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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, and \$4.00 for sustaining members.

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FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON

by MRS. COLGATE W. DARDEN
Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1946, the first nest of the yellow-crowned night heron was found on our grounds in Algonquin Park in Norfolk, Virginia. The account of this is in *The Raven*, Vol. XVIII, Nos. 5 and 6, May-June, 1947, which I contributed, and from which I quote, "This species has been a recorded resident of the Norfolk area for a number of years, but its nesting was unknown heretofore. A. C. Bent, in his *Life Histories of North American Marsh Birds*", states that its breeding range in the southeastern states is north to Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. Craighill, in *Birds of North Carolina*, gives an account of its breeding in North Carolina by 1939." J. J. Murray in *A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia* (1952) lists it as "uncommon summer resident at Norfolk," and breeding at Wards Creek Swamp, Charlotte County, and at Bridgewater.

After 12 years absence, I have returned to Algonquin Park, a residential part of the city with houses on lots from a little over an acre to considerably smaller. It is bounded on the east side where we live, by Crab Creek, a tidal branch of the Lafayette River. There are several areas of marsh grass along Crab Creek, as only a few building sites have bulkheads. A border of trees stands back of the marshes, largely loblolly pine, nearly eighty feet high, with somewhat heavy crowns; live oaks with trunks from one to three feet thick; Spanish oaks, black jack oaks, hollies, sweet gums, black gums, mulberry, hackberry, wild cherry, and dogwood. There is a small cove of Crab Creek on one side of our property. It is all mud at low tide. With the exception of the tree where the nest was located in 1946, and which had a nest last year and this, the 19 nests making up this rookery are located in a crooked line curling around the border of this Cove, perhaps covering a hundred yards distance, the last nest being about seventy-five yards across the Cove from our land.

Bent says the nests are 9 to 20 feet from the ground in Florida. Howell gives 8 to 40 feet. Bent says there are usually two pairs of birds in a rookery of this species. Bent on page 217 and Sprunt in *Florida Bird Life* refer to this species as a shy, retiring bird.

All nests of this rookery are in pine trees and 40 to 70 feet from the ground. Our garage and that of our neighbor's are nearly in the nesting area where our automobiles and power lawn mowers come and go. Crab Creek at high tide and in warm weather is full of power boats and skiers.

There are two other rookeries in Algonquin Park about a third of a mile from this. One has two nests not known to have been there before this year and the other with three nests which have been there some 14 years.

The first day I saw the yellow-crowned night heron in 1960 was March 28th. Not until April 14th did I think to keep a nesting record. By that time there were already five occupied nests in three trees. The nests in one tree were six feet apart and in another about two feet apart. The following day I found 4 more nests in progress; and the next, two more; likewise, two more on the 18th. That meant 13 nests established in four days. Later other nests were added, so the total of 19 were built during a month. Two more nests were started June 10th and 19th, but were never completed, the pairs remaining respectively two and three weeks. If a nest is broken up, by a predator or an accident at any time during the season, a new nest will be started, sometimes on the old nest or sometimes at a new location. I watched two pairs remove all sticks from the old nest to a new nest site, last year. The latest pair that produced young started building May 19th, and laying May 25th. There were a few more, perhaps three nests, besides the 19 that I watched last year which

I did not follow because of their remote location. Of the 19 nests completed, five were abandoned and 14 produced young, one of which was broken up on July 19th, with young found dead on the ground, so that 13 of the nineteen produced 42 young.

The night of May 3rd, a storm came which could have been the cause of the destruction of eggs from five nests. One nest continued and produced two young, the other four started over again their courtship, building and incubating. It was these late nests that made possible the photography of young, for I did not purchase an adequate camera until the latter part of July, after the first nests were completed.

March 22nd was the first date I saw the yellow-crowned night heron, in 1961. Three were in the marsh in the early morning. By evening there were three pairs standing about the old nests, moving occasionally from one nest to another. Since they would stand two together, they were already paired. Can there be some choosing of mates during migration? That night, I could hear the "hoo" call of their courtship from three o'clock in the morning on through daybreak. I counted 16 cries in 40 minutes from these three pairs.

COURTSHIP AND NESTING

The male stands on the nest site he has chosen, either an old nest or where a nest has been the year before or what to me is a new site. He makes the "stretch display" toward the female. The names of heron behaviors are from Dr. Andrew Meyerieck's treatise on *Comparative Breeding Behavior of North American Herons*. The "stretch display" is a forward downward motion of the body with the head thrown back and wings dropped out and down while scapular plumes rise forming a sort of fan behind his head. With this motion is given a sound like "hoo", short in duration and always pitched on "D" of the octave above "middle C". The female sometimes responds to this display in like manner but without the sound. At early courtship, she responds not at all. The most frequent action in courtship is "feather nibbling", a sort of caress which either bird does to his mate, from the neck down the back, sometimes even to the tail. This happens when the mates meet at the nest or nest site. Another sexual display is when two birds face each other, raise their heads high with bills just touching and bring them down so that each bows to the other. This preceded copulation the three times I have seen it. Dr. Meyeriecks mentions for the green heron a "hostile behavior" or attack motive of the male toward the female in early stages of courtship. I have not seen anything similar in this species nor have I observed any territory rights being defended by the males other than their own nests. I have observed in nest building that the male only brings sticks to the nest site for building or repairs. The female usually places them. Many sticks are dropped. I cannot say that this is willful rejection on the part of the female as suggested by one observer. I have never seen a stick picked up from the ground. All sticks without leaves are taken from trees or removed from another nest. I have seen these selected from pine, oak or dogwood, but not from our many sweet gums for these branches break very easily. I have watched birds remove sticks from a nest being built by another pair, if the builders are absent. The nests are loosely built so that sometimes one can see the color of an egg from below. Sticks are often added during incubation period. One frequently can see the bill or tail over the side of the nest and sometimes the outline of the bird from below. In time of storms during brooding or incubation, the bird heads into the wind and becomes so low on the nest as to be practically invisible.

Bent gives 24 to 26 days for incubation of the black-crowned night heron. I quote, "It is customary to start incubation after the first egg is laid although it may take a week to complete the set. This accounts for the inequality in the size of the young." Dates for the progress of one nest are: May 12th, laying started; June 6th, 25 days later, first hatched shell found on ground; June 21st,

excrement seen on side of the nest; June 22nd, visible feeding of young; June 24th, heads and necks of two young observed; June 25th, three young seen; and June 30th, the fourth young was visible. July 3rd, 27 days after hatching the young were walking on branches. One week later they were flying though returning to nest for feeding continued at the nest 15 or 16 days more. The last days, of course, only one young was left to be fed.

Bent says "the yellow-crowned night heron usually lays three or four eggs, rarely five." These nests bear this out as only one nest had five young and all others had three or four except, of course, the one mentioned when two eggs were lost May 3rd, leaving two young to mature.

Because of a nest located on each side of our house, I was able to hear the feeding of the young at night, any hour I awakened. The feeding is a continuous process day and night, one parent guarding the nest while the other gathers food, and changing at intervals from 2 to 5 hours.

The communal life of this rookery, where only the yellow-crowned night heron is present, is generally peaceful. Last year a fish crow raised her four young on the edge of this area. The herons took no notice of crows passing through at any time, so that I did not know the crow was an enemy. There are occasional disruptions to peace, such as the chasing away of the occasional unmated immature bird. The only fight I witnessed was the courtship of a very brilliantly marked male, deep dandelion yellow crown and bright coral pink legs, which made the stretch display a number of times to a female some 20 feet from another bird (presumably male). The female flew away and the duller colored bird attacked the bright male. After a moment's fuss the bright male caught the dull bird by the foot and shook him before he let go. The bright male's wing was injured so that it hung down, but he flew readily when the assailant returned. This time they clasped bills and fell from the bough some eight feet before separating. The bright bird immediately returned to his bough or nest site. Another choosing of mates was peaceful. A male stood on old nest site B, and one on the old nest C, at 9:30 on April 9th 1961. A female was at B with the male, nibbling feathers and snapping bills. She left and joined C, there also nibbling feathers with this bird. The same interchange between nest and nest site took place for two and a half hours. She remained at each place between 15 and 30 minutes approximately. At 12:15 there was copulation at B nest site, but in five minutes she was nibbling C bird again. For two days after I saw two birds at one nest and one at the other. Eight days later building started at C, and B site was deserted.

PLUMAGE

After examining this species for a year I had thought one could differentiate between sexes. I now believe the first year birds are too uncertain in color to be determined. In the adult mature plumage, the neck and breast of the male is darker and more solid color gray than the female. The legs in breeding plumage are coral pink for male and paler coral heels only for the female, the tarsus being a muddy grey or green grey. I now believe the males with the partially colored legs are under two and a half years old, the age Bent gives for the mature plumage of many herons. The leg color changes with post nuptial moult into yellow legs for the male and grey green for the female.

I counted the long occipital plumes of seven yellow-crowns by means of a telescope, I found five to have two white and one black each; one to have three white and one black; and one to have five and one black plume.

There are occasionally some brown or gray-color birds seen feeding in the creek or roosting about the rookery. They vary from quite solid, color though darker above than below, to quite mottled. In all the nests I have seen, only one brown bird was bred. She had not lost her brown color by July 7th, the last time I saw her feed her young, but her cheek stripe was already becoming visible by June 8th. The great blue heron does not breed until the second

year according to Bent, but I can find no statement to this effect in any books concerning the smaller herons.

YOUNG

Not being able to see into nests so high, I have not witnessed feeding of the very young birds. The sexes alternate in incubating and feeding of young. When the brooding birds change, the feeding takes place. It is by regurgitation, I presume, into the mouth of the young at first and later into the center of the nest. The young perch around the edge of the nest, tail out, wings flapping as the adult comes in to feed them. The young give a gentle sound like "chu-chu-chu-chu" in anticipation of food. The sound could be confused by the unacquainted ear with the beginning of the cicada's call. I have one moving picture of the feeding at the nest of two young where one bird consumes all that the mother brought, in one chunk. The other young nibbles at the bill of the first young whereupon it puts some of the food in the mouth of the hungry bird. You can see the second bird swallow several times.

ENEMIES

Bent gives under this heading only the mention of people. The crow is the only one observed here. I saw an attack at dusk last year and my neighbor saw a crow attack a nest on May 6th, this year. She said the nesting heron rose to defend and the crow slipped into the nest quickly as if for eggs. I picked up three egg shells under this nest. Sometimes these shells are whole except for a small round break large enough for a crow's bill to penetrate.

In closing, I shall report what I saw the afternoon of October 17th, 1960. A number of constant "quock" cries brought me running out on our point. Several yellow-crowned night herons were circling the water round and round and one or two more joined them until there were six adult and two immature birds in the group. A laughing gull chased one of the immature birds away from the flock, and it flew into the marsh, but the others left together heading down the creek to the south. Apparently the start of a fall migration.

POSTSCRIPT

Reporting on the aforementioned heronry for 1961, yellow-crowned night herons arrived March 22nd, six days earlier than last year. No birds started laying this year until April 26th. Last year three nests were incubating by April 14th when records were first kept.

19 nests matured as far as incubation.

12 nests produced 32 young and 5 of these had 4 young each. No nest this year raised five young.

42 egg shells are believed to have been destroyed and not hatched.

Nest "A", a little apart from rookery, lost 9 eggs and produced no young.

Averaging the progress of these nests, young are seen above edge of nest (from forty feet or more below) 10 to 12 days after hatching. Young are out of nest walking on branches 30 to 35 days after hatching and fly when between 43 and 53 days old.

One nest started incubation as late as June 23rd. Hatched egg shells were found by July 20th and 22nd. Two young were seen August 1st, but by August 4th only one young was fed. This young bird flew on September 2nd.

VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS COUNTS—1961

COMPILED BY F. R. SCOTT

Poor weather during the Christmas count period this year was the probable cause of the smallest count in recent years. Some 175 species were reported by 145 different observers on 20 different counts. Since many observers participated in more than one count, there are actually 180 observers' names listed.

Five species are apparently new to the Christmas count in Virginia. These are the Least Bittern, Short-billed Dowitcher, Least Tern, Ovenbird, and Indigo Bunting. Species missing from the count this year include the Louisiana Heron, Peregrine Falcon, Common Gallinule, Piping and Semipalmated Plovers, and Least Sandpiper.

In the tabulation that accompanies this introduction several interesting items can be pointed out. Red-headed Woodpeckers are at their lowest point since 1951, whereas Red-breasted Nuthatches were more common than in any recent year, with 165 birds reported on 14 counts. Eastern Bluebirds were down again, with 51 birds on 9 counts. The northern finches experienced a good flight this winter, although curiously the Pine Siskin was recorded only east of the Fall Line.

1. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 2 miles north of center of Chincoteague as in previous 7 years; same habitat percentages as in 1960).—Dec. 28; 6:30 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Overcast, intermittent rain in a.m., snow flurries in p.m.; temp. 33° to 41°; wind NW, 10-35 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty-one observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 58 (43 on foot, 10 by car, 5 by boat); total party-miles, 230 (49 on foot, 164 by car, 17 by boat). Observers: J. M. Abbott, P. A. DuMont, Helen A. Fessenden, M. Garland, L. C. Goldman, C. D. Hackman, C. A. Harding, O. D. Justice, T. W. Martin, G. M. and J. B. Meade, B. Johnson, M. C. Newlon, B. Newman, C. S. Robbins, Betsy Schaffer, F. G. Scheider, F. R. Scott (compiler), J. W. Terborgh, J. S. Weske, H. L. Wessels, Jr.—The Short-billed Dowitcher was seen by Scheider and DuMont and the Long-billed Dowitchers by Scott. The Brewer's Blackbird was seen by Robbins and the Ovenbird and Indigo Bunting by Robbins, Fessenden, and Schaffer.

2. Chesapeake Bay (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%).—Dec. 27; 2:55 to 3:55 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 50° to 54°; wind SW, 5-10 m.p.h.; water moderate. One observer. Total party-hours, 1 (by boat); total party-miles, 15 (by boat). Observer: F. R. Scott.

3. Little Creek (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1½ miles NE of Kempsville, including Lynnhaven Inlet, Little Creek, eastern portion of Norfolk City, Stumpy Lake; open farmland 25%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 45%, salt marsh, sand beach, bay, rivers 10%, suburbs 10%).—Dec. 24; 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy, rain from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., then clearing; temp. 35° to 39°; wind W, 9-23 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Seven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 30 (19½ on foot, 10½ by car); total party-miles, 176 (12 on foot, 164 by car). Observers: Mrs. L. E. Burford, D. S. Gordon, F. S. and H. A. Hespenheide, W. F. Rountrey, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), F. W. Whitehurst (Cape Henry Bird Club).—The Little Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, and American Oystercatcher were seen by F. S. Hespenheide and Sykes. The Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported by Gordon and H. A. Hespenheide and the Vesper and White-crowned Sparrows by Mrs. Burford. The total count of Common Grackles was 150,000.

4. Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1½ miles east of Back Bay, including much of mainland of Prin-

(Continued from preceding page)

