

The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

VOLUME 35

MARCH 1964

NUMBER 1



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, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

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Published four times a year in March, June, September and December at Charlottesville, Virginia. Membership includes subscription to *The Raven*. Annual subscription price to non-members is \$3.00. Individual issues are priced at 75¢.

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The business and mailing address for *The Raven* is Box 57, Charlottesville, Virginia.

VSO MATTAMUSKEET TRIP

MYRIAM P. MOORE

The Mattamuskeet trip was held on 31 January and 1 and 2 February 1964. The locale of this first out-of-state field trip of the VSO was the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge in Hyde County, North Carolina, adjacent to Pamlico Sound. The refuge includes beautiful Lake Mattamuskeet, 30,000 acres in extent, with some 20,000 acres of surrounding wetlands. Fifteen miles long and about six miles wide, the lake lies three feet below sea level, and its shallow waters average two to three feet in depth. Cypress trees form a border to the north, but other shores pass into low marshlands.

Headquarters, accommodations, and meals were at Mattamuskeet Lodge. This interesting building was remodeled from the old pumping plant of the New Holland agricultural operations which began about 1914 and drained the lake by an extensive system of canals so that the area could be put under cultivation. The initial promise of the venture did not pay off, and the area was purchased by the government for a waterfowl sanctuary in 1934.

A birder's glance out of any window of the lodge is sure to be rewarded. The immediate grounds are crisscrossed by canals, and these waterways are thickly bordered with a shrubby growth of bog evergreens, cypress, and pine trees. Small birds abound in this cover, and Common Egrets roost in the taller pines. Window-watchers got the Great Blue Heron, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, and many others.

After an impromptu slides show on Friday evening, our Trip Chairman for the outing, J. Steven Thornhill, announced that our Saturday morning trip would explore the eastern sector of the refuge.

When Hal Swindell of the refuge staff drove the big truck around at 8:00 a.m., he loaded 46 passengers. VSO'ers were present from all parts of the state. In addition to Fred R. Scott, Assistant Editor of *The Raven*, from the Richmond area there were Miss Cleo Allen, Mrs. Mildred C. Howard, Miss Margaret Finch, Mrs. R. H. Rudd, Miss Mary Tompkins, Miss Franklin Woodson, and Miss Henrietta Weidenfeld. Our coastal cities were represented by Miss Louise Bethea, Mrs. Mary Clark, Miss Patsy Clark, Byard Bergey, Mr. and Mrs. David Green, Miss Mary T. Gwathmey, William Henry, Miss Virginia Hank, Roy Jackson, Norton Jeffers, Dennis Miller, and Mrs. Mary Frances Morrisette. Northern Virginians were Dr. and Mrs. Dan F. Keeney and Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Rothery. The Valley sent Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Birchfield and their friend from Maryland, Mrs. I. W. Young. Col. Bernard Thielen came from southwest Virginia. The Lynchburg group, led by our Tripmaster, were John Black, Gordon Howell, Miss Kay McDonald, Miss Gene Moore, Mrs. Myriam Moore, Miss Gertrude Prior, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Reams, Steve Reams, Miss Harriet Rogers, Chip Thornhill, J. Steven Thornhill, M. B. Tillotson, Miss Mary Walker, Mr. and Mrs. John Withrow, Charles Wood.

Remnants of former canals reach out in long grown-over peninsulas and afford excellent walkways by which the observer may approach the feeding grounds of the great flocks of waterfowl. Our morning's walk edged the marshlands on the eastern rim of the lake, in an area where Canada Geese and Whistling Swans were abundant. Occasional companies of these birds would rise in noisy protest at our presence, while other groups remained quietly feeding. Snow geese were plentiful, and there was appreciative excitement when a telescope found a group of Blue Geese in the middle distance. As for ducks, Mallards and Pintails appeared frequently. Black Ducks and Canvasbacks were less frequent, and a few Green-winged Teal won a lot of admiring glances, if one can judge by the queues awaiting a turn at the telescopes. Other ducks reported were American Widgeon, Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, and Ruddy Duck.

