eike, Miss Susan C. (J)	3307 N. Tuckahoe St.	Falls Church, Va.
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Frost, Mrs. Thomas		Warrenton, Va.
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Griffin, Michael	610 New Jersey Ave.	Norfolk, Va.
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Gulley, Mrs. S.R.	Rt. 1, Box 210-A	Bayside, Va.
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Gwathmey, Miss Mary Tayloe	Lake Shore Dr., Bay Colony,	Virginia Beach, Va.
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Hawkins, Leigh	Gaskin Rd., RFD #13	Roanoke, Va.
Haynes, Mrs. W.T. (S)	Pratts Woods	Richmond, Va.
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Heatwole, Miss Wintie	338 Monticello Ave.	Dayton, Va.
Helbert, Dr. Hollen G. (S)	338 Monticello Ave.	Harrisonburg, Va.
Helbert, Mrs. Janet	Box 682	Harrisonburg, Va.
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