	1. Chincoteague	2. Chesapeake Bay	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Norfolk County	6. Newport News	7. Hopewell	8. Fort Belvoir	9. Brooke	10. Rockingham County	11. McDowell	12. Big Flat	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Lexington	16. Sweet Briar	17. Western Allegheny County	18. Roanoke	19. Blacksburg	20. Glade Spring
Date	12-28	12-27	12-24	1-1	12-23	12-30	12-31	12-23	12-21	12-28	12-21	12-23	12-29	12-30	12-26	12-29	12-31	12-30	12-22	12-23
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	...	...	8	3	3	4	6	6	10	...	...	1	3	2	2	6	...	1	7	1
Hairy Woodpecker	5	...	2	5	9	1	2	16	19	1	4	1	4	4	2	1	...	1	6	1
Downy Woodpecker	31	...	10	13	34	21	33	127	73	6	9	4	27	30	19	15	2	3	41	11
Eastern Phoebe	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...
Horned Lark	8	...	...	15	...	2	10	12	...	...	...	...	40	71	26	...	...	...	22	...
Tree Swallow	...	...	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Jay	3	...	30	5	70	45	141	438	67	4	15	3	106	134	8	53	24	3	77	32
Common Raven	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Crow	3000	...	394	345	1200	131	157	362	420	69	63	129	406	373	487	220	179	30	657	96
Fish Crow	800	...	17	15	349	12	...	6	...	...	...	...	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Black-capped Chickadee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	41	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	13*	...
Carolina Chickadee	45	...	50	95	126	109	35	312	170	12	...	16	89	58	33	52	...	6	89	25
Tufted Titmouse	14	...	32	25	58	75	17	246	75	11	14	8	57	30	20	20	...	5	44	9
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	...	3	3	2	...	15	97	31	6	8	...	16	18	12	9	...	2	27	12
Red-breasted Nuthatch	14	...	3*	...	1*	12	1	74	16	...	5	...	17	7	3	2	...	1	9	...
Brown-headed Nuthatch	18	...	2	23	7	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Creeper	22	...	3	8	2	9	7	28	19	...	3	1	3	1	...	2	2	1	5	...
House Wren	1	...	...	3	5	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Winter Wren	10	...	4	4	5	3	4	2	3	...	9	...	3	2	4	...	...	...	...	...
Carolina Wren	45	...	45	60	72	51	20	49	20	...	2	2	16	6	4	9	...	1	7	10
Long-billed Marsh Wren	...	...	3	12	...	2	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Marsh Wren	1	...	...	6	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mockingbird	11	...	53	68	66	126	35	149	65	15	1	8	51	44	32	25	3	15	32	11
Catbird	8	...	7	12	4	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Thrasher	5	...	...	8	9	14	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Robin	21	...	12	141	142	35	...	43	4	...	...	...	1	36	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hermit Thrush	7	...	3	4	...	...	3	...	2	...	...	...	...	5	1	...	...	...	2	...
Swainson's Thrush	...	...	...	...	1*	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern Bluebird	8	...	11	...	9	...	...	5	11	...	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	135	...	11	49	25	48	26	38	21	2	4	7	43	47	4	...	...	1	9	3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	...	14	6	22	5	9	6	6	...	...	...	7	10	4	1	...	...	...	...
Water Pipit	1	...	5	56	...	18	300	...	...	...	...	...	72	107	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cedar Waxwing	2	...	6	11	7	4	6	236	52	1	1	1	...	11	...	2	62	...	...	2
Loggerhead Shrike	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Starling	1216	...	2500	481	810	1224	582	1190	240	712	22	13	656	988	541	300	1220	1500	1721	975
Myrtle Warbler	7276	...	169	467	321	974	77	85	40	...	...	...	32	17	1	3	...	...	1	...
Pine Warbler	1	...	16	12	4	16	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3*	...	...	...	...	...
Palm Warbler	9	...	8	13	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ovenbird	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellowthroat	...	...	4	1	3	1	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-breasted Chat	...	...	...	1	2*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
House Sparrow	219	...	425	98	87	812	224	160	140	78	2	9	11	43	179	180	430	125	283	155
Eastern Meadowlark	329	...	287	560	104	462	297	68	52	105	13	...	54	174	15	...	...	20	186	39
Redwinged Blackbird	2392	...	10,750	25,400	...	221	795	223	400	...	...	...	361	66	...	...	...	...	...	...
Baltimore Oriole	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1*	...
Rusty Blackbird	6	...	35	...	20	...	...	12	12	26	1	...	...	8	20	...	...	...	...	...
Brewer's Blackbird	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	1716	...	...	7	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	65	...	...	1285	...	33	9	1	7	...	...	...	...	24	1	250	...	9	...	370
Brown-headed Cowbird	98	...	1900	1680	...	18	580	51	4	...	...	...	50	671	...	80	...	1	...	...
Blackbird (sp.?)	...	...	...	...	...	637	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	196	...	205	266	240	235	143	332	230	98	7	29	274	264	279	50	109	20	76	52
Indigo Bunting	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dickcissel	...	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Evening Grosbeak	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	82	...	...	...	2	10	1	14	...	...	2	12	...
Purple Finch	4	...	3	...	2	1	2	10	19	...	...	4	11	14	20	4	...	4	...	...
Common Redpoll	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13*	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Siskin	3	...	3	...	4	1	1	33	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Goldfinch	47	...	76	71	92	390	41	235	70	4	2	...	19	15	7	4	...	12	16	2
Rufous-sided Towhee	64	...	58	70	201	49	12	13	...	1	...	...	3	2	...	...	...	...	3	2
Ipswich Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Savannah Sparrow	117	...	35	260	106	405	8	29	1	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Grasshopper Sparrow	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	10	...	60	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	3	...	44	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	...	...	1*	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Slate-colored Junco	40	...	242	283	227	487	523	1285	400	77	57	33	255	493	219	116	96	20	84	34
Tree Sparrow	2	...	5	...	2	...	...	71	9	11	5	...	27	26	6	...	...	...	...	...
Chipping Sparrow	...	...	15	...	12	1*	...	...	1*	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Field Sparrow	37	...	93	209	60	60	5	154	70	3	1	...	272	173	23	15	...	1	19	25
White-crowned Sparrow	3	...	3*	...	...	...	...	9	...	10	...	...	8	52	29	59	...	4	20	40
White-throated Sparrow	553	...	409	735	561	522	344	504	200	7	...	8	238	127	99	99	12	15	24	23
Fox Sparrow	33	...	29	17	40	38	5	...	1	...	...	...	3	2	...	1	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	150	...	56	341	158	239	13	33	3	1	...	...	13	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Song Sparrow	384	...	169	404	246	504	166	308	110	15	3	5	179	144	25	27	...	15	38	18
Snow Bunting	...	...	...	...	40	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	130	11	113	113	77	116	77	85	76	41	32	25	63	70	55	40	13	39	54	39
Total Individuals	61,582	1598	179,649	73,027	16,765	9598	12,985	6484	2185	318	216	...	4059	5270	2333	1705	2141	1874	4240	2280
Total Party-hours	58	1	30	57	32	64	25	90	63	16	10	10	30	40	19	17	10	...	43	10
No. of Observers	21	1	7	22	11	23	7	24	15	6	1	1	4	4	6	4	2	7	12	2

*See under count station in text of article.

cess Anne Co.; open farmland 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 20%, open beach 5%, marshes and bay 45%).—Jan. 1; 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy and windy (calm early a.m.) with rain from 7:30 a.m. throughout day (0.95 in.); temp. 37° to 39°; wind NE, 0-40 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty-two observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 57 (46 on foot, 10 by car, 1 by boat); total party-miles, 248 (21 on foot, 223 by car, 4 by boat). Observers: R. L. Buck, Mrs. L. E. Burford, W. A. Cooper, G. W. Gibbins, D. S. Gordon, Miss G. A. Grimm, C. S. and C. W. Hacker, F. S. and H. A. Hespenheide, Mrs. E. Katz, T. H. McDaniel, J. F. Parker, J. A. Pond, Jr. and Sr., J. W. Pond, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, W. P. Smith, R. E. Spies, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), F. W. Whitehurst (Cape Henry Bird Club and guests).—The Vesper Sparrow was seen by Mrs. Burford, Miss Grimm, and Mrs. Katz.

5. Norfolk County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 6½ miles NE of Wallaceton, including eastern edge of Dismal Swamp, western part of Northwest River, Great Bridge, Butts Station, Fentress, Deep Creek; open farmland 30%, woodland swamp 24%, mixed woodland 30%, pine woodland 10%, marsh 1%).—Dec. 23; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy with rain showers from noon through rest of day; temp. 34° to 58°; wind E, 0-8 m.p.h.; ground bare, small bodies of water frozen in early morning. Eleven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (22¼ on foot, 9¾ by car); total party-miles, 225 (17 on foot, 208 by car). Observers: Miss M. W. Bryant, W. A. Cooper, Misses A. D. and G. A. Grimm, F. S. and H. A. Hespenheide, J. F. Parker, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), F. W. Whitehurst (Cape Henry Bird Club and guest).—The Least Bittern was seen by Cooper and H. A. Hespenheide and the Red-breasted Nuthatch and Grasshopper Sparrow by these observers plus Whitehurst. The Swainson's Thrush was reported by Richardson and Rountrey. The totals for the various blackbirds were: Red-winged Blackbird, 6,000,000; Common Grackle, 7,000,000; and Brown-headed Cowbird, 100,000. The total count of individuals was 13,106,790.

6. Newport News (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle bounded by Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River, Grafton; woodland 30%, open fields 30%, fresh-water ponds 10%, waterfront 30%).—Dec. 30; 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; 24° to 37°; wind SW, 5-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, marshes partly frozen. Twenty-three observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 64 (32 on foot, 32 by car); total party-miles, 343 (48 on foot, 295 by car). Observers: Bob Brooks, W. A. Cooper, J. H. Grey, C. S. and C. W. Hacker, Jeanne Hacker, M. E. Hathaway, F. S. Hespenheide, Mrs. E. Katz, J. Kuznicki, Mrs. L. W. Machen, Dorothy Mitchell, Mike Mitchell, J. F. Parker, R. H. Peake, Jr., J. Pond, Ash Rawls, Mildred Rawls, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, Mr. & Mrs. W. P. Smith (compilers), Bill Snyder (Hampton Roads Bird Club).—The Red-necked Grebes were seen by Grey and the Rawlses, and Pond reported the Blue-winged Teal, American Oystercatcher, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Least Tern. The Rough-legged Hawk and Boat-tailed Grackle were seen by C. S. Hacker and Rountrey, while Snyder observed the Yellow-breasted Chats. The Swainson's Thrush and Chipping Sparrow were reported by Hathaway and Peake and the Dickcissel by the Smiths.

7. Hopewell (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center in Curles Neck as in last 7 years; Presquile National Wildlife Refuge not covered this year; open farmland 35%, brushy fields 10%, marshes and river shore 5%, deciduous wooded swamp 5%, woodland 45%).—Dec. 31; 6:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 16° to 43°; wind SSW, 2-12 m.p.h.; ground bare, still water frozen. Seven observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 25 (21 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 118 (13 on foot, 105 by car). Observers: Miss Cleo Allen, H. L. Frazier, J. S. Lovering, R. H. Rudd, F. R. Scott (compiler), Miss Mary Tompkins, Miss Henrietta Weidenfeld.

8. Fort Belvoir (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Lebanon, Mason's Neck, and including Fort Hunt, Mount Vernon, Fort Belvoir,

Occoquan, Springfield, Woodbridge, Neabsco Creek, and Powell's Creek; deciduous woods 40%, pine woods 10%, open fields and pastures 10%, swamps and marshes 5%, farmyards, orchards, and gardens 10%, towns 5%, river, bays, and inlets 20%).—Dec. 23; 4 a.m. to 4 p.m. Partly cloudy in a.m., light to heavy rain in p.m.; temp. 29° to 40°; wind NW, 5-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, inlets and marshes frozen. Twenty-four observers in 14 parties. Total party-hours, 90¼ (65¼ on foot, 19 by car, 6 at feeding station); total party-miles, 259 (64 on foot, 195 by car). Observers: J. M. Abbott (compiler), Louise Berry, E. Bierley, B. O. Bird, Mr. & Mrs. J. D'Alpuget, P. A. DuMont, M. Gilbert, Mr. & Mrs. I. C. Hoover, Col. & Mrs. W. A. Houston, D. Keeney, Lois Morgan, J. Price, Mr. & Mrs. W. Rothery, G. Sigel, Mr. & Mrs. R. Teel, Mr. & Mrs. K. Trever, Mrs. J. Williams, Jeb Williams.—The Common Egrets were seen by Sigel, Gilbert, *et al.* and the Wood Ducks by Bird. DuMont reported the Great Black-backed Gull and the Yellowthroat, and the Laughing Gull was seen by Hoover.

9. Brooke (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center on road 3 miles ESE of Brooke, including Potomac River from Widewater to Maryland Point Lighthouse and Virginia upland nearly to Fredericksburg; tidal water 15%, marsh 8%, fields 14%, hedgerows 9%, mixed forest edge 14%, deciduous woods 33%, pine woods 5%, slash 2%).—Dec. 21; 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy in a.m., clear in p.m.; temp. 36° to 42°; wind NW, 5-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Fifteen observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 63 (60 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles, 97 (51 on foot, 46 by car). Observers: C. A. Anderson, R. A. Bailey, A. A. Baker, H. Bell, III, J. H. Eric, Luna B. Leopold, E. T. McKnight (compiler), T. B. Nolan, M. A. Pistrang, C. D. Rinehart, B. J. Skinner, R. L. Smith, D. B. Stewart, A. M. White, D. R. Wiesnet.—The Chipping Sparrow was seen by Skinner.

10. Rockingham County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Ottobine, including Silver Lake in Dayton; suburbs 5%, river bottom woodland 5%, open farmland and farm woodlots 55%, mixed upland woodland 35%; elevation 1160 to 3200 feet).—Dec. 28; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Snowing in a.m., clear in p.m.; temp. 28° to 35°; wind N, 3 m.p.h.; snow on ground, most water open. Six observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 16 (6 on foot, 10 by car); total party-miles, 104 (10 on foot, 94 by car). Observers: D. & L. Carpenter, Max Carpenter (compiler), J. M. Dietz, H. G. Helbert, R. Helbert.

11. McDowell (same area and habitats as last year).—Dec. 21; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mostly cloudy; temp. 25° to 32°; no wind. One observer. Total hours, 9½ (on foot); total miles, 17 (on foot). Observer: C. E. Stevens.

12. Big Flat Mountain (same area and habitats as last year, mostly in southern section of Shenandoah National Park). — Dec. 23; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Ground bare early, snowed 4 in. during day; temp. 25° to 30°; wind, none. One observer. Total hours, 9½ (on foot); total miles, 18 (on foot). Observer: C. E. Stevens.

13. Charlottesville (about same area and habitats as last year).—Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 13° to 28°; wind NW, 0-15 m.p.h.; 1-3 in. snow on ground. Four observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 30 (28 on foot, 2 by car); total party-miles, 76 (34 on foot, 42 by car). Observers: Mrs. C. O. Gregory, K. Lawless, R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler).—The Vesper Sparrow was seen by Stevens, the first area winter record. Not all of the Canada Geese were feral.

14. Warren (about same area and habitats as last year).—Dec. 30; 7 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. Clear; temp. 11° to 35°; wind W, 0-15 m.p.h.; 1-2 in. snow on ground, ponds frozen. Four observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 40 (36 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 118 (43 on foot, 75 by car). Observers: K. Lawless, R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler), Mrs. F. S. Whiteside.—The Common Redpolls were reported by Mrs. Whiteside, the second record for Albemarle Co.

15. Lexington (from town center west to Sunnyside Farm and Brushy Hills; Big Spring Pond; Maury River from Cave Spring to Lime Kiln Bridge and the mouth of Warm Run; east to Mill Creek and Womeldorf's Farm, Neriah Church, and the Glasgow Place on South River; pasture and open field 25%, cedar-honeysuckle scrub 30%, hardwood forest 20%, river bottom and Big Spring 5%).—Dec. 26; 7 a.m. to 5:25 p.m. Clear; temp. 11° to 48°; wind, none. Six observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 18 (16 on foot, 2 by car); total party-miles, 54 (14 on foot, 40 by car). Observers: R. P. Carroll, R. P. Carroll, Jr., R. O. Paxton, R. Stewart, C. Tutwiler, J. Womeldorf.—The Pine Warblers were seen by Carroll and Womeldorf.

16. Sweet Briar (all points within a 3-mile-diameter circle, center Sweet Briar College; open fields 30%, deciduous woodland 30%, scrubby creekbottoms 20%, lake edges 5%, hedgerows 10%, campus and suburban areas 5%).—Dec. 29; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Overcast to clear; temp. 15° to 30°; wind 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Four observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 17 (16½ on foot, ½ by car); total party-miles, 14 (8 on foot, 6 by car). Observers: Jeanette Boone, Katherine Macdonald, Gertrude Prior (compiler), S. L. Thornhill.

17. Western Alleghany County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center in Altamont and including Pitzer's Ridge, Falling Springs Valley, Morris Hill, Indian Draft, Dunlap Creek; open woodland 55%, fields and pastures 45%).—Dec. 31; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 5° to 26°; wind, calm; 2 in. frozen snow on ground, ice on trees and wires. Two observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 9½ (2 on foot, 7½ by car); total party-miles, 91.1 (2 on foot, 89.1 by car). Observers: Lucy Y. Wilson (compiler), R. C. Wilson.

18. Roanoke (same territory as in previous years; Murray's Pond, Woodrum Field airport, Peter's Creek Road, Carvin's Cove Dam; farmland 30%, open fields 30%, woodland 20%, creek bottom and pond 20%).—Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fair; temp. 22° to 54°; wind SW, 12-32 m.p.h. Total party-miles, 38 (8 by foot, 30 by car). Observers: A. O. English (compiler), G. Davis, Billy Kendig, P. F. Kendig, C. H. Lewis, Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Moore.

19. Blacksburg (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Linkous Store; pasture and plowed land 20%, town and suburbs 10%, hardwood woodlots 20%, mixed woodlands 20%, river and creek bottoms 30%).—Dec. 22; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy in a.m., clear in p.m.; temp. 25° to 50°; wind SSW, 0-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, ponds and streams partly frozen. Twelve observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 43 (32 on foot, 11 by car); total party-miles, 172 (32 on foot, 140 by car). Observers: D. G. Cochran, A. L. Dean, R. V. Dietrich, M. G. Hale, B. S. McGinnes, H. S. Mosby, J. W. Murray (compiler), D. Shear, G. M. Shear, A. Smyth, Mrs. E. A. Smyth, E. A. Smyth, Jr.—The Ring-billed Gulls were seen by Dietrich and the Baltimore Oriole by Hale and G. M. Shear. The 13 Black-capped Chickadees reported is a record number for a Blacksburg count. However, this is a minimum number, as some observers reported all chickadees as the Carolina with no attempt at distinguishing the two species.

20. Glade Spring (same area as in previous years; farmland and pastures 40%, deciduous woodlands 30%, mixed woodlands 20%, riverbottoms 8%, marsh and ponds 2%).—Dec. 23; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Rain and snow in a.m., clearing in p.m.; temp. 30° to 45°; wind NW, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Two observers together. Total party-hours, 10 (3 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 50 (5 on foot, 45 by car). Observers: B. B. Dulaney, P. S. Dulaney (compiler).

NEWS AND NOTES

THANKS TO MISS PRIOR AND THE MISSES EDMON. As *The Raven* takes its first printed form the editor, the officers, and the members of the executive committee of the Virginia Society of Ornithology would take this opportunity of expressing their deep appreciation to Miss Gertrude Prior, who for over ten years has had charge of the production of our journal, and to her loyal assistants, Miss Mildred and Miss Helen Edgemon, who for two-thirds of that time have done the actual mimeographing. The VSO owes a great debt of gratitude to these ladies for their faithful and competent service.

THE COVER CUT. The picture of the Raven on the cover is from a drawing made by Walter Weber for Dr. Alexander Wetmore for use in Shenandoah National Park publications on birds. It is used by kind permission of the artist and Dr. Wetmore.

FIELD TRIPS. An early summer mountain field trip has been set for Skyland, in Shenandoah National Park, on June 15, 16, and 17. A mid-summer trip is planned for the Wachapreague area, on the Eastern Shore, at a time to be announced later, probably around the middle of July.

TREASURER'S REPORT. The Treasurer's report, prepared by Miss Helen L. Goldstick, as of March 3, 1962, is as follows:

Oct. 10, 1961—Publication fund balance	778.88
Oct. 10, 1961—Checking account balance	730.04

DEPOSITS

Dec. 20, 1961—Memberships	190.00
Feb. 20, 1962—Memberships and Arm Emblems	613.00
Checking account balance plus deposits.	\$1,533.04

EXPENDITURES

Feb. 20, 1962—Raven & Newsletter	204.08
Postage	21.56
Feb. 28, 1962—Raven (envelopes)	15.75
Total expenditures	\$ 241.39
	\$1,533.04
	—241.39
Balance in checking account	\$1,291.65

PINE GROSBEAKS IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY. Two flocks of Pine Grosbeaks are reported by Max Carpenter from Rockingham County: 6 birds on December 9, 1961, at Briery Branch Gap; and 4 birds on January 27, 1962, at Second Mountain.

SNOW BUNTINGS IN AUGUSTA AND ROCKINGHAM COUNTIES. Since we have very few inland Virginia records for the Snow Bunting, the following are of interest. On December 24, 1961, Richard Peake and H. G. M. Jopson saw 14 at Bridgewater, Rockingham County. Peake saw another flock of 7 on the same day in Augusta County, south of Bridgewater. On January 18, 1962, Max Carpenter saw 6 at Coates' Store, Rockingham County.