Hummocks of muddy sod and brush gave excellent cover for small birds along our path and there was an assortment of sparrows: Savannah, Field, White-throated, Fox, Swamp, and Song. Fred Scott's Yellowthroat and Gertrude Prior's Orange-crowned Warbler competed for the attention of observers along this stretch, so that a House Wren and a Winter Wren had to pose together upon the same limb of brush to catch a lens eye. An occasional report of a carbide gun in the distance (used to frighten geese off private grain fields) with the sight of decoy geese strewn about the marshes and a hunting blind here and there were reminders that thousands of wildfowl had been lawfully killed here during the hunting season, a few days ended.

As we turned back toward the truck we added the Red-shouldered and the Marsh Hawks to the list and noted that the overcast skies had cleared. A short ride brought us for a brief stroll along a canal where the pines and cypresses above us were alive with Myrtle Warblers and Carolina Chickadees. The big moment here came when two Black-crowned Night Herons swooped silently in to perch in a tree just ahead of the group. These two, one mature and one immature, waited patiently while the admiring gallery examined them to its satisfaction. And so back to the lodge to polish off a substantial lunch.

After lunch small groups wandered along the paths around the lodge. Some fortunates observed the Brown-headed Nuthatch in the pines bordering the lawn. A Brown Thrasher showed us his yellow eye as we walked along a muddy path that eventually brought out the Yellow-breasted Chat, the Hermit Thrush, and several Catbirds. There was a moment of real excitement when a covey of Bobwhite burst into the air at our right, startling a young deer into leaping across the path to our left, to splash into the tangle of swamp growth. For a brief moment the animal was visible—a small individual, sleek and well-groomed. Another graceful bound and he was onto the flats, stirring up a large company of Canada Geese into hurried and noisy flight. They left the ground in headlong disorder but in only a moment skined out into a well-organized V.

At midafternoon we rode over the causeway that crosses the lake. Here it was Col. Thielen's sharp eye that spotted the adult Bald Eagle. This noble bird was sitting in the topmost branches of a small tree growing offshore on a sandy speck. He maintained a majestic pose as the observers took turns at regarding him eyeball to eyeball, as it were, through the splendid new telescope of Miss Louise Bethea. Miss Bethea was patient, and so was the eagle, as enthusiastic birders continually reformed in line for second and third looks at this regal beauty. Once the sun shone out brightly on his white head and quite dazzled us.

On Saturday evening Mr. Willie G. Cahoon, Refuge Manager, gave a program of slides and told a little of the problems of controlling undesirable and cultivating desirable plants, and the problems of carp and catfish control as a means of improving the waterfowl feeding grounds. He issued a cordial invitation for future VSO trips to the area.

Up betimes on Sunday morning we were soon bound for nearby Swanquarter National Wildlife Refuge on Pamlico Sound, out to list some bay ducks and perhaps the elusive Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Bowling along in a stiff cool breeze, we walked through a picturesque area where spikes and spines of dead pines (victims of inundation by salt water following a great storm some years ago) stuck up everywhere amid the young pine growth and evergreen bog shrubs. Myrtle Warblers were here in quantity, but the only woodpecker we saw was a Red-bellied. A push into the briar tangles brought some satisfactions to those brave enough to try it—another glimpse of the Brown-headed Nuthatch, for example—but yielded no Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Strong winds pushed us back from the pier at Swanquarter, and we returned to the lodge for lunch with only a Lesser Scaup and one Bluebird to add to the total trip list.

All told, there were 93 species reported for the trip. Everyone agreed that our Tripmaster Thornhill was due a vote of thanks for his good work. The Mattamuskeet trip was interesting and pleasant from beginning to end.

9 Riverview Place, Lynchburg, Virginia

VSO WINTER FIELD TRIP

C. W. HACKER

The VSO winter field trip was held at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on 7 December. The day opened with exceptionally fine weather—no clouds, little wind, and moderate temperature. The refuge people, headed by Donald Ambrosen, met the group at Sandbridge and provided transportation down the beach. The ride along the ocean front is always cold and is compensated only by the expectation of what the day will offer.

At the refuge Mr. Donald R. Ambrosen, the manager, outlined recent changes in refuge operation. A new dike has been constructed parallel to Back Bay and extending from the refuge headquarters to the southern limit of the refuge. Perpendicular to this dike and extending to the sand dunes were three more dikes. With flood gates the water levels in the impounded areas can be controlled to provide optimum growing conditions for the waterfowl vegetation. From the birdwatching standpoint the dikes provided an excellent means for getting into the feeding areas. Although waterproof footwear was hardly necessary, it will be recommended again next year if for no other reason than just good birdsmanship. Due to the improved observation conditions the trip to Long Island was dispensed with as not being worth the time and effort involved in ferrying across Back Bay.