ANNUAL MEETING OF VSO. The Hampton Roads Bird Club will be host to the 1962 annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology on Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28. Program sessions and annual dinner will be at the Mariner's Museum, Newport News, with registration at 1:00 P. M. on April 27th; afternoon session from 2:00 to 5:00; annual dinner at 6:30; an evening session at 8:00. The field trip on Saturday is tentatively set for Grandview Beach, north of Hampton. Fuller information will be furnished in a News Letter.

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, and \$4.00 for sustaining members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

President: PAUL S. DULANEY, Colonnade Club, Charlottesville, Virginia.

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RECENT RECORDS OF INTEREST FROM NORTHERN VIRGINIA

THOMAS D. BURLEIGH

Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

In connection with taxonomic studies now being carried on at the U. S. National Museum, a limited amount of field work in northern Virginia was found necessary in order to secure specimens in fresh unfaded plumage. In many instances such material, dating back fifty years or more, proved to be so "foxed" as to be useless for comparative purposes. Species where browns and grays predominated were especially unsatisfactory in this respect, and could not be relied upon. For this reason small series of many of the more common birds of this part of the State were collected over a period of several years (Sept. 1958 through Feb. 1961) in the vicinity of Washington, D. C. On critical examination, new and at times unexpected subspecies were recorded for the State, and the status of others materially changed. The following list summarizes briefly both these subspecies determinations, and the occurrence of species only infrequently noted in Virginia.

***Colaptes auratus borealis*.**—A female taken on Bull Run, at Manassas, January 1, 1960, is the second record for the occurrence of this far northern race in the State. It had a wing measurement of 162 mm, as compared to a maximum of 159.5 mm and an average of 155 mm for *luteus*.

***Certhia familiaris nigrescens*.**—Rather unexpected was the fact that this southern mountain race of the brown creeper proved to be as common a transient and winter resident in Fairfax and Prince William Counties as the more northern breeding populations, *americana*. Fifteen specimens, out of a series of 45, were found to be typical of *nigrescens*, and were taken between the dates of November 13 (1958) and April 16 (1960) at Alexandria, Mt. Vernon, and Manassas.

****Certhia familiaris montana*.**—Even more unexpected was the presence of this western race in Virginia during the winter of 1960-61. Since it was not recorded during the previous two years, there apparently was an unusual invasion of creepers from the Rocky Mountains this past fall. A total of 5 specimens were taken, males at Mt. Vernon on October 31 and November 6, 1960, and females at Mt. Vernon on October 12 and November 27, 1960, and at Alexandria, February 22, 1961. Heretofore *montana* had not been reported in the State.

***Troglodytes troglodytes pullus*.**—Being interested in the distribution and relative abundance in Virginia of the race described from Newfoundland, *aquilonaria*, 8 winter wrens were collected in Fairfax and Prince William Counties during October and November of 1959 and 1960. Oddly enough, all were found to represent the Appalachian race. Since *pullus* is the breeding form in the mountains of West Virginia, it apparently migrates east in the fall and, although undetected in past years, probably occurs commonly in northern Virginia in migration. Specimens of *pullus* taken were: males, Alexandria, November 15, 1959, Mt. Vernon, October 1 and November 20, 1960, Manassas, November 13, 1960; females, Mt. Vernon, October 18, 1959, October 4 and 23, and November 27, 1960.

***Dumetella carolinensis carolinensis*.**—No catbirds representing the nominate race were recorded in the spring. Breeding specimens were taken at Manassas, Prince William County, on May 22 and June 30, 1960, and this represents the extreme southern limits of *carolinensis* during the summer months as it does not occur then on the Coastal Plain. In the fall of 1960, specimens were taken between the dates of September 21 (Alexandria) and November 6 (Mt. Vernon).

[*Dumetella carolinensis meridianus*.—This southern race of the catbird, readily distinguished by its paler plumage, was found to occur commonly as a breeding bird in suitable habitat between Alexandria and Mt. Vernon. Ten specimens typical of *meridianus* were taken in 1960 between the dates of April 19 and October 13.]

[*Dumetella carolinensis ruficrissa*.—This race was recorded but once, a male being taken at Alexandria on October 12, 1959. The catbird occurs commonly as a breeding bird in the northwestern United States, but in migration is largely of accidental occurrence in the West, south of northern Oregon and southern Idaho. The western breeding population apparently passes through the southeastern States in its journey north and south, so should be of at least casual occurrence as a transient in Virginia. It resembles *meridianus* closely, being noticeably paler both above and below than *carolinensis*, and for this reason could be easily overlooked.]

Turdus migratorius nigrideus.—A close scrutiny of flocks of transient robins feeding in open fields in the vicinity of Mt. Vernon, in February and March of 1960, revealed the fact that the race described from Newfoundland (*Turdus migratorius nigrideus*) occurred regularly, and was not uncommon. Usually one or two of these birds would be feeding with flocks of other robins. Specimens taken which proved to be *nigrideus* could be distinguished in the field with little difficulty by their dark upper parts. Since only three specimens of *nigrideus* have been taken in Virginia in past years, it would appear that the Newfoundland bird has merely been overlooked. Specimens collected in the spring, all males, were taken on the following dates: February 21, March 8, March 16, and March 24, and in the fall, October 31.

Hylocichla guttata crymophila.—To the two records for the occurrence of the Newfoundland hermit thrush in Virginia (Assateague Island November 3, 1934, and Blacksburg, October 22, 1938), the following can now be added: Mt. Vernon, males, January 1 and April 5, 1959, and January 21 and October 23, 1960, and a female, October 12, 1960: Manassas, a male, February 24, 1960.

[*Hylocichla guttata euboria*.—A male taken at Alexandria on April 13, 1959, was found to represent this recently described race from western Canada. It has not heretofore been recorded from Virginia.]

**Hylocichla ustulata incana*.—In the small series of olive-backed thrushes taken during the fall of 1959, three specimens were found to represent this far western race. These were females collected at Alexandria, September 12, and at Mt. Vernon, October 11, and a male at Mt. Vernon, October 18. *Incana* can be distinguished by its grayish upperparts, as compared to the olivaceous upperparts of *swainsoni*.

**Dendroica coronata hooveri*.—The western race of the myrtle warbler apparently occurs but rarely in Virginia, for in a small series of 16 birds taken between the dates of November 23, 1958, and December 18, 1960, only one proved referable to *hooveri*, a female collected at Manassas on November 4, 1960. This is apparently the first record for the State. Although its larger measurements have been considered the chief character separating the two races of *Dendroica coronata*, the lighter brown coloration of the upper parts is even more diagnostic in distinguishing *hooveri* from the eastern myrtle warbler.

Seiurus aurocapillus furvior.—In view of the few records for the occurrence of this Newfoundland race in the State, it may be of interest to record a female taken at Mt. Vernon on August 21, 1959.

**Seiurus aurocapillus cinereus*.—A male ovenbird taken at Mt. Vernon on April 19, 1959, was found to represent this western race, characterized by its distinct grayish upperparts. It has not heretofore been recorded from Virginia.

[*Geothlypis trichas roscoe*.—A critical study of races of *Geothlypis trichas*

has shown that the breeding population in the Mississippi Valley area represents a distinct and unrecognized race. Its characters are small size as in the nominate race, but with the upper parts distinctly paler and greener. Audubon gave the name *roscoe* to yellowthroats from the southern Mississippi Valley, and this name apparently is the only one available for this breeding population. Three male specimens taken in northern Virginia were clearly referable to this race. They were collected at Alexandria on April 21, 1959, and May 15, 1960, and at Mt. Vernon on September 25, 1960.]

***Euphagus carolinus nigrans.**—Although heretofore not recorded in the State, this race described from Newfoundland was found to occur regularly in northern Virginia, both during the winter months and as a spring transient. It was not recorded during the fall, but doubtless is present then. In all, ten specimens were taken at Alexandria between the dates of December 7 (1958) and April 24 (1959), and at Mt. Vernon on April 3 and 13, 1960.

Euphagus cyanocephalus breweri.—On March 20, 1960, two male Brewer's blackbirds were found feeding in an open field 2 miles south of Mt. Vernon, and one was collected to verify the identification. This is apparently the first specimen of this species to be taken in the State. It was clearly referable in its characters to *breweri*, the breeding population of the Northern Plains.

***Hesperiphona vespertina brooksi.**—As is generally well known, the winter of 1959-60 witnessed an unusually large invasion of evening grosbeaks in the eastern States as far south as Georgia. A female taken at Alexandria on January 3, 1960, was found to represent this western race, heretofore unrecorded in the State.

Carpodacus purpureus nesophilus.—This dark race described from Newfoundland has been recorded but once from the State (at Richmond, in 1958), so it was of interest to find it of regular occurrence in northern Virginia, both as a transient and during the winter months. Eleven specimens were taken at Alexandria between the dates of November 28 (1960) and April 24 (1960), 3 at Mt. Vernon on December 31, 1959, January 8, 1960, and February 19, 1961, and 1 at Manassas on March 13, 1960.

Acanthis flammea flammea.—There appear to be few records for the occurrence of this boreal finch in Virginia, so it was apparently unusually plentiful during the winter of 1959-60. Small flocks were noted on Hunting Creek, south of Alexandria on February 4 and 12 and March 12, and an adult male was collected there on February 12. This is but the second specimen to be taken in the State.

[Passerculus sandwichensis mediogriseus.—Although not recognized by the A.O.U. Committee on Nomenclature, *mediogriseus* is a valid and well-marked race. Of 12 Savannah Sparrows taken at Mt. Vernon in 1960, 3 were found to represent this form. All were males, collected on March 24 and 31 and April 8.]

[Poocetes gramineus polius.—This is another well-marked race that is not as yet recognized by the A.O.U. Committee. It can be distinguished by its noticeable blackish upperparts as compared to the rufescent upperparts of *gramineus*. A male taken at Mt. Vernon on March 31, 1960, is clearly referable to *polius*, and is the first record for this form for the State.]

Junco hyemalis cismontanus.—A female of this western race of the slate-colored junco, rarely recorded in Virginia, was taken at Alexandria on March 3, 1959.

***Passerella iliaca zaboria.**—This western race of the fox sparrow is apparently of regular occurrence in northern Virginia, although heretofore not recorded from the State. Of 26 specimens taken between the dates of November 9, 1958, and February 28, 1961, 6 were found referable to *zaboria*. They were: Mt. Vernon, male, December 21, 1958, and female, January 8, 1961; Alexandria, 2 males, March 28, 1960, and females, March 8 and April 4, 1959.

Melospiza georgiana ericrypta.—Since there are relatively few records for

the occurrence of this northern race of the swamp sparrow in Virginia, it was of interest to find it of regular occurrence as a winter resident in the north-eastern corner of the State. Eleven specimens were taken as follows: Alexandria, males, November 30, 1959, April 4 and December 12, 1960; females, February 21, 1959, March 12 and December 13, 1960, January 22 and February 8, 1961; Mt. Vernon, male, October 21, 1959, female, November 13, 1959; Manassas, female, December 18, 1960.

Melospiza melodia atlantica.—A song sparrow taken at Alexandria on February 12, 1959, in underbrush fringing an open marsh, was found to represent this grayish coastal race. It is probably largely of accidental occurrence this far inland.

[Birds marked with a star are new to the Virginia list. Birds in brackets are races not yet recognized in the A.O.U. 'Check-List.']

BIRDS BATHING IN SHRUBS AND TREES

HARRY A. ALLARD

Arlington, Virginia

It is well known that many birds use water for bathing, as the Starling, Robin, Tufted Titmouse, and others. As a matter of fact, water birds, shore birds, and passerine birds generally bathe in water, if they bathe. Some birds take dust baths, as in the case of the Vesper Sparrow and some birds living in arid regions. Many of our common birds not only bathe in water but end this with a dust bath. It is not generally known that some birds do not submerge in a shallow pool to bathe and splash about with their wings.

Recently I watched close at hand the Eastern Towhee bathing in a bush in my yard; the leaves were soaked and dripping water from a recent shower. The male Towhee spread and fluttered his wings violently against the leaves throughout the bush, causing the water to fly about and wetting the bird above and below. It continued this behavior for some time. This is virtually a shower bath. This tree-bathing method is a more common behavior with a number of species of birds in the tropics, where it has been observed in the rainforest region of Peru and elsewhere. Birds that use pools must have shallow water so that they can stand upon the bottom and move and flutter about, which they could not do in deep water. The shower-bath method in the foliage of trees and bushes is quite as efficient. I have found no reference to this method of bathing by birds in the literature, however. In the dense, poorly lighted rainforests, many birds are usually not seen on the forest floor and appear to prefer to bathe in the rain or take foliage baths in the leafy canopy of the trees.

In a conversation with Dr. Alexander Wetmore, a keen life-long student of birds and world-wide authority, he gave me some interesting instances of the shrub shower-bath method which he once observed at his home. He saw an olive-backed thrush indulging in a shower bath in one of his shrubs. While this was going on, an observing scarlet tanager flew in and took his bath in the same manner. Dr. Wetmore informed me that during dry periods he has seen some birds flutter around in the wet grass to bathe while he was sprinkling the lawn. Very frequently while watering my lawn and garden, various birds would sit on a post and get a good bath in my artificial rain from a type of sprinkler simulating gentle rain.

Dr. Wetmore says that perhaps many birds not infrequently bathe in shrubs as the above observations show, but it is not a commonly observed or well-known behavior. It might be well for our Virginian bird students to make observations on this point and publish these in *The Raven*.

SOUTHWARD DISPERSAL INTO VIRGINIA OF THE
EVENING GROSBEEK

by JOSEPH JAMES MURRAY AND ROBERT OWEN PAXTON

One of the striking developments in Virginia ornithology in recent years has been the appearance in winter of a very handsome and interesting bird, the Evening Grosbeak. This southward invasion by a boreal species is contrary to the general trend in the recent but now apparently ending cycle of mild years in which there has been a northward extension of the range of a number of austral species, such as the Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat, and others.

The scientific name of our eastern race of the Evening Grosbeak is *Hesperiphona vespertina vespertina* (Cooper). The first element of this euphonious name comes in part from the Greek word for voice or song, and in part from the Greek Hesperides, the Daughters of Night, who dwell on the western verge of the world. It is consequently suggestive of western, or sunset, or evening. The other two parts of the trinomial, *vespertina*, likewise have a reference to evening and the west. The significance of all parts of the scientific name is taken over into the first part of the English name, Evening Grosbeak. The names, both scientific and common, are, however, misnomers, caused by the conjectures of the first discoverers of the bird that it was a bird of the west alone and that it sang only at twilight, neither of which assumptions is correct.

The Evening Grosbeak is indeed largely a bird of the west, but there is a subspecies which is more and more moving eastward. There are three recognized races: *brooksi* of the west and northwest; *montana* of the mountains of the Southwest and Mexico; and our more eastern race, *vespertina*. At the time of the publication of the fourth edition of the "Check-List of North American Birds" in 1931 the eastern breeding limits of the bird, apart from one breeding record for Woodstock, Vermont, were in Ontario and northern Michigan, and it wintered only irregularly into the northeastern states. The fifth (1957) edition recognized the extension of both summer and winter ranges, both eastward and southward, for it is now known to breed in northern New Brunswick, northeastern New York, and central Vermont and Massachusetts, and to winter at least irregularly to western South Carolina, northern Georgia, and eastern Tennessee.

The first Virginia record was of the accidental occurrence of a single bird at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Graham in Alexandria in late March, 1940. Four years later the present series of invasions began. At this time the senior author discovered a small flock of two males and four females in his yard at Lexington on February 28, 1944. The birds again appeared there on Easter Sunday morning, a thoroughly inconvenient time for a man whose split personality is with difficulty apportioned between divinity and ornithology. The birds were seen by others in Lexington between those dates. This seems to have been the first move in the effort of the Evening Grosbeaks to take over winter in the Old Dominion.

The following winter, 1944-45, presented us with none of these birds. In 1945-46, however, the grosbeaks put on a nice show for us in Virginia. They occurred at only seven places and, except at Arlington, in small numbers, but the places were widely scattered, from Arlington to Williamsburg to Abingdon, and at Charlottesville, Lexington, and Blacksburg, making a great triangle across the State, with Charlottesville near its center. In the eighteen years from 1943-44 to 1960-61 inclusive, there have been three years of abundance, two good years, eight years with small numbers, and five years in which we drew blank. Every section of the State has shared these visits, the Eastern

Shore, which had its first record in December, 1959, being the last to receive them. The records for the three peak seasons of 1951-52, 1957-58, and 1959-60, have been summarized by the junior author in *The Raven*, mimeographed journal of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

The most phenomenal of the large-scale irruptions of the Evening Grosbeak into Virginia came in the winter of 1951-52. The birds came first to northern Virginia in late October, then in November south to Lexington and east to Williamsburg, and by the latter part of that month to Blacksburg. Thirteen places reported them in December, with flocks to more than seventy. Most flocks throughout the season ran from fifteen to thirty. There were heavy concentrations in March, small flocks still present in fourteen areas in April and in seven into May, with May 21 at Waynesboro as the latest date. Altogether they appeared in forty localities, which covered the State except for Southwest Virginia. Even there the lack of reports may have been due to the scarcity of interested observers. The largest counts were in the Alexandria-Arlington region, which, because of geographical position and the large number of observers working there, is to be expected. The high count in that area was 450 in late February and early March. Four banders there, Arthur H. Fast, Mrs. M. B. Peacock, Mrs. Michael Dreese, and Mrs. Mary Newlin Borton, banded 682 grosbeaks. The only birds banded previously in the State were 51 by Fast in 1945-46.

The second year of abundance, not so notable as 1951-52, was the winter of 1957-58. Birds were present from October 12 at Charlottesville and October 15 at Richmond to May 14 at Arlington. They were reported from over thirty places, a number of which were in two clusters around Arlington and Richmond, and from all parts of the State except the Eastern Shore. They ranged from Nansemond County in Tidewater to 5200 feet on our highest mountain, Mount Rogers. The numbers built up to late spring, April being the peak month. Flocks were small, usually under thirty and with maximum counts to fifty and seventy-five. This is a deceptive fact, however, by no means indicating the total numbers present. While the flock at Fast's feeding station in Arlington was apparently static at about twenty-five birds, he was nevertheless able to band 112 different birds, 43 males and 69 females.

The winter of 1959-1960 brought a third phenomenal invasion, more widespread than in 1957-58 but not representing such great numbers as the winter of 1951-52, except in the Alexandria-Arlington area, where 930 were banded. The birds came earlier; they were listed on eight out of twenty-two land Christmas Counts; and they were present at 26 places, from the Eastern Shore, where the first record was made on December 29, to Blacksburg, and from Hampton to 4000 feet on Middle Mountain in Highland County. Nine of the places had flocks of over 50, maximum counts going to 75 and 100. Of the 930 birds banded in northern Virginia, 92 were banded by Fast at Arlington, 229 around Pine Ridge, Fairfax County, by Mrs. Peacock, 569 near Vienna by Mr. and Mrs. William Mull, and 40 at Herndon by L. H. Sharp. In addition A. O. English banded 35 at Salem.

Good numbers of grosbeaks came in 1954-55 and 1955-56 but nothing like the numbers of the three peak years. The five years in which no birds were reported were 1944-45, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1953-54, and 1956-57. The other eight years were not significant, three of them providing only records of a single bird, the others from two to seven reports. Extreme dates have been October 1 at Pine Ridge, and May 21 at Waynesboro, both in 1952.

No significant pattern emerges from the study of these invasions. There seems to be no curve of increase or decrease in the annual appearances, the numbers being, at least from our standpoint, altogether erratic. In 1952-53, following the year of greatest abundance, only six birds in all were seen, the next year none. Then followed four years, of which the first was fairly good, the second good, the third barren, and the fourth a peak year. But after the peak

year of 1957-58 came one small year and then another peak. Starting from 1945-46, the first year in which there was more than one report, the peak years have come at intervals of 6-6-2 years.

Despite the fact that no pattern can be ascertained, certain observations of interest may be made. First, the distribution became widespread within two years of the advent of the birds in 1944, small numbers appearing in 1945-46 in northern, eastern, and western Virginia. Second, no years of abundance were successive. Third, the three years of abundance plus the two good years equal the number of blank years. Fourth, the eight years with small numbers were almost half of the total of eighteen years. Fifth, the distribution of the grosbeaks in good years coincides almost exactly with the distribution of the membership of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. The birds seem in those years to have appeared wherever there were observers competent to identify and interested enough to report them. Sixth, since there is no curve of increase and decrease in these annual appearances, there seems to be no indication of a cyclic rise and fall in the total population of the species.

When the effort is made to ascertain the factors underlying this southward dispersal of the Evening Grosbeaks we are almost irresistibly led to the conclusion that the movements are caused by population pressures upon the winter food supply in the north country; but that the variation has been in the amount of available food rather than in the numbers of grosbeaks. There has been an evident extension of the breeding range of this species. This extension has been marked in its easterly direction, somewhat less marked in its southward direction. Around 1890 there was a great winter invasion into the north-eastern states, but for another twenty years the bird was seen only irregularly. In 1910-1911 there was another great movement into the East, after which birds were seen in New England every winter. In 1926 a pair with newly fledged young were seen at Woodstock, Vermont, the only breeding record until recent years in the eastern United States. There have been no winter records south of Kentucky and the District of Columbia until 1940. It is only in the past eighteen years that there have been these explosive winter irruptions into the South. The eastward extension of the breeding range seems to have come from a decided increase in the total population.

The southward dispersal is in no sense a typical migratory movement. Further, weather seems to have little or nothing to do with these wanderings. The great dispersal coincides with what have been until the past two seasons relatively mild winters in the eastern United States. In the hard winter of 1959-60 the birds had arrived long before the great March blizzard struck Virginia. The winter of 1960-61, the worst since 1917-18, brought us very few birds. The fact that the numbers increase as winter advances seems to be a further indication that population pressure on food supplies in Canada is one factor, and probably the chief in this dispersal.

Artificial feeding at stations certainly has something to do with holding the birds in an area when they have arrived. It is also possibly a minor cause in the general increase, since it saves many birds that have come south, thus adding, it may be, to the breeding population of the following year. Richard H. Pough believes that such feeding stations are a real factor not only in the survival of individual birds but in consequence of that survival of the general increase in the species. We would only say 'it may be.' We have had so few returns from banded birds of preceding seasons that we do not know whether many birds that have come this far south ever succeeded in getting back to their breeding grounds. There are some who think that increased plantings of box elder trees in the East have been a factor in the eastward extension of the species. This, too, is hypothetical.

This brings to mind the fact that in nature a favorite food of the Evening Grosbeak is the winged seed of the box elder. The same thing is true of all winged maple seeds. At feeding stations the birds are also voracious feeders

on sunflower seeds. Dr. Paul Bartsch, the famous echinodermist of the National Museum, fed 500 pounds of sunflower seeds in 1951-52 to the grosbeaks at his home in northern Virginia. T. Kenneth Ellis at Hot Springs, who was visited by 50 or 60 birds each day, surrendered a hundred dollars worth of seed to them. A Waynesboro station served a gallon a day for a time. They will also eat other small seeds, suet, and chick feed, although they do not seem partial to grain. C. C. Steirly, forester at Waverly, has seen them hungrily devour the fruit of wax myrtles in his yard.

The Evening Grosbeak is easily trapped for banding. Some figures have already been given. Banding has shown that flocks wander extensively over limited areas, constantly changing their constituency, with the consequence that feeding stations will actually have many more different individual visitors than their highest counts would indicate. Fast counted no more than 60 birds in any one day, but trapped 419 from this flock in 1951-52. The William Mulls in Fairfax County had a steady population in their yard of some 60 birds, yet banded nine times that number. While four neighboring banders in northern Virginia saw no more than 50 birds at a time at each station, they actually banded 682 in 1951-52.

Banding proves that where the birds are fed they do not seem to wander widely. While Fast at Arlington recovered no birds from Fairfax County stations, two Fairfax stations about five miles apart each recovered birds from the other station. Further, nearly all birds banded outside Virginia and recovered within the State were from New England banding stations. Only one bird was recovered from Michigan and one from Minnesota.

We shall watch with interest the further history of this attractive invader of the Old Dominion.

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Lexington, Virginia

[This paper was read at the meeting of the Virginia Academy of Science at V. M. I. in Lexington on May 12, 1961, and at the Abingdon meeting of the V. S. O. on June 9, 1961.]

THE 1962 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

*Newport News, Virginia*by ROBERT J. WATSON, *Secretary*

The 1962 Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology opened at 2:00 PM on April 27, 1962, in the Mariners' Museum at Newport News. Mr. Ray J. Beasley, Chairman of the Committee on Local Arrangements, called the meeting to order and introduced the Director of the Museum, Rear Admiral G. J. Dufek, USN (Ret.), who extended a welcome to the Society. Dr. John H. Grey served as chairman for the ensuing program session.

The evening banquet and business meeting were likewise held in the Museum. President Dulaney called attention to a proposed change in the Constitution, already approved by the Executive Committee and published in the *Newsletter*, to eliminate the meaningless requirement for Executive Committee approval of each individual membership application. The amendment would change the first sentence of Article II, Section 2, to read as follows:

"Any person of good character who is interested in bird study may apply for membership and may be admitted upon payment of dues to the Treasurer, subject to review by the Executive Committee."

It was moved, seconded, and voted that the amendment be approved.

Mr. James W. Eike, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, submitted the following slate of nominees:

President: Mr. PAUL S. DULANEY, Charlottesville

Vice-President: MRS. J. W. WILTSHIRE, Lynchburg

Secretary: Mr. R. J. WATSON, Arlington

Treasurer: Miss HELEN GOLDSTICK, Arlington

Executive Committee (Class of 1965):

Miss GERTRUDE PRIOR, Sweet Briar

Mr. HARRY FRAZIER III, Richmond

Mr. C. W. HACKER, Hampton

There were no nominations from the floor and all nominees were elected.

As Chairman of the Society's Committee on Local Chapters, Mr. Eike also reported the organization of a new chapter at Damascus. The application of this chapter for affiliation had already been approved by Mr. Eike, in accord with a decision of the Executive Committee on March 3, 1962, empowering him to do so. Moreover, the organization of this new group, according to Mr. Eike, had stimulated a number of high school teachers and students in Bristol to found a chapter in their area. There followed a short discussion concerning the proper method of acting on the application of the Bristol chapter. Following a motion, approval of the application was voted by all members of the Executive Committee present at the meeting.

Dr. Grey commented favorably on the appearance of *The Raven* in printed form. His remarks were endorsed by a round of applause. Dr. Murray paid tribute to the work of Mr. W. O. Lewis of Charlottesville in making this change possible, and noted that a letter of appreciation to Mr. Lewis from the Secretary would be in order.

A rising vote of thanks was given the Newport News group for their work in arranging the meeting. A motion that the Secretary write a letter to the Museum, expressing appreciation for the hospitality of the latter's officials, was informally approved.

Following the business meeting, an evening program was presented which consisted of two movies in color: "Natural History in Tidewater Virginia," shown by Mr. Charles T. Hotchkiss; and "Know Your Ducks," by Mr. Max Carpenter.

THE FIELD TRIPS OF THE 1962 ANNUAL MEETING

by JOHN A. POND

Hampton, Virginia

The field trips for the 1962 annual meeting of the VSO enjoyed beautiful weather on Saturday, April 28. They included morning walks through the woods and around Lake Maury at Mariners' Museum, through the marsh and on the beach at Grandview, along Mill Creek at Fort Monroe, to Church Creek in South Hampton, and in the mud flats along Tide Mill Creek bordering Langley Air Force Base. The day's lists produced 111 species of birds.

The party during the morning at Mariners' Museum listed 67 species, including Cape May, Parula, Myrtle, Yellow-throated, Pine, and Prairie Warblers, as well as the Yellowthroat and Ovenbird. Caspian and Royal Terns were seen side by side on a sandbar in the James River below Lake Maury.

Marsh waders at Grandview spotted two families of ducklings recently hatched, Blacks and Blue-winged Teal. A pair of Osprey were seen using a nest to the west of Grandview marsh. Long-billed Marsh Wrens and Seaside Sparrows were beginning to sing. Two early Least Bitterns, an American Bittern, and two Virginia Rails were flushed from the marsh.

Along the beach at Grandview Willet, Sanderlings, both Yellowlegs, Spotted, and Semipalmated Sandpipers were among the very few shorebirds seen. Two Oystercatchers did put in their appearance, and they offered a good view to those who made the hike all the way to the north tip of the beach. It was interesting to watch a Gnatcatcher feed from a perch just above the sand; he seemed out of place, but of course he wasn't since the insect crop was large there on the beach. The total count at Grandview was 80 species.

On Mill Creek the party of seven who extended the field trip into the afternoon enjoyed watching a Common Loon in breeding plumage alternately dive and surface while feeding within 50 yards of the observers' 30x telescope. The afternoon trip listed 43 species. It included a stop to see Yellow-crowned Night Herons nesting along Church Creek, and for a grand finale it produced *five Golden Plovers* feeding on a mud flat along Tide Mill Creek! Two of the Plovers were in *breeding plumage*, one was moulting, and two were in winter dress.

GREAT BLUE HERON VERSUS HERRING GULL

by C. C. STEIRLY

Waverly, Virginia

On March 5, 1962, while eating lunch in a rain storm on the shores of the James River in northern Surry County I was quite surprised to observe a Great Blue Heron and a Herring Gull flying together high over a field. A closer inspection with binoculars revealed that the gull had a fish about six or eight inches long in its bill, and that it was being pursued by the heron. The wind was quite strong and the gull being somewhat overweighted by the fish was having a difficult time maneuvering. The heron was apparently having an equally hard time of it, but it persistently attacked the gull from underneath.

I followed this event for sometime while the contestants passed over a large open field. At times they seemed to be making no headway in the wind and the heron seemed to be getting in better and better upward thrusts with its savage bill. Finally the gull, being too top-heavy and quite hard-pressed, dropped the fish over the field. Both birds followed it to the ground. The

heron plunged downward not unlike a gannet in its dive. At the last moment the heron arrested its dive and lit on the ground on its legs, seized the fish, and flew off over a brush area. The gull circled a bit and returned to the river.

A review of the literature,—viz. Bent, Forbush, Townsend, Job, Sprunt, Etc. — did not indicate that this piratical behavior between the Great Blue Heron and a gull had been recorded. Audubon, in 1840, observed a Great Blue Heron forcing an Osprey to drop its prey by attacking from above. In the Surry County incident the attack was from below.

REVIEWS

Handbook of North American Birds, Volume 1, Loons through Flamingoes, edited by Ralph S. Palmer, with 25 contributors, Yale University Press, 1962, 567 pages, octavo, color chart, 6 color plates, 60 drawings, 80 distributional maps, \$15.00.

This handsome and authoritative volume, issued under the sponsorship of the American Ornithologists' Union and the New York State Museum and Science Service, is the first of a series that when completed will cover all the species in the A. O. U. 'Check-List.' We are not told how many volumes will be required but a rough calculation would indicate at least a dozen. Of the beautiful color plates four are by Robert M. Mengel and two by Roger T. Peterson. A valuable feature, long available only in out of print books, is the color chart, standardizing the color terms used in the text. There is no list in the front of the book of the cuts and maps. Since the material is arranged systematically as a check-list, the editor evidently felt that such a list was not necessary. There is a bibliography of literature cited in the text and a good index.

The treatment of species may be illustrated by the Pied-billed Grebe, to which nine pages are devoted. First comes a detailed description of all plumages, occupying nearly two pages. This is followed by brief paragraphs on subspecies, field identification, voice, habitat, distribution, migration, and banding data. A longer section on 'reproduction' deals with courtship, nest building, egg laying, incubation, and the development of the young. Two sections on habits and food close the account.

Ownership of or ready access to these volumes as they appear would seem to be essential for serious bird work.

J. J. Murray

Care and Feeding of Budgerigars, Canaries and Foreign Finches, by R. B. Bennett, F. Z. S., Arco Publishing Company, Inc., 480 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, N. Y., April, 1962, 320 pages, 12 color plates, 8 in duotone, \$10.00. (There are also 8 pages of photographs and about 100 drawings; and as a bonus, the front and back of the dust jacket present two more color plates, showing 14 additional birds.)

The author is a well-known British aviculturist and an authority on cage birds of all kinds. Naturally, the first interest of this book is to those who keep cage birds in their homes or in an aviary. It is a vertiable encyclopedia on the breeding and management of such birds.

There are three main parts to the book: one on budgerigars; one on canaries; and one on foreign finches and their allies. In each section there are chapters on housing, breeding, color production, rearing the young, exhibiting, and the treatment of avian ailments. Almost any question the keeper of cage birds might face would seem to be answered here.

In addition, there is a great deal of ornithological information of interest to all bird students, particularly in the section which treats of foreign finches.

Here many varieties of American, Australian, African, and Oriental birds are described and discussed. One does have to watch for differences in nomenclature, both common and scientific. While, for example, the Goldfinch is so named on the plate, in the text it is called the American Siskin. Its scientific name is given as *Chrysomitris psaltria*.

The twelve color plates by the author are lovely as pictures. Unfortunately, the better one knows the species pictured, the more apparent are some of the failures in the color reproduction. The Goldfinch has brown in the yellow; the Dickcissel has practically no yellow at all in the underparts; while the Siskin is a greenish bird in the plate. The figures, too, are stiffer than those of our better bird artists. On the other hand, the Cardinal is beautifully done both in color and in posture. The descriptions in the text are quite accurate.

This book will be of real interest to those whose concern is chiefly ornithological; it would seem to be invaluable to cage bird fanciers.

J. J. Murray

NEWS AND NOTES

CHANGES OF ADDRESS. Requests for change of address should not be sent to the Editor but to Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar, Virginia. Otherwise a delay in making the change may result.

SPREAD OF CATTLE EGRETS IN VIRGINIA. It appears that an almost explosive spread of the Cattle Egret is taking place in Virginia. C. E. Stevens, Jr., saw one at Langhorne's Pond, near Scottsville, Albemarle County, on May 13, 1962. On May 1, 1962, Mrs. John Kline saw 21 at Cross Keys, Rockingham County, which is the first record west of the Blue Ridge. The next day she showed 14 to Max Carpenter and H. G. M. Jopson. The Editor plans for the September or December issue a summary of occurrences away from salt water for the past three years. He hopes that VSO members will send him as soon as possible any such records they may have.

CATTLE EGRETS ON NESTS AT WALLOPS ISLAND. F. R. Scott counted six Cattle Egrets at the 'Navy Ditch' heronry off the northern end of Wallops Island on the week end of July 8. At least three of these were on nests. The Wachapreague heronry had one Cattle Egret in it.

SNOWY EGRET AT LEXINGTON. On April 28, 1962, Joshua Womeldorf found a Snowy Egret at his farm pond, a mile northeast of Lexington. The bird, which was also seen by J. J. Murray, remained through April 30. This is the first record for the Valley proper and the second west of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, one having been seen at Saltville in late summer, 1950, by S. M. Russell.

GLOSSY IBIS AT HOPEWELL. Mrs. Donald Pickens found a Glossy Ibis at a pond near Bermuda Hundred, not far from Hopewell, on May 8, 1962. The bird was also seen by Dr. and Mrs. Harry L. Heckel on May 8 and 9. Fred Scott banded a few young Glossy Ibises at Wachapreague on the week end of July 8.

SIGHT RECORD OF MISSISSIPPI KITE. The following note was received from Robert S. Merkel, Box 33-C, RFD 3, Charlottesville: "On May 20 (1962), at my house two miles south of Charlottesville, I saw a Mississippi Kite! The bird was perched on a branch of a dead tree and I approached to about 60 feet from him. My notes, taken on the spot, were: 'nearly white head,

clear darker breast, eye dark, appearing inset, bill small, appeared to have fine hook. Wings dark gray-brown, pointed. Tail dark; seen to have fine bars of whitish when bird preened it. Bird flew with falcon-like appearance. Appeared slightly larger than Pigeon Hawk or Sparrow Hawk.' Because of intervening trees, my view of the bird in flight was poor but the view when perched was excellent." This is the second good Virginia sight record for the Mississippi Kite, Murray having seen one at close range near Lexington on May 21, 1951.

SNOW GOOSE IN BEDFORD COUNTY. Ruskin S. Freer and Mrs. Grace Wiltshire saw a Snow Goose in Bedford County, near the Bedford Country Club, on May 19, 1962. The bird flew across the road and landed in a plowed field half a mile away.

OFF-SEASON DUCK RECORDS NEAR NORFOLK. J. E. Ames found 4 male and 3 female Canvasbacks and 11 Ruddy Ducks at the Craney Island Disposal Area on June 24, 1962. A crippled Ruddy was still present at Norfolk on July 2, 1962; seen by Walter Cooper. A Bufflehead male was seen by Walter Cooper and others at Norfolk, May 13, 1962.

WOODCOCK NEST. W. J. Hadden found a nest with eggs at Dare, near Seaford, York County (*vide* John H. Grey), the eggs hatching on April 1, 1962.

WILLET AT SCOTTSVILLE. Robert S. Merkel saw a Willet at Langhorne's Pond, Scottsville, on May 13, 1962. This is the first record for Albemarle County. There are records for Lynchburg and Blacksburg.

GOLDEN PLOVER AT HAMPTON. On April 28, 1962, following the VSO Annual Meeting, John A. Pond and others found 5 Golden Plovers at a tidal pool on Tide Mill Creek, adjacent to Langley Air Force Base, Hampton. Two were in full breeding plumage, two in winter plumage, and one in transition.

RED PHALAROPE AT CRANEY ISLAND. A Red Phalarope was found by J. E. Ames at the Craney Island Disposal Area, near Norfolk, on June 24, 1962. All three phalaropes have been seen here in recent years.

THICK-BILLED MURRE AT CRANEY ISLAND. On March 3, 1962, a Thick-billed Murre (Brünnich's) was seen at the Craney Island Disposal Area by J. E. Ames and Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Ames, III. Since it made no attempt to escape and swam with great difficulty, they were sure that it was an injured bird. Otherwise, this would be a very unusual date, as all previous Virginia records date from November 22 to January 26.

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW IN SHENANDOAH COUNTY. Miss Lena Artz writes that she heard a Chuck-will's-widow at close range and for a long time at her home, which is in the woods, near Waterlick, but over the line in Shenandoah County, on May 17, 1962. She could hear the different song of a Whip-poor-will at the same time.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER AT LYNCHBURG. Ruskin S. Freer reports that they now have three or four records for the Prothonotary Warbler for the Lynchburg area.

BLUEBIRD DEATHS. Ruskin S. Freer writes: "We have developed information (chiefly from Mrs. C. W. Harris) indicating that in the tobacco country the new metal flues of the oil furnaces account for thousands of deaths

of Bluebirds. The farm paper, *The Progressive Farmer*, has been publishing letters about it for about six years. Mrs. Harris sent me a copy of an editorial in this paper which claimed that several dozen burners checked at tobacco barns averaged one bird each. Nineteen dead birds were found on a single farm."

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER AT LYNCHBURG. On May 6, 1962, Steven Thornhill (*vide* Ruskin S. Freer) saw a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Lynchburg.

SWAINSON'S WARBLER AGAIN AT CHARLOTTESVILLE. Robert S. Merkel writes under date of June 6, 1962, that again a Swainson's Warbler is spending the summer near his home, two miles south of Charlottesville. "Our trouble with the Swainson's Warbler is that he can be found only when he sings (and not always then) and that the area where there would most likely be a nest (if there is a mate and a nest) is a terrible tangle of downed trees and low trees completely overgrown with honeysuckle. Since I wrote you, Stevens and I have seen the bird a number of times, and we have concluded that the only way to prove presence of young would be to catch him feeding them. Of course, this is the time when he is most likely to be quiet. In the past three days there has been a near cessation of singing on his part, and if there is a mate and nest, it may be that young have hatched." In a later letter (June 14) he writes: "Starting about June 5 or 6, the bird sang almost only in early morning through the rest of last week. On the 9th for instance, he sang 5:30-5:50 A. M. DST, 6:40-6:45, with a partial call at 7:00, and one call at 7:50 A. M. During the cold and cloudy days of this week we have again heard songs in the evening and during the day, particularly in the last two days. Last year, he sang intermittently in the heat of the day during part of July. The sudden cessation of song last week could have meant that eggs had hatched. But still no direct evidence."

LAWRENCE'S WARBLER AT LORTON. We now have a fifth satisfactory Virginia record for the Lawrence's Warbler, a hybrid between the Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Rothery observed one moving about on a dead branch in front of their living room window and about 35 feet away. They watched it for some time with glasses and with a Peterson's *Field Guide* in hand, checking the details of black bib, black eye patch, white wing bars, and yellow underparts. The only point that did not check exactly was the fact that the breast seemed to have a more orange tinge in the yellow.

BLACKBIRD ROOST IN AMHERST COUNTY. Ruskin S. Freer reports the discovery of a huge blackbird roost just north of Lynchburg in Amherst County, half a mile from Route 29 and back of the Town and Country Restaurant. They estimated 750,000 birds leaving the roost on the morning of the Christmas Count. "By far the greater number of birds were Purple Grackles and Starlings, about equally divided, with about 5 to 10% each of Cowbirds and Redwings. The roost has been there for two or three winters, according to people who live in the community."

BOBOLINK NEST NEAR VIRGINIA LINE. H. W. Nunley, new VSO member from Bristol, Virginia, writes that a nest of the Bobolink has been discovered at Shady Valley, Tennessee, 13 miles south of Damascus, Virginia, and 11 miles south of the Virginia-Tennessee line. The nest was found on June 11, 1962, with three young and an unhatched egg. The young were banded on June 16.

The Raven

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, and \$4.00 for sustaining members.

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RECENT LYNCHBURG RECORDS

RUSKIN S. FREER

John Burroughs wrote, years ago, that a surprise always awaits the student of ornithology. Perhaps greatly improved means of communication and a great increase in the number of human observers have reduced the chances of surprises in field work with birds in these latter years, or on the other hand, have multiplied the surprises. However that may be, we have been favored with a number of surprises in the past year or two in the Lynchburg area. This fact is definitely attributable to the splendid growth of the Lynchburg Bird Club and to activity by enthusiastic younger birders.

Late in the autumn of 1961 we became aware of tremendous numbers of blackbirds roosting in Amherst County near Lynchburg. Through the efforts of a number of members of the Lynchburg Bird Club as well as of several people residing near this roost, we found the exact location in an extensive growth of pine and mixed pine and hardwoods. It has been in use at least for the past two years, and was again in use by July of the past summer. On our Christmas Count four parties of two or more observers each watched the birds come out. Our count of the total number was about 750,000 birds, of which we estimated that Purple Grackles and Starlings in about equal numbers made up the greater part of the group, with scatterings of Rusties, Red-wings and Cowbirds. Early morning flights radiated out in all directions from the roost.

We have been interested in the frequent visits of gulls, usually Ringbills, at the airport or on the extensive parking lots around the new shopping centers. They usually come in on easterly winds during prolonged rains, and possibly are victims of the illusion that rainy pavements are bodies of waters. At any rate, they are either on local lakes or extensive paved areas. People are always excited by these visits and the papers carry stories of the "strange" appearances of these "rare" birds. Airport officials, however, say this is a regular occurrence.

Numerous observers have been finding Bobolinks by the hundreds, usually in alfalfa fields, during the spring migration in the early part of May. There is a very noticeable although gradual change in the ratio between males and females, the latter becoming more abundant toward the end of the migration period. The Bobolinks are doubtless not more abundant, but reports on them are, due to more human observers.

It is doubtless the experience of other older bird watchers that many of their ideas of earlier years must be changed in later years. I have had to revise some of my ideas. A factor in our understanding of the avifauna of a region is the tendency to become victims of our assumptions, particularly after long years of observing. As amateurs we do not make extensive use of quantitative methods which are essential to accuracy and correct judgments. So it is well for the older bird students to have their ideas checked by the younger ones. I have been studying birds for 56 years. I considered, years ago, that Blue Jays were non-migratory. Thirty years ago, here in Lynchburg, I assumed as a matter of course, that Baltimore Orioles were common breeding birds. These notions are in error.

Several personal observations, beginning as long as 30 years ago, and confirmed by others this spring, indicate that we may see considerable migration by flocks of Blue Jays here. They fly fairly high, perhaps 500 feet, and are headed in the proper direction consistently, according to season. Dr. Murray in his *A Check-list of the Birds of Virginia*, states that the Blue Jay is less common in western Virginia in the winter and gives migration dates. While preparing this paper I just happened to read the note on Eike's finding of

5000 Blue Jays migrating over Arlington in two and a half hours on 1 October 1960.

Perhaps as recently as ten years ago I noted that Baltimore Orioles sang commonly in late April and early May, were quiet during the summer, and were heard again in the autumn. Then in the summer of 1961 we found them more frequently in Ontario than we do in Lynchburg. This raised the question in my mind as to just what the bird's status was here. A little work with Bent's life histories indicated to my surprise that the Baltimore Oriole is more abundant farther north. Nevertheless, several readers of my nature column in a local paper report that this bird is nesting with us in small numbers.

The Prothonotary Warbler has been added to our local list. The bird was first found by John Withrow at the upper end of College Lake, 18 April 1960. Mrs. C. W. Harris also found it, 21 April 1961, along the James River near Nine Mile Bridge, and Billy Sackett found it along the river also, in June 1961, below Riverside Park. On 5 May 1962, John Withrow and Larry Farmer found three birds on the YMCA island in the James River in Lynchburg.

For perhaps the last 70 to 80 years, the Dickcissel has definitely been a bird of the prairies of the Midwest. It was abundant around my boyhood home in western Ohio, and we found many on recent western trips. They were formerly more common on the eastern Atlantic slope. I had only one record for this vicinity, a singing male found in May 1926, until this April, when Mrs. H. E. Hogle of this city reported one at her feeding area in her yard. Frankly skeptical, my son David and I went over to check her identification. It was a male in winter plumage. Then on 19 May the Bird Club took an early morning warbler trip to the Blue Ridge Parkway, and en route found two singing male Dickcissels along a road beside an alfalfa field in Bedford County. On a return visit by Mr. and Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Jr., and myself, we witnessed nestbuilding and copulation by a pair, as the other male, apparently unmated, sang near by. A week later the alfalfa was cut and baled and the Dickcissels were neither seen nor heard again.

On the latter visit to the Dickcissel station, Mr. and Mrs. Wiltshire and I beheld a sight which caused us to question the accuracy of our senses—a Snow Goose, which flew low across the road just a few feet ahead of the car, and alighted in a plowed field a half mile away. The date was 24 May 1962. It was late for migration. There had been a thunderstorm the preceding night. We have no explanation for its presence so far inland and so late in the season. This was not an addition to our list as the bird had been seen some years ago by Mrs. C. W. Harris on the James River near her home.

Another addition to our local list, which embraces the territory of the city and the three adjacent counties, Campbell, Bedford and Amherst, was the Pine Grosbeak, reported by Mrs. C. W. Harris, when a female visited her feeding shelf on a window sill, 3 February 1961. There appear to be few records for it in the State.

Cerulean Warblers appear to be more abundant than I had formerly believed. I had found them only on Locke's Mountain, near the city. In the summer of 1961 we found them at several places on the Blue Ridge Parkway between the Peaks of Otter and Apple Orchard Mountain.

Carolina Wrens, hit hard by the snowstorms of February and March 1961, seem to be as numerous as ever. Killdeer, according to my own and observations of several others, are still very scarce since those storms. Bewick's Wrens seem to have disappeared from the city completely within the past ten years. I found three families of these birds on Alleghany Mountain in Highland County in July, and it was good to renew acquaintance with them. In the same area there were three families each of Sapsuckers and Bluebirds.

There is much evidence here in the tobacco country that one factor in decrease

in Bluebird population is the metal flue of the tobacco barn. One reliable person reports removal of a bushel of Bluebird bodies from flues.

In spite of all the discussion as to whether it is use of insecticides, starlings, tobacco flues or storms which affected the Bluebirds, I am convinced from my own observations on rather frequent and extensive travels through the western part of the State that there was an abrupt drop in the Bluebird population after the two deep snows and low temperatures of early 1960. Furthermore a number of my correspondents reported finding dead Bluebirds in nest boxes just after those storms.

So our hobby is not static. Birds are very much alive, and living things are adaptable. Come blizzards, jet engines which suck up Starlings, man-made modifications of the earth's surface, and shifting climates, avian populations will change. Let us hope that the minds of bird students remain adaptable and competent to assess changing conditions.

LYNCHBURG COLLEGE, Lynchburg, Virginia

OBSERVATIONS ON SOME BIRDS OF THE VALLEY

F. R. SCOTT

Over the past several years a number of observations have been made in the northern part of the Great Valley of Virginia from Augusta County northward. Individually, these records did not seem worthy of publication, but brought together they appear to be a distinct contribution to our knowledge of the birds of this area. There has been little published previously on the birds of this region.

Unless otherwise indicated, all of the following observations are mine. I am indebted, however, to several other observers, especially Messrs. Max Carpenter, of Dayton, Virginia, and Brooke Meanley, of Laurel, Maryland, who have allowed me to include some unpublished notes of theirs on this area.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron, *Nyctanassa violacea* (Linnaeus)

Carpenter (1949 and 1951) has described in detail the discovery of this bird near Dayton, Rockingham County, first in 1948, and its later nesting in 1951. He found the birds on the same area again in 1953, 1955, and 1956, with young birds being seen several times. In 1962 he reported an adult male along the river near Dayton between 24 June and 22 July.

Wood Duck, *Aix sponsa* (Linnaeus)

On a 20-mile canoe trip along the Shenandoah River in Clark County on 2 June 1962, some 11 adults and a brood of 8 recently hatched young were found. The only other duck seen on this trip was one female Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos* Linnaeus.

Common Merganser, *Mergus merganser* Linnaeus

Jopson (1956) summarized the finding of this species breeding near Dayton, Rockingham County, in 1953 and a probable breeding record for 1947. He also reported a female with one downy young in the same area on 6 July 1954. Apparently, the birds are returning each year to the area, for Jopson found a male on 23 June 1956, and Carpenter reports adults in the summers of both 1961 and 1962.

Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus* (Linnaeus)

One bird was found along the Shenandoah River in Clark County near the U. S. route 50 bridge on 2 June 1962. There are few other breeding-season records for the Valley.

Ring-necked Pheasant, *Phasianus colchicus* Linnaeus

A cock pheasant was seen on the north side of Staunton on 22 and 23 June 1961. In view of the continuing introductions of this species all over the state, it seems unlikely that this was a feral bird.

Olive-sided Flycatcher, *Nuttallornis borealis* (Swainson)

C. E. Stevens saw a singing bird along the Calfpasture River, Augusta County, on 13 May 1961.

Rough-winged Swallow, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* (Vieillot)

Along 20 miles of the Shenandoah River in Clark County on 2 June 1962, this proved to be the common swallow, and some 22 were counted. At one point 3 were seen investigating a hole in an old sycamore tree overhanging the river. Since the breeding of the Bank Swallow, *Riparia riparia* (Linnaeus), at Blacksburg was reported some time ago (Murray, 1952), a special search was made for this species, but none were seen.

Purple Martin, *Progne subis* (Linnaeus)

In view of the apparent rarity of breeding martins in the Valley, I was interested to find a small breeding colony still active on the north side of Staunton on 1961 and 1962. It probably contained no more than 10 pairs.

Fish Crow, *Corvus ossifragus* Wilson

This bird was found fairly commonly in the parks and suburban areas of Staunton in June 1960. A single bird at Hone Quarry, western Rockingham County, on 18 June 1960, seems inexplicable for such a small mountain valley remote from any large water courses (altitude 1800 feet). This is the only time I have ever seen a Fish Crow and Common Ravens, *Corvus corax* Linnaeus, at the same time! Oddly, no Fish Crows were recorded on a 20-mile canoe trip on the Shenandoah River in Clark County on 2 June 1962.

Winter Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes* (Linnaeus)

Stevens and I found a singing bird in Ramsey Draft, western Augusta County (altitude 3000 feet), on 13 May 1961. Later Bruce Davenport saw one at the same place on 17 July 1961. The following spring I found another singing bird along nearby Jerry Run (2600 feet) on 20 May 1962. These records would seem to indicate another breeding station for this species.

Solitary Vireo, *Vireo solitarius* (Wilson)

Brooke Meanley reported a pair feeding young in the nest at Ramsey Draft, Augusta County, on 4 July 1961. The nest was over a dirt road about 20 feet up in a yellow birch and about 5 feet out from the trunk.

Warbling Vireo, *Vireo gilvus* (Vieillot)

Seven singing birds of this species were found along the Shenandoah River in Clark County on 2 June 1962.

Prothonotary Warbler, *Protonotaria citrea* (Boddaert)

This bird, long suspected of breeding along the lower Shenandoah River, was finally found on 2 June 1962, when 12 singing birds were recorded along 20 miles of the river in Clark County between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Since the observations were not made at the optimum time of day for singing birds, it is probable that many were missed. Max Carpenter also found one singing bird in this area near Virginia route 7 on 24 July 1962. This bird was apparently first found along the West Virginia part of the Shenandoah River in June 1949 (DeGarmo, 1950).

Yellow-throated Warbler, *Dendroica dominica* (Linnaeus)

Four singing birds of this species were found on 2 June 1962, along the Shenandoah River in Clark County. Previous breeding-season records of this bird from the northern part of the Valley seem to be totally lacking. Since the Parula Warbler, *Parula americana* (Linnaeus), is quite common here (22 singing birds on 2 June 1962), this would appear to be an ideal area for the possible hybridization of these two species. The suspected hybrid, Sutton's Warbler, *Dendroica potomac* Haller, was described from specimens taken only a few miles farther down the Valley (Brooks, 1944).

Canada Warbler, *Wilsonia canadensis* (Linnaeus)

This bird was found to be abundant down to 2250 feet in Ramsey Draft, Augusta County, on 17 June 1960, whereas Murray (1957) reported it common only down to 3000 feet in summer in Rockbridge County. Brooke Meanley found two fledged broods in Ramsey Draft on 4 July 1961.

Dickcissel, *Spiza americana* (Gmelin)

Brooke Meanley located a male Dickcissel near Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, on 3 July 1961, and found 5 pairs in the same area on 25 May 1962. Most of those seen were in alfalfa fields.

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MISCELLANEOUS BIRD NOTES FROM VIRGINIA'S
NORTHERN NECK

F. R. SCOTT

Several recent trips to the Northern Neck have resulted in some interesting bird observations even though these were incidental to the purposes of the trips. All observations have occurred since 1958 and are principally from two areas, Sandy Point in eastern Westmoreland County and Ingram Bay, which fronts on Chesapeake Bay in Northumberland County. The most interesting areas at Ingram Bay are Dameron Marsh, a fair-sized salt marsh on the southern edge of the bay, and a small marshy island off the eastern edge of Dameron Marsh, an ideal place for roosting waterbirds. Two significant trips have been made to Ingram Bay, 27-28 May and 8-10 June 1962. Both of these were in the company of Dr. and Mrs. Richard K. Williams, who introduced me to the area and participated in a number of the observations.

The Northern Neck is ornithologically one of the most neglected areas in Virginia. Anyone willing to put out a little time and effort should be able to add a tremendous amount to our knowledge of the birds of this area.

Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos* Linnaeus

One was flushed from Dameron Marsh on 27 May 1961.

Black Duck, *Anas rubripes* Brewster

Two to three were found in Dameron Marsh on both 27 May 1961 and 10 June 1962.

American Coot, *Fulica americana* Gmelin

An adult American Coot was found swimming in Cockrell Creek (salt water), Reedville, Northumberland County, on 9 June 1962.

Ruddy Turnstone, *Arenaria interpres* (Linnaeus)

On 27 May 1961, 4 Ruddy Turnstones were found feeding in a freshly plowed field next to Ingram Bay with 18 Black-bellied Plovers, *Squatarola squatarola* (Linnaeus), and 2 the following day. This feeding habit of the turnstone was totally new to me.

Willet, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* (Gmelin)

Paired Willets were present on Dameron Marsh in both years. On 10 June 1962 at least 3 pairs were seen there.

Iceland Gull, *Larus glaucoideus* Meyer

An amazing discovery was a pair of adult Iceland Gulls on the island off Dameron Marsh on 9 June 1962. They were roosting with a large flock of Herring Gulls, *Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan.

Great Black-backed Gull, *Larus marinus* Linnaeus

Three to four Great Black-backed Gulls were present on the island off Dameron Marsh both years. Only one immature was seen each time, the rest being adults. I would definitely consider these as summering birds.

Laughing Gull, *Larus atricilla* Linnaeus

On 9 June 1962 some 360 Laughing Gulls, almost all immatures, were seen at Ingram Bay. These would seem to indicate an extremely early and successful nesting season along the coast. Assuming approximately 3 weeks for incubation and the generally accepted 4 weeks before the fledged bird begins to fly, it appears that these birds were hatched from eggs laid no later than mid April, an incredibly early date.

Gull-billed Tern, *Gelochelidon nilotica* (Gmelin)

An adult Gull-billed Tern was seen on the Yeocomico River, Westmoreland County, on 28 August 1959. This appears to be the farthest inland record for Virginia, although there is one District of Columbia record.

Forster's Tern, *Sterna forsteri* Nuttall

A flock of 130 mostly immature Forster's Terns was found on 9 June 1962 at Ingram Bay. As in the case of the Laughing Gulls noted above, this observation indicates a very early and successful nesting season, probably on the coast of Virginia. We might speculate that for the young to be flying at this date, the eggs must have been laid no later than mid April, and perhaps earlier.

Least Tern, *Sterna albifrons* Pallas

A small nesting colony of Least Terns consisting of 15 nests containing 1 to 3 eggs each was discovered on the island off Dameron Marsh on 9 June 1962. This is the first colony reported for Northumberland County and only the second for the Northern Neck.

Black Skimmer, *Rynchops nigra* Linnaeus

A surprising development was the discovery of a small flock of adult Black Skimmers at Ingram Bay on both trips, principally about the island off Dameron Marsh. On 28 May 1961 the flock totaled 17 birds, and on a return trip on 10 June 1961 Dr. and Mrs. Williams counted 24 there. On 9 June 1962 the count was 11. These were apparently nonbreeding birds, at least at the time observed.

Chuck-will's-widow, *Caprimulgus carolinensis* Gmelin

This bird proved to be fairly common both at Sandy Point and Ingram Bay, with records extending from late May to early July.

Brown-headed Nuthatch, *Sitta pusilla* Latham

A few birds were noted during July and August of 1959 and 1960 at Sandy Point. These records do not necessarily indicate breeding here, but from the bird's known breeding distribution in Maryland we can reasonably expect to find it breeding at least along the eastern edge of the Northern Neck.

Boat-tailed Grackle, *Cassidix mexicanus* (Gmelin)

My only record is a pair seen at Dameron Marsh on 10 June 1962. Apparently the salt marshes here are not extensive enough to draw a large breeding population.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow, *Ammodramus caudacuta* (Gmelin)

One was seen at Dameron Marsh on 28 May 1961. This was probably, but not positively, a locally breeding bird.

Seaside Sparrow, *Ammodramus maritima* (Wilson)

This bird was quite common at Dameron Marsh and the adjacent island. My best count was 17 on 10 June 1962.

VSO WACHAPREAGUE FIELD TRIP, JUNE 1962

ANNE W. WACHENFELD

Five VSO ladies arrived at the Hotel Wachapreague as dinner was being served on Thursday, 12 July. A short pause on the third floor porch gave glimpses of a few birds, among them a Double-crested Cormorant, and a hummingbird in the Mimosa.

On Friday morning this advance group reached the causeway to Chincoteague about an hour before low tide. Clapper Rails and Willets were abundant, as were egrets and herons. Going to the south of the island they found few birds. Although great damage had been reported following the March storm, there was no longer evidence of it except for the sand spread all through what used to be salt marshes. A trip was made to the Chincoteague Refuge headquarters, then on to the northern end of the island where the bridge to Assateague Island was nearing completion. On the dirt road leading to the bridge a herd of cattle and ponies was found, and two Cattle Egrets were viewed closely. They still had buffy plumes. The tide was coming in as the return was made across the causeway, and fewer birds were seen. Going through Oak Hall on the mainland and approaching Chincoteague Bay, the group found a little pocket of land birds which are not included on the checklist for the trip. There was a Red-bellied Woodpecker, Carolina Chickadee, White-eyed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, American Goldfinch, and in the bay, an American Coot. Near Accomac an Osprey nest with two active young was seen.

On Saturday morning 25 eager men and women awaited the opening of the dining room. While one man remained to paint the scene from the porch, the rest of the group set out from Wachapreague in four chartered boats on a trip through the waterways. The most conspicuous bird to be seen was the Willet, flocks of 10 to 30 flying up constantly. The tide was high so there were no birds along the edges, but the heads of Whimbrels and Clapper Rails were seen in the grass.

A landing was made at Club Point where there were many heron and egret nests and immature birds, a highlight being immature Glossy Ibises. Louisiana Herons and Snowy Egrets were the commonest birds here. Two Barn Owls were flushed from the old water tower, and many flightless young Laughing Gulls were underfoot. The egrets and herons in flight were spectacular, a sight not soon to be forgotten.

The next landing was at Cedar Island. The dock was gone and it was necessary to go by dinghy to the beach. The dunes were no more, a great loss. Large numbers of young terns and skimmers were on the sand, and the adult birds flew anxiously overhead. A walk up the island showed immature birds to be numerous. About 50 pairs of Gull-billed Terns were sighted, as well as some Wilson's Plovers.

Owing to the early start, the group was back at the boats ready for lunch before noon. An overcast sky and a light breeze made walking a pleasure, and all were pleased to hear that a third stop was to be made. All the group went ashore on Parramore Island. An invitation to ride down the ocean beach in a Coast Guard truck was accepted. The writer sat in the front seat and heard from the driver about the March high tides, after which "a thousand" small birds were found dead on the beach. He also told of the wintering waterfowl in the many ponds of the island which cannot be visited easily in summer because of mosquitoes. There were seven Ospreys at the south end, and six nests were seen. A few more birds were added to the day's list on Parramore.

Some of the more energetic members went out after dark on the mainland and heard Chuck-will's-widows at each of five stops along a state road.

Sunday morning six members went out in a boat for three hours. There were more dowitchers than the previous day, but no new birds were seen. The main group went to Chincoteague but failed to find the Cattle Egret there. Two were seen, however, near Onancock, where the group also found four Bobolinks in an alfalfa field, an unusual summer record for Virginia. From the ferry on the return trip to Little Creek Wilson's Petrels, Black Terns, and Double-crested Cormorants were seen.

The checklist as made up by Charles Hacker, the leader of the trip, follows: Wilson's Petrel, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Common Egret, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Glossy Ibis, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bobwhite, Clapper Rail, American Oystercatcher, Piping Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Wilson's Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Whimbrel, Spotted Sandpiper, Willet, Greater Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Sanderling, Great Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Laughing Gull, Gull-billed Tern, Forster's Tern, Common Tern, Least Tern, Royal Tern, Caspian Tern, Black Skimmer, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Barn Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Eastern Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Common Crow, Fish Crow, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Starling, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Yellowthroat, House Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Boat-tailed Grackle, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Seaside Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

Orange, New Jersey

VSO MOUNTAIN FORAY, JUNE 1962

JAMES W. EIKE

The Virginia Society of Ornithology held its Summer Foray on 15, 16, and 17 June, with the base of operations at Skyland, in Shenandoah National Park. As in the past, Hepburn Cottage was reserved as headquarters and for evening programs.

Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Rothery had obtained the fine new National Audubon Society film on the Bald Eagle, which with the cooperation of Mr. Max Carpenter of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries was shown to the group on Saturday evening. In addition, Mr. Carpenter presented an excellent film on the Bobwhite. A group of perhaps 50 members thoroughly enjoyed the two conservation films. The Society is indebted to the Rotherys and Mr. Carpenter for the program.

Ideal weather prevailed throughout the Foray. As always, the only problem presented was one of determining which of the many beautiful areas should be visited in the two-and-one-half days available.

The first day was devoted to the trip through the Big Meadows Nature Trail and down Dark Hollow to the Rose River Falls. Sixteen persons took part in this walk, one of the finest in the Shenandoah National Park. Forty-two species of birds and a total of 237 individuals were observed.

On Saturday about 35 members traveled down White Oak Canyon, with a brief rest under the great hemlocks in Limberlost, and lunch on the rocks with a spectacular view of the Second Falls to add zest to the food and fellowship. Thirty-six species and 173 individuals were recorded with the "talk" of a pair of Barred Owls being one of the highlights.

After the return from White Oak Canyon three of the more hardy members struggled wearily up Stony Man with the well-rested Dr. J. J. Murray and enjoyed the magnificent view across the valley.

The Sunday trip took the group up Hawksbill, with a visit to "Byrd's Nest No. 2," the fine shelter contributed by Senator Harry F. Byrd for the use of campers. It was well-filled with Scouts when the VSO arrived. Twenty-one species of birds and 111 individuals were tallied on this half-day walk. The group enjoyed a picnic lunch near Big Meadows and departed for their homes in the early afternoon.

Among the more pleasing "finds" on the Foray were the daily singing of a Least Flycatcher at the Skyland Restaurant parking lot (where it apparently was nesting) and the song of a Winter Wren on Hawksbill (also reported by Paul Dulaney the previous week).

Another interesting feature was the number of nests and fledgling young observed along the trails with no special effort to seek them out. Those recorded were: Downy Woodpecker, 1; Wood Thrush, 3; Solitary Vireo, 3; Parula Warbler, 1; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 4; American Redstart, 1; Scarlet Tanager, 1; Carolina Junco 1—19 nests of 10 species.

3307 N. Tuckahoe Street, Falls Church, Virginia

THREE BLUEBIRDS RAISE FOUR YOUNG

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

Each summer since 1958 we have been fortunate enough to have a pair of Bluebirds nest in one of the four boxes placed around the yard. In 1961 it appeared that we were not going to be so honored. Six Bluebirds which regularly visited our windowsill feeder during December 1960 and January 1961 left abruptly in mid-February and none showed up in the spring.

Finally on 2 July three Bluebirds appeared and took an immediate interest in one of the boxes. From their plumages one bird appeared to be a typical adult male in breeding plumage; a second bird perfectly matched descriptions in literature of a male in winter plumage (i.e. blue on the head, wings and tail, smoky brown on the back, and dark gray on the chest with bluish feathers bordering the lower portion of the gray area); half complete white eye rings were evident. The third bird was a juvenile (sex?): brown on the head, back, and wing coverts with much white and dark brown speckling; the grayish chest was streaked with brown; there were two nearly complete white eye rings; the only blue was in the flight feathers and in the tail. Obviously, the juvenile was not more than two months old, if that. All three birds had noticeable yellow mouth linings where the upper and lower mandibles join. This is a feature of nearly all nestling birds but I have several color photos of adult Bluebirds in which this feature is readily apparent. Most bird books and artists' illustrations of adult Bluebirds fail to mention or depict this feature.

All three birds immediately began nest building in a box 5 feet high on a fence post. The nest was constructed entirely of dead weed stalks and grasses from the lawn and its borders; it was finished in about five hours. The first egg appeared on 5 July, three days after the nest was built; on the 10th of July there were 4 eggs. Although I was never positive as to which of the three actually laid the eggs, during the next two weeks the adult male and the juvenile seemed to be the only ones who shared in the incubation of the eggs. The third bird stayed close during this period but I was never able to confirm that it shared in the incubation task.

The eggs hatched on 25 July and, to 9 August when the four young left the box, all three older birds shared in bringing food to the young. The juvenile

made most of the food-carrying trips to the box with the adult male a close second. The odd-plumaged third bird made about half as many food-carrying trips as the other two. For instance: during a one-hour period (between 4 and 5 p.m.) on 6 August the juvenile made 22 trips, the adult male made 19 trips, and the third bird made 12 trips with food, all of which appeared to be flying insects. Both the fully adult bird and the juvenile removed fecal sacs from the box after food-carrying visits but the winter plumaged male (?) was never observed to perform this act. The juvenile deposited these sacs on various limbs of a nearby oak tree. The adult male did likewise but was observed to eat the sacs on two occasions.

After leaving the box the entire family remained in the vicinity for at least 8 days; the young stayed 30 to 60 feet up on horizontal limbs of mature deciduous trees standing in a small clump, surrounded by houses. During this period all three older birds were observed to feed the young but again the odd plumaged male (?) was observed to be a much less frequent feeder than the other two.

In summary, polygamy among Bluebirds has been recorded many times in the past with the usual occurrence being a male mating with two or more females. In this case it appeared to be two males mating with a juvenile female although, as stated previously, the sexes of the two other than the adult male are only presumed through their observed actions.

Mr. Frederick W. Kent reported in *Atlantic Naturalist* for October-December 1961 a second nesting of a pair of Bluebirds near Iowa City, Iowa, in which "a young of the first brood took over regularly the feeding of the second nestlings. Sometimes all three birds would come in with insects". He took a picture (which appears in the article) of the male and the immature each with food in their bills perched on a fence post on their way to feed the young. He reports that the female (presumably a normally plumaged adult) did "much less feeding but kept better watch on the nest and showed more concern". It could well be that my "odd-plumaged male" was really an "odd-plumaged female" and that, as Mr. Kent reports in his observations, my juvenile was the "helper" rather than the mother of the second brood, as appeared to be the case with my birds.

1100 Doter Drive, Alexandria, Virginia

PURPLE MARTINS IN VIRGINIA

MILAM B. CATER

As reported in *THE RAVEN* of May-June 1945, the writer made a search for nesting Purple Martins in five counties of the western part of Virginia. They were Alleghany, Bath, Highland, Augusta, and Rockbridge. One small colony was located at Clifton Forge, in Alleghany county, with 9 pairs nesting. Three colonies with approximately 50 pairs nesting were located at Staunton, in Augusta county. None were located in Bath, Highland, or Rockbridge counties.

Since 1945, a limited search for nesting martins in Virginia, has been conducted, also encouragement and assistance has been given to interested persons in starting new colonies with some degree of success.

East of Highway No. 1, in Virginia, martins are fairly common, especially around the Chesapeake Bay area. Many counties in the southwestern section of Virginia have no nesting martins. They are unknown in most areas of this section.

Martins are fairly common in the Staunton, Harrisonburg, Clifton Forge, Winchester, and Lynchburg areas. A few colonies were located elsewhere in the Shenandoah Valley and in the Piedmont section.

This year, 1962, there were seven nesting colonies in Clifton Forge and vicinity, with over 100 pairs. This is an increase of more than ten-fold since 1945. Likewise in the Staunton area, nesting martins have increased from approximately 50 pairs in 1945 to over 200 pairs in 1962.

As reported, there were no nesting martins found in many of our western counties. However, in Bath county where local residents reported that none had nested for over 35 years a house was erected near Millboro Springs, and two pairs nested in 1949. Another colony was later started in this same county at Nimrod Hall in 1959. Consequently martins are seen frequently in this area along the Cowpasture river, where they were rarely seen before.

During 1961 a count was made of the martins nesting in the Lynchburg area which includes Campbell, Appomattox, Amherst, and Nelson counties, 15 colonies being located, with 228 pairs. During 1962 four new colonies were established and one lost in the area, but no actual count was made of the nesting birds. Reports and observations indicate a slight increase of martins since 1961.

Nesting martins are to be found at Danville, Fieldale, and Dillwyn in the Piedmont section. Martins are rare to unknown in Southwest Virginia. One colony was located near Christianburg. Reports from residents of other areas in Southwest Virginia indicate that martins formerly nested in a few localities, but none in late years. A colony at Pearisburg in Giles county was located but it had been abandoned for several years.

The spring migration of Purple Martins in Virginia is an interesting study. The earliest record we have was 14 March 1953 at Clifton Forge, when one male remained for 11 days and disappeared. None were seen then until 6 April when 7 arrived. We have a reported arrival in the Norfolk area for 14 March, but the year is not mentioned. The earliest reported arrival in the Lynchburg area was 17 March 1961, when one male arrived at Amherst. Our record of arrival dates since 1945 indicates an average of the last week in March. The particular date may vary from one to ten days. Martins continue to arrive until the middle of May, increasing perceptibly from 15 April to the first week in May. The last to arrive are the young birds, fledged the previous year. This is easy to determine as the males are gray-breasted, similar to the females. These young males do not obtain their dark or "blue-black" phase until after their first year.

The fall migration is somewhat in reverse of the spring migration, in that the first to nest are the first to leave. This usually begins about the second week in July and continues until the second or third week of August. The adults and young begin to congregate at a common roost, which is in the tops of trees with heavy foliage, but not necessarily in the same location each year.

Such a group of Martins was observed at Buggs Island Dam in July 1959. It was estimated that over 800 martins were on the wires in the vicinity. The local residents reported that this had occurred for two or three years.

Late fall dates are not available, possibly the latest is 4 September 1947, when martins were observed at Elon, in Amherst county. A large flight was observed at Millboro, Bath county, on 28 August 1950. These were thought to be transients, rather than local birds.

It may be of interest to note that the oldest colony of martins in Virginia is near the City Hall in Clifton Forge, which began in 1910. A colony at Appomattox which has over 40 nesting pairs each year, was established in 1921. The largest, and one of the older colonies is located on Pierce Street, near 12th Street in Lynchburg, with four houses and a total of 80 compartments.

The above is only a brief summary. Our information does indicate that martins have increased in number in the last 10 or 12 years, which is encouraging. Much more information and study is needed to have a complete report on Purple Martins in Virginia.

P. O. Box 146, Madison Heights, Virginia

NEWS OF THE LOCAL CHAPTERS

Two New VSO Chapters Formed

In April 1962, two new local chapters were approved for affiliation with the Virginia Society of Ornithology. These two chapters have been tentatively named the *Damascus Bird Club* and the *John S. Battle High School Bird Club*.

Principle credit for the formation of these two chapters is due Mr. H. W. Nunley of Bristol, Virginia, whose name was suggested to this writer by Dr. J. J. Murray of Lexington as an active and interested "birder." With his stimulus the groups organized, named a slate of officers, and were welcomed into the Virginia Society of Ornithology. It is anticipated that these chapters will provide additional bird records from this beautiful area of the state, rich in fine habitat, and in time will provide additional full-fledged members for the VSO.

The Damascus Club expects to have a schedule of indoor programs and occasional field trips to Mt. Rogers and White Top, the farming area about Damascus, and the TVA lake and rivers nearby. The John S. Battle High School Club will have similar programs in their area. The latter club was formed of interested members of the faculty and the student body. This is an encouraging development in view of the long-standing VSO goal of encouraging interest in ornithology during the school years. The high school is located on U. S. route 11 approximately half-way between Abingdon and Bristol.

The VSO now has nine local chapters with regularly scheduled programs, and they are producing increased field work, which will benefit ornithological knowledge in the state. They are also a source of new members for the Society.

Officers of the two new chapters are listed below.

THE DAMASCUS BIRD CLUB:

President: JAMES F. GREER, Damascus, Virginia

Vice President: MISS MARY ROWLAND, White Mill Road, Abingdon, Virginia

Secretary-Treasurer: MRS. JOHN L. WINGFIELD, Damascus, Virginia

Statistician: MRS. EDGAR UMBARGER, Damascus, Virginia

Historian: MISS ELEANOR CHRISTIE, 333 Court Street, N. E., Abingdon, Virginia

THE JOHN S. BATTLE BIRD CLUB:

President: A. B. BILLINGS, Abingdon, Virginia

Vice President: H. W. NUNLEY, P. O. Box 203, Bristol, Virginia

Secretary-Treasurer: MRS. JOHN M. CAYWOOD, Bristol, Virginia

The Society welcomes these new chapters and extends to them its warmest wishes for success.

James W. Eike

The Northern Virginia Chapter

The Northern Virginia Chapter, under the leadership of James W. Eike, emphasized field activities for its spring program, which was launched on 24 March with a trip to observe waterfowl at Burke Lake, a newly established recreational area in Fairfax County. The Chapter's annual visit to Mr. Arthur Fast's banding and feeding station is an event to which all members look forward with pleasure. A field trip from the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert M. Church, near Leesburg, on 5 May, included a hike to Selden's Island in the Potomac and the sight of a late Pipit. On 19 May, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Rothery led the group on a field trip from their new home on the Potomac to observe at close range a nearby Bald Eagle roost. The trip was followed by an up-to-date report from Mr. Jackson M. Abbott, of Alexandria, on the status of the Bald Eagle research project. An outing at the residence of Mrs. Lucille Still, near Oakton, on 27 May, concluded activities for the season.—Robert J. Watson.

NEWS AND NOTES

EDITOR TEMPORARILY OUT OF THE STATE. The editor, J. J. Murray, will be in Charlotte, North Carolina, for the fall season, September 1 to November 30, helping get a new church organized. His address will be 1233 East Boulevard, Apartment 46, Charlotte, North Carolina.

ERROR IN PAGING. The editor is responsible for the slip in the page numbers of the second issue of *The Raven*. The page numbering should have been 17 to 32, instead of repeating 1 to 16. This inevitably makes for confusion in referring to articles in that issue and calls for using the name of the month as well as year and page.

FORMAT FOR PAPERS IN THE RAVEN. When at all possible, papers submitted for publication should be typed. The author's name should be given under the title of the article, with the author's address at the end. Short papers of less than half a printed page will normally be put in this 'News and Notes' section. Beginning with this issue two style practises will be followed: (1). The names of all bird species will be capitalized. Capitals will not be used for names referring the groups of birds. For example, capitals for Purple Grackle or Red-eyed Vireo, but not for grackle or vireo. In scientific names the genus should begin with a capital letter, but the species and subspecies with small letters, as *Melospiza melodia melodia*, with the name underlined in the manuscript, to indicate italics when printed. (2). In listing dates the style now generally used in scientific publications will be followed: the day first, the month second, and the year last, without commas. For example, 10 September 1962; not September 10, 1962.

REQUEST FOR EVENING GROSBEAK RECORDS. The winter of 1961-62 was not a good Evening Grosbeak year in Virginia. However, we plan for the December issue a brief summary of occurrences, to be prepared by Arthur H. Fast. Send your records for last winter to him at 4924 Rock Spring Road, Arlington, Virginia, making your notes as full as possible, with definite dates.

CATTLE EGRET SUMMARY FOR RECENT YEARS. Check the request on page 14 of the June issue and send in your records, particularly for areas away from salt water, to the editor in order that a summary of the remarkable spread of the bird into interior Virginia may be prepared.

RED-THROATED LOON. A count of 16 by J. M. Abbott at Mt. Vernon on 13 April 1962 is the highest on record in the Washington area.

GLOSSY IBIS. The maximum spring count at Chicoteague was 54 on 27 April 1962, by T. W. Martin. C. C. Steirly saw one at Hog Island, James River, on 13 April 1962. F. R. Scott found 12 occupied nests near Wachapreague on 13 May 1962.

SNOW GEESE AT BACK BAY. The 1961-62 population of Snow Geese at Back Bay was down to 30,000, only half as many as in the previous winter, with very few immature birds among them.

FULVOUS TREE DUCK. One was shot at Townsend, Northampton County, 16 December 1961, as reported by H. R. Prince (*vide* P. W. Sykes).

BLACK DUCK NESTS. A Hampton group found a brood at Grandview, Hampton, on 28 April; W. A. Cooper and P. W. Sykes found a nest with 11 eggs at Back Bay on 5 May; and Sykes saw an adult and 8 young at Stumpy Lake, Norfolk, on 26 May.

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, and \$4.00 for sustaining members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

President: PAUL S. DULANEY, Colonnade Club, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Vice-President: MRS. J. W. WILTSHIRE, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Secretary: ROBERT J. WATSON, 1507 N. Hancock, Arlington 1, Virginia.

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ICE AGE BIRDS IN VIRGINIA

BY ALEXANDER WETMORE

Explorations at the Natural Chimneys in Augusta County in recent years have located a deposit of animal bones of Pleistocene age that include the first extensive record of ancient bird remains known from Virginia. Mr. John Guilday of the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh, in an account of the entire fauna, has established the period as extending through late Pleistocene and early Recent time from 15,000 to 10,000 years ago. The list includes fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals for a total of 120 kinds of vertebrates.

The birds, placed in my hands for study through the kind attention of Mr. Guilday, number 38 species, with a thrush and a junco in addition that I have been able to identify only to genus.

The small size of most, and the condition of the bones, make it probable that the main deposit is from an accumulation of cast pellets of ancient owls, which, however, if the agents, were careful to leave no skeletons to reveal their kind. Fragments of larger birds, as the Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, and the Turkey, may have been carried by predator mammals or acquisitive wood rats, or may have been added by the wash of flood waters or other casual means.

Most of the species are the ordinary kinds—Bobwhite, Killdeer, Flicker, Phoebe, Robin, Brown Thrasher, Cowbird—that are regular in occurrence today in this North River arm of the Great Valley of Virginia, but some among them attract immediate attention as kinds unknown in the region in modern years. In addition to the Ruffed Grouse, there are remains of four or more individuals of the Sharp-tailed Grouse, of western and northern range in the present day. Recently I have identified other bones of Pleistocene age of this species from a sink hole in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, so that it appears to have been widely spread in those early times in this eastern area. Equally interesting is the presence of bones of the Spruce Grouse, a species that lives now in Canadian zone forests of the north. A bone of the Gray Jay, of similar modern range, that accompanies the grouse, gives indication that, barring a radical change in choice of habitat, spruce and other northern conifers were principal trees in the forests of Augusta County at the period under discussion. Perhaps the Red-breasted Nuthatch, Fox Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow, also represented, were on their nesting grounds, rather than as migrants from elsewhere as they are today.

The Magpie, now a bird of the west, was unexpected. Since I have seen the abundance of this species in much of western Europe, I have often wondered at its lack through our eastern states where wide areas seem ecologically wholly suited for it. One small fragment from the Whooping Crane is the first actual record in the state, an addition to be expected because the crane, though now much reduced in number, in earlier times is known to have ranged widely through the east and south. Another interesting circumstance is the abundance of bones of the Passenger Pigeon which form nearly a quarter of the entire collection. All are from adult individuals, indication that there may have been a roost nearby, used by the birds in periods when they were not nesting.

Mr. Guilday has found among the mammals four that are extinct, the giant beaver, a peccary or wild pig, a squirrel, and a bat, and with these such forms as the spruce vole, bog lemming, yellow-cheeked vole, and arctic shrew that now live far to the north.

Other birds that have not been mentioned are the Blue-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Sharp-shinned and Broad-winged hawks, Woodcock, Upland Plover, Willet (with the larger size of the western subspecies), Least Sandpiper, Kingfisher, Red-bellied, Red-headed, and Downy Woodpeckers, Wood Pewee, Cliff Swallow, Blue Jay and Red-winged Blackbird. Not a bad list for a bird bone watcher in prehistoric time!

United States National Museum, Washington 25, D. C.

SUMMER BIRDS IN EXTREME SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA

CHARLES O. HANDLEY, JR.

Studies of distribution and variation of small mammals, supported by a National Science Foundation grant, have taken me often into southwestern Virginia. Recently, 19-22 June 1962, I visited Cumberland Gap and Ewing, in Lee County, at the southwestern extreme of the State.

A few miles northeast of the gap, the town of Ewing is in a cultivated valley that parallels Cumberland Mountain. The small streams that drain this valley are tributaries of the Powell River. Just west of Ewing the valley widens into a basin about a mile in diameter, with gently-sloped hills and well-kept farms, primarily with pasture, hay, corn, and tobacco.

Here my companions, Richard and Daniel Peacock, and I hoped to find small mammals of the lower Mississippi valley at the northeastern extremity of their ranges. We succeeded in trapping the cotton rat, *Sigmodon hispidus*, for the first time in southwestern Virginia, but found small mammals so uncommon that we cut short our projected two-weeks visit and moved to more productive territory.

Coincident with mammal collecting I observed birds, but not at all in the sense of "bird watching", so undoubtedly many species were missed. Nevertheless, I was able to make a few observations that may be of interest simply because this part of Virginia is so infrequently visited by ornithologists.

Most significant perhaps was an Alder Flycatcher singing persistently 2 miles WSW of Ewing. At that point U. S. Rt. 58 parallels the tracks of the L & N R.R. The strip between, 30 to 100 feet wide, is variously grassy, weedy, or grown up to small black locusts. Cultivated land flanks the highway and the railroad. The habitat is dry. The nearest moisture is a small stream several hundred feet away. The flycatcher sang its "fitz-brew" song repeatedly and without variation in and around a small thicket of black locusts, eight to ten feet high, between highway and railroad. The bird sang sometimes from the small locusts, but also from the telephone wires along the railroad and from a taller locust across the tracks. It was quite fearless and could be approached to within ten or fifteen feet. It shared its habitat with Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Yellow-throat. Acadian Flycatchers were singing along nearby shady streams.

Evidence of nesting was found in several species. Bobwhites were common near Ewing and one was incubating 14 eggs in a nest three feet from the railroad tracks. It persisted despite the fact that the roadside had been mowed and had been sprayed with herbicide during the previous week. Several family groups of four or five Bewick's Wrens were found in shrubby pastures. The males were still singing regularly. In the same areas Bluebirds were observed in family aggregations of as many as twenty individuals. They frequently were seen on roadside wires in other parts of Lee County as well, but not elsewhere along the roads between there and Washington, D. C. Starlings were common and were feeding young in nests. Meadowlarks were common, and in a hayfield one flushed from an apparently completed but eggless nest. Orchard Orioles were abundant in family groups in roadside scrub. Baltimore Orioles were much less numerous. Blue Grosbeaks were common along the highway and in weedy and slightly brushy fields. In a damp creek flood plain grown up with annuals and panic grass three to four feet high I found a Blue Grosbeak nest three feet above the ground in an ironweed. With the three grosbeak eggs were two eggs of the Cowbird (Friedmann, *The Cowbirds*, p. 229, 1929, observed that the Blue Grosbeak is a frequent victim of Cowbird parasitism). The male grosbeak at this nest was predominantly brown, as were many of the singing individuals that were seen. Indigo Buntings were abundant, and

several pairs were seen mating. A nest $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the ground in dense annuals beside a stream contained two eggs and a newly hatched young.

Several other species of birds were observed with varying frequency. Yellowthroats and Yellow-breasted Chats were abundant. The following species were common: Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Kingbird, Wood Pewee, Barn Swallow, Crow, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Robin, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, House Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Goldfinch, Grasshopper Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

The following species were seen occasionally and in small numbers: Green Heron, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Killdeer, Belted Kingfisher, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Rough-winged Swallow, Blue Jay, Carolina Chickadee, Brown Thrasher, Wood Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo (Cumberland Gap only), Louisiana Waterthrush, Cardinal, Towhee, Vesper Sparrow.

United States National Museum, Washington 25, D. C.

OSPREYS NESTING ON DUCK BLINDS

JACK P. HAILMAN

During the spring of 1960, my wife and I visited the Hollis Marsh heronry in Virginia's Northern Neck, near Westmoreland State Park. The habitat and heronry are described in Abbott's (1955) article. We were impressed by the number of pairs of Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nesting on the tops of duck blinds. Although birds were also nesting in trees on the island, most of the available duck blinds which had roofs or some platform on top were occupied by Ospreys. Both blinds on the shore and those over water were utilized. This situation provides an excellent opportunity for study; I was able to obtain several Kodachromes of nests and young.

To my knowledge, only one other American bird has been found regularly to nest upon currently-used hunters' blinds. Gunter (1956) reported that Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) on the Gulf Coast frequently do so. I have not seen Ospreys anywhere else nesting on blinds, nor does Bent (1937) report it.

It is now well recognized that availability of nesting sites is a common factor limiting the populations of some birds. In the case of small songbirds, for instance, erection of nest boxes may effect a significant increase in the population. The willingness of the Osprey to nest upon man-made structures such as blinds may play a large role in its ability to coexist with man. A cursory look at Bent's (1937) *Life Histories* quickly shows that the Osprey nests in a much wider variety of sites than does the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Perhaps this difference helps to explain why the Eagle is not as common as it once was.

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EVENING GROSBEAKS IN VIRGINIA, 1961-1962

ARTHUR H. FAST

A recent article in *The Raven** contains an excellent summary of the occurrence, abundance and dispersal in Virginia of the eastern race of the Evening Grosbeak, *Hesperiphona vespertina vespertina* (Cooper)—from the time of its first appearance in March, 1940, through 1960-1961. The article states: "There has been an evident extension of the breeding range of this species". Dr. Benjamin M. Shaub** states that there is a probability of a rather widespread and numerous population breeding in the remote forested areas of northeastern Maine into New Brunswick and Quebec;—"The early weak, occasional east-west migration [along the United States-Canada border] has now developed into a strong fall and winter migration southward and southwestward along the Appalachian Mountains, although the exact source of the migrating birds is unknown at present". (1952). In "The Destruction of Nearly One Hundred Evening Grosbeaks at St. Leon le Grand, Quebec", by Dr. Shaub***, he relates that one Thomas Brousseau and another killed at least 94 banded Evening Grosbeaks during the summer of 1959; they believed they were co-operating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These birds were shot on their nesting grounds in the (apparently) new breeding range. The significant fact is that all but 2 of the 94 birds had been banded in the New England and Middle Atlantic States; one as far south as Richmond, Virginia. Shaub states that the selection by the Evening Grosbeaks of this breeding territory "appears to have been made within the past decade, and possibly during the latter half of the period".

The recent history of the Evening Grosbeak tends to indicate that we may expect more frequent winter invasions of this bird into Virginia, even though its appearances may be erratic, both as to place and numbers of the bird present. The Arlington-Alexandria-nearby Fairfax County region has always been one of the leaders in the peak years. This is particularly true of the instant year 1961-1962. After the small year 1960-1961, the instant year recorded one of the biggest dispersals, ever, of this conspicuous bird in the region just mentioned, and in several places within a belt extending to Strasburg. The Lynchburg area also had a good year. In the Arlington-Alexander-Fairfax region, it is almost literally true that every feeding station which regularly put out sunflower seed had at least a few Evening Grosbeaks at one time or another during this year. In this region of northern Virginia, 1238 Evening Grosbeaks, plus 117 in Richmond, for a total of 1355, were banded this year. The highest previous record for total birds banded in this region was 930, plus 35 for Salem, in 1959-1960.

Arthur Fast, assisted continuously by Mrs. David Beach, using traps only and working in two suburban gardens within 300 yards of each other, never saw more than 35 Evening Grosbeaks at any one time; yet 447 of these birds were banded between 10 December and 6 May. The greatest concentrations of these bandings were during 3 weeks beginning approximately Christmas Day, and 3 weeks beginning approximately 12 April, although these birds were present almost daily in varying numbers throughout the season. Jackson Abbott

*"Southward Dispersal into Virginia of the Evening Grosbeak", by Joseph James Murray and Robert Owen Paxton. *The Raven*, 33, 7-10; and literature cited in the Bibliography.

**Bull. of Mass. Audubon Society, 36, 334-336. Dr. and Mrs. Shaub reside in Northampton, Mass. Their writings, disclosing the results of their study and research over the years in all seasons, have contributed much authentic and reliable information on this species.

***Bird-Banding, 31, 150-156.

of Alexandria, who banded 6 of these birds, says that they increased from 3 on 1 January to 40 on 19 January, which numbers held until early March; then gradually declined to 2 on 6 May. Ira N. Gabrielson in nearby Fairfax County reported 75 of these birds on 20 April, "and this number stayed until about May 1st". He fed 500 pounds of sunflower seed. Elliott in Annandale saw 50 on 5 January. Marcia Lakeman in McLean, 50 in "late April"; she fed 350 pounds of sunflower seed. Elizabeth Peacock-Mary Pulley, sub-permittee, operating in Fairfax village, Pine Ridge and other nearby places in Fairfax County, banded 259. Mrs. Herbert Church, on a farm near Ashburn and Leesburg, banded 121. Although she fed 600 pounds of sunflower seed, she "only banded a very small percentage of the Grosbeaks here"; most of the time they "seemed very wary" of the traps and nets. Mrs. Thomas Frost reported them as of fairly regular occurrence in numbers up to 18, in Warrenton. From 29 November to 25 April, Rev. and Mrs. George M. Smith banded 405 of these birds in Strasburg. He says that in contrast to 1959-1960, the flocks in the instant year "were dispersed rather broadly into numerous small and medium sized flocks". In nearby Maurertown, Mrs. Fleming fed "hordes of them all winter" (Lena Artz).

Based on the reports received, the following number of Evening Grosbeaks were banded in Virginia during the 1961-1962 season:

<i>Bander</i>	<i>Number Banded</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	
Fast, assisted by Mrs. Beach	127	320	447
Mrs. Peacock-Mrs. Pulley, sub-permittee *	121	138	259
Rev. and Mrs. Smith	173	232	405
Abbott	1	5	6
Mrs. Church	38	83	121
	460	778	1238
	37%	63%	of total
Scott			117
Total for Virginia			1355

Of the 447 banded by Fast, 54 or 12% repeated in the traps during the season, one 5 times, for a total of 71 repeats. The Smiths had 150 repeats. Each bander retrapped birds banded by others; some retraps were banded in the immediate area; others in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. One bird banded in New York was retrapped 5 times between 31 December and 20 April by the Smiths at Strasburg.

With respect to other areas in Virginia, Dr. Ruskin S. Freer reports that in the Lynchburg area "The Grosbeaks appeared to be about as abundant this year as the first major invasion". He lists 17 reports in the area, and says many more people reported "The large flocks certainly seem to stay close to the James River". T. K. Ellis reports 200 of these birds about 21 January at Hot Springs. James D. Lehman writes that by mid-December flocks of up to 35 were sighted at Luray. Quite a number of VSO members reported from various parts of the state that the Evening Grosbeaks had appeared sporadically, as in Charles Hacker's report in the Newport News-Hampton area that a few birds have been sighted at various times; or that they have been of uncommon occurrence, as reported by C. E. Stevens for Charlottesville; J. J. Murray for Lexington, and Mrs. E. A. Smyth and J. W. Murray for Blacks-

*This is the only instance this year in which the number of males banded almost equaled the number of females; the respective ratios are 46.7% and 53.3%

burg. F. R. Scott reported 2 for Kiptopeke Beach on the Eastern Shore on 28 October. Mrs. David S. Rose states that a flock of some 200 could be seen for several weeks in March in Petersburg.

The extreme dates for the arrival and departure of the Evening Grosbeaks were 22 September (Princess Anne County—Rountrey, Sykes), and 15 May (Fairfax—Peacock-Pulley), respectively. The next earliest arrival date was 20 October in Fairfax (Peacock). In several areas arrivals were reported for late October, early November, or later. Departures were reported for late April and early May.

With a few exceptions, the females greatly predominated in observations and birds banded in Virginia in 1961-1962, as in all previous years. Mason and Shaub* and Shaub** state that the females tend to penetrate more deeply into the wintering grounds than the males; and that the males may leave the wintering grounds before the females.

As in previous years, the Evening Grosbeak has been essentially a morning bird in the instant year. Most observers would probably agree with Marcia Lakeman of McLean: "During the cold winter months, feeding has been active principally between daybreak and 1:00 P.M., with few birds even in mid-afternoon"; also "As migration time approached, feeding continued much later into the afternoon". It still seems mostly a mystery throughout the eastern states as to where these birds spend the remainder of their afternoons and nights. After searching the literature, only one report, of a night roost of a small flock of Evening Grosbeaks in an old stand of hemlocks in upper New York state, has been found***.

Thanks to the contributors: J. M. Abbott, L. Artz, Mrs. D. Beach, Mrs. W. Babcock, M. Carpenter, Mrs. R. E. Christian, Mrs. H. M. Church, J. W. Eike, T. K. Ellis, A. Fast, R. S. Freer, Mrs. T. Frost, I. N. Gabrielson, C. Hacker, J. D. Lehman, Marcia Lakeman, J. J. Murray, J. W. Murray, Mrs. E. Peacock, Miss G. Prior, Mrs. M. Pulley, W. F. Rountrey, F. R. Scott, L. H. Sharp, Mr. and Mrs. G. M. Smith, Mrs. E. A. Smyth, C. C. Steirly, C. E. Stevens, P. W. Sykes.

In the older literature, even as late as the early 1900s, the Evening Grosbeak is sometimes called a bird of mystery, or a stranger to civilization, with notations like: "breeding habits unknown." As this intriguing and fascinating bird has increased in population, extended its breeding and winter ranges, and come closer to the habitations of so-called civilized man, the veil of mystery surrounding the bird is being gradually, if as yet only slightly, lifted.

4924 Rock Spring Road, Arlington, Virginia.

*Bird-Banding, 20, 169 and 178.

**Bird-Banding, 31, 140 and 150.

***Fordham (1952), E. G. Survey News (Shaub) 2, 35.

NEWS OF THE LOCAL CHAPTERS

Lynchburg Bird Club

Activities of the Lynchburg Bird Club designed to foster an interest in birds among young people have brought increasing numbers of youthful visitors and friends to the regular programs of the club. A promising lot of young birders enjoyed taking part in a series of local field trips held in April 1962. A special children's program on birds is in preparation for November 1962. Scheduled during the Thanksgiving season, attractive material on bird lore—color films, music, stories, drawings—will be presented as a special holiday treat.

"Lining up our future membership," is the way M. B. Tillotson, president of the Lynchburg Bird Club, describes it. "We now have enrolled 123 members and feel that we are beginning a significant period of growth and expanding activity."

Programs are carefully planned for each of the club's well-attended meetings. John R. Withrow, club vice president and programs chairman, says, "We are fortunate to have in the Lynchburg area much scientific talent to draw on." He has found that guest speakers and color films or slides are always appreciated, so an evening combining the two wins special applause. On one such evening an Audubon Society film, "Water Fowl in Spring," was effectively augmented and brought home to the audience when followed by commentary by Dr. Ruskin S. Freer on the water birds of local streams and lakes. A program on how to attract birds to yard and garden exhibited an array of feeding shelves and suet sticks, seeds and other foods, take-home idea pamphlets and so on, to follow up the interest created by the color film, "Yours for a Song," obtained from the Virginia Commission on Game and Inland Fisheries.

Many memorable programs have originated with members themselves. Such a one was the study, "Pollination by Birds," in which a club member, Dr. Elizabeth Sprague, faculty member of Sweet Briar College and a botanist of note, told of her California field work on this subject. The club is forever indebted to Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Jr., who so frequently and generously shares with the members some of her interesting professional projects in ornithology and bird photography. And members arriving for a recent meeting were at once in the midst of the evening's subject, for they found the hall transformed into a veritable museum of mounted owls, eagles, and hawks. With posters and pamphlets, these effectively expanded the interest of a film, "Birds of Prey," and a talk by the program chairman, John R. Withrow.

Lynchburg Bird Club members are equally active outside the meeting hall. There is M. B. Cater, whose interest in the Purple Martin has resulted in a number of new martin houses being set up and colonies established. He and our president, Tillotson, were among those who worked with Dr. Freer last winter on a study of a blackbird roost in nearby Amherst County. Many a dark cold predawn found this hardy group afield surveying the Starling hosts.

A field trip to the Peaks of Otter and Apple Orchard Mountain area on 19 May 1962 was notable for an unusual record. The outing, led by Dr. Freer, was billed as a trip for warblers and Veeries and was rewarding enough with respect to these birds. But the high point of the day was an unexpected listing: two male Dickcissels, singing. The birds were seen in a farm field in Bedford County, near the Bedford Country Club.

Four Lynchburg Bird Club members attended the International Ornithological Congress in Ithaca, New York in June 1962. Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Jr., led the group, which included Mrs. W. P. Guenther, J. Steven Thornhill, and Chip Thornhill. A panel report on the congress was a program feature

of the club's summer picnic held in August at Pine Hill Lake near Lynchburg. "Our annual summer picnic," said Tillotson, "is a time when we may spend a few moments reviewing the past year. But more important, it marks the point where we turn our attention to the new and busy club year ahead."

—Myriam P. Moore.

Cape Henry Bird Club

The Club, meeting the second Friday of each month in the Science Building of Old Dominion College, follows the business meetings with a program of nature slides, taken and presented by members or special guests. This has proved an informative and interesting phase of the Club's activities. Field trips, averaging two a month, are attended by a large and enthusiastic group.

In the spring of 1961, before the reopening of the Seashore State Park wilderness area, members of the Club compiled a classified list of the birds of the area for distribution to visitors. Currently, the Club is providing and arranging color prints of selected birds of the park to be placed on display in the Information Center.

The Audubon Wildlife Films continue to be successfully sponsored by the Club. Beginning with the 1961-1962 season the Club has been the sole sponsor; previously the sponsorship was shared with a garden club. The net profit for the past two years has been \$377.00, which added to previous profits has been set aside in a special fund and is being used for the conservation work of the Club. This season junior Audubon programs to be given by the lecturers in the afternoon have been arranged and are being sponsored by such groups as the Norfolk Museum of Arts and the P.T.A. of the public schools. Speakers for this season's programs are Howard Cleaves on October 6; Fran William Hall on November 14; Emerson Scott on January 15; Robert C. Hermes on February 26; and Roger Tory Peterson on March 13—all to be held at Northside Junior High School at 8:15 p.m.

At the request of the Southeast Virginia Regional Planning Commission the Club made recommendations for areas considered desirable to be set aside for conservation and recreation purposes. These recommendations were given serious consideration and discussed by the Club President with Mr. Garland Wood, Planning Director, in a subsequent meeting. Mr. Wood visited the proposed areas with a member of the Club.

The Cape Henry Bird Club has recently become an affiliate member of the National Audubon Society and is anticipating many benefits from this move, especially information and assistance with local conservation problems.

Current officers of the Club are:

President: Mr. Robert E. McGlaughon

Vice Presidents: Miss Helen Lukens, Mrs. Dean Derby

Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Leamon Forrest

Recording Secretary: Miss Virginia W. Hank

Treasurer: Mr. A. F. Shaffirt

—Mrs. Leamon Forrest.

Roanoke Valley Bird Club

The Roanoke Valley Bird Club was organized on 14 May 1957 and adopted its present constitution on 9 July 1957. The purpose of the Club is to promote interest in the study of birds and in conservation, and membership is open to anyone who is interested in birds. Each adult member pays \$1.00 annual dues for the calendar year, and junior members, defined as those who have not passed their nineteenth birthday, pay annual dues of 50¢ for the calendar year.

The officers of the Club are a President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer. Two Directors-at-Large are elected from the membership, who with the officers conduct the business of the Club between meetings. The constitution requires that the Club hold at least four general meetings a year.

The Club does not publish a regularly scheduled bulletin, but throughout

the year, as needed, mimeographed notices and newsletters keep the membership informed of the Club's meetings and activities. Also, the Telephone Committee often follows up these communications with direct calls to remind members of scheduled events or deadlines.

Every spring during migration bird walks are scheduled for each week in April and the first weeks in May to various areas where walking is generally easy and where birds are most likely to be seen. Each walk has an appointed leader and a stated meeting place and time of departure. They are generally equally divided between Saturdays and Sundays and are designed so that persons may walk as long as they like or leave the group at any time to attend church or other obligations.

The Club also participates in the Annual Audubon Christmas bird count. Local publicity is given the count through the press, and it has been customary to cover the same general areas each year to provide comparable records.

An annual picnic is held each fall at club member Sally Nelson's cabin in Craig County where bird walks are made in all directions, members relax and relate their summer's experiences and home-cooked food in abundance is provided by each member bringing a covered dish; the bird club provides coffee, cold drinks, paper cups, and plates. This is an outstanding event of our Club's year.

The members of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club may participate in the Club's cooperative bird food program. Sunflower seed, wild bird seed mix, and peanuts are bought in large quantities and distributed at actual cost to the members. Last season the members purchased 4,700 lb. sunflower seed, 3,850 lb. wild bird seed mix, and 300 lb. peanuts. The orders are placed with the chairman of Bird Seed via mail on mimeographed order blanks and before a stated deadline, and when the seed arrives, all members are notified by the Telephone Committee, and they immediately pick up their orders. This program has been one of the greatest inducements to membership in the Club. We have members who, because of age or illness, cannot actively participate in the bird walks, picnics, or lectures and meetings, but they do love birds and enjoy feeding them, and they appreciate the opportunity to buy bird food at lower than retail prices through affiliation with the Club.

Since 1958, the Roanoke Valley Bird Club has been cosponsor with the Tri-Beta Society of Roanoke College in bringing to our area a series of three Audubon Screen Film lectures. This year, the Roanoke Valley Bird Club will be sole sponsor, and the programs will be held at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School in Roanoke on 4 December 1962 and 11 January and 12 March 1963. Promotional work in the way of special meetings, TV personal appearances by Club members, radio announcements, newspaper articles, and contacts with local Scout troops, garden clubs, and biology classes is moving forward as scheduled, and it is hoped that when the first of the series comes, we will have a full auditorium.

In addition to the Audubon lectures, the Club has had some very interesting programs featuring local members. Dr. Perry Kendig gave us a program on "The Bird Watcher's Year"; Almon O. English recently gave us a program on "Bird Banding"; C. H. "Pete" Lewis has given several different Kodachrome slide programs featuring birds of this area and other subjects of nature. Also, we have been privileged to have Max Carpenter of the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries with the movie, "Wood Duck Ways"; George H. Harrison, who at the time was with the wildlife research unit at VPI, presented "A Wood Warbler World;" and very recently, Dr. Donald H. Messersmith of the Biology Department of Radford College gave us an interesting illustrated lecture on his summer at the Michigan Biological Station.

We feel the past and present officers and directors of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club are to be commended for the excellent programs they have arranged, and the growth of the Club from 33 charter members to 131 members at this date is something to be proud of.

—Evelyn Lewis

VSO By-laws Concerning Local Chapters

The following five By-laws (numbers 5 through 9) were adopted some years ago to govern the establishment and operation of local chapters of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. They are reprinted by request.

No. 5. Any group of six or more persons may organize a local group and apply for affiliation as a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. All applications shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee of the VSO. Any group which has had its application accepted shall remain a chapter in good standing so long as it complies with the requirements of the By-laws.

No. 6. Each chapter shall pay annual dues to the Virginia Society of Ornithology, payable on January 1. The amount of the dues shall be determined by the number of members of the chapter as of January 1. A chapter consisting of 6 to 15 members shall pay dues of \$5.00 per year; 16 to 25 members, \$7.50; over 25 members, \$10.00.

No. 7. Each chapter shall be entitled to receive one or more subscriptions to *The Raven* as follows: a chapter consisting of 6 to 15 members shall receive one subscription; 16 to 25 members, two subscriptions; and more than 25 members, three subscriptions. Advance notice of all VSO activities, such as meetings, field trips, and the like, shall be sent to each chapter by the Secretary of the VSO, and chapter members shall have the privilege of attending all such activities. News of chapter activities which may be of general interest shall be published in *The Raven*.

No. 8. Each local chapter not already represented on the Executive Committee of the VSO may choose a representative for this purpose, as provided in the Constitution. Such representative shall be required to be a member in good standing of the VSO.

No. 9. Local chapters may choose any name they may desire, except that no chapter may use a name already selected by another group. They shall have full power to regulate their own organization and affairs, provided their actions do not conflict with the Constitution or By-laws of the VSO.

VSO MEMBERSHIP—1962

Abbe, Edward H.—1936 Aberdeen Ave., S.W., Roanoke, Va.
Abbott, Jackson M.—1100 Doter Dr., Alexandria, Va.
Abbott, Mrs. Judith A.—737 Alabama St., Bristol, Tenn.
Adams, Sally B.—1320 South Lake, Bayside, Va.
Addington, Mrs. J. C.—Ceder Grove Farm, London Bridge, Va.
Akers, Mrs. W. G.—1138 Bolling Ave., Norfolk 8, Va.
Aldrich, Dr. John W.—7725 Lakeview Dr., Falls Church, Va.
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Allard, Howard F.—100 Southwick St., Fairfax, Va.
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Allen, Mrs. Harry, Jr.—21 Towana Rd., Richmond 26, Va.
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Ames, J. E., III—1717 King Mt. Rd., Charlottesville, Va.
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- Armstrong, Mrs. Martha B.—510 Newport Ave., Williamsburg, Va.
Artz, Lena—RFD, Waterlick, Va.
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Bailey, Dr. John Wendell—27 Willway Rd., Richmond 26, Va.
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Ball, Ada—4508 Forest Hill Ave., Richmond 25, Va.
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Boone, Jeanette—Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Va.
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Cooper, Walter A.—1341 Surrey Crescent, Norfolk 8, Va.
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Couper, Monroe—1925 Cherokee Rd., Waynesboro, Va.
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Cumming, Mrs. W. M.—213 Cherokee Rd., Hampton, Va.

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Dabney, M. B.—227 W. Freemason St., Norfolk 10, Va.
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