Again, the Snow Geese were the highlight of the day. In the neighborhood of 10,000 Snows were seen within good range. With the Snows were 12 Blue Geese in unusually good viewing conditions. The Whistling Swans and Canada Geese at close range added to the success of the day. Because of the feeding Snow Geese, the Pintail was the most frequently seen duck. In numbers, the ducks were far from spectacular, although all of the ducks in the entire Back Bay area were supposedly on the refuge. On the ocean front, diving Gannets were seen easily, and a large flight of Red-throated Loons was in progress. Scoters were few in numbers. Of the land birds, noteworthy were flocks totaling 200 Pine Siskins in the stand of live oaks at the southern limit of the refuge. At the close of the day the checklist totaled 73 species.

On 8 December a morning trip was made to the Craney Island Disposal Area in Chesapeake, where Ed Ames and George Cornell led the group in some excellent waterfowl observations. The Canvasbacks were outstanding among the ducks, and the Black Skimmers seemed unseasonal. Again this year, much discussion was held on whether any of the cormorants were the European species. A Dunlin exhibited the typical feeding behavior at a distance of 35 yards. Purple Sandpipers and Snow Buntings had been in the area recently but were not seen on the trip. Following a hurried roadside lunch, the crowd dispersed in the face of threatening weather.

218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton, Virginia

VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1963-64 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

During the Christmas bird count from 19 December to 1 January some 169 observers participated in 19 counts in Virginia. Since some helped in two or more counts, there are actually 191 names listed in the count data accompanying this summary. In general, this was a good count year, though few records were broken. The total list of species was 171, the same as the previous year, but the quality of the counts was such that the total party-hours, perhaps the best measure of effort expended, was 733, a record for a Christmas count period in Virginia. Only one bird appears to be new for the Virginia Christmas counts, the Whimbrels at Chincoteague. Among the species missing from the totals this year, perhaps the most significant were the White-winged Scoter, American Woodcock, Least Sandpiper, and Laughing Gull. Undoubtedly, the feature of the period was the spectacular flight of some of the more northern birds.

In some years a warm December causes the fall migration to extend into the count period, so that the counts are not a true reflection of midwinter birdlife. This occurred in a very pronounced way, for example, in December 1959. This year, however, there could be no doubt that winter had arrived well before the counts began, and temperatures averaged about 7° below normal around the state for the month. For Richmond, it was the third coldest December on record, and two of the state counts actually reported zero temperatures. One obvious result of this was the fact that frozen water areas either during or just prior to the count period reduced the counts of waterfowl drastically in some areas.

Table 1 lists all of the Virginia counts in tabular form. Counts numbered from 1 to 8 are from the Coastal Plain, more or less in order of their distance from the ocean. Counts 9 to 11 are from the Piedmont, whereas numbers 12 to 19 are all mountain and valley areas from the Blue Ridge west. The locations of these counts are shown in Figure 1.

The Cattle Egrets at Chincoteague were the second count record for Virginia, one having previously been seen at Back Bay in 1960. Whereas most areas had reduced waterfowl counts because of ice, expanded coverage by boat gave some excellent counts at Hopewell, with 78 Shovelers and 900 Wood Ducks being of particular interest. The 16,000 Canvasbacks at Brooke were a welcomed increase in this species.

As in the past two years, only two Rough-legged Hawks were reported, and Bald Eagles were found as usual principally in the upper Coastal Plain counts. It is discouraging to see how the latter species has decreased as a winter bird along the coast. Except for the Chincoteague count, the shore-bird reports were somewhat below normal. Pectoral Sandpipers at Chincoteague were only the second Christmas count record for Virginia. A Long-billed Dowitcher at Back Bay finally broke the monopoly that Chincoteague has seemed to have on this species.

Red-headed Woodpeckers were in good numbers and were reported from 11 counts for a total of 47 individuals. The history of this bird's fluctuations over the past nine years is shown in Table 2, which is set up in the same manner as the table on Eastern Bluebirds in the 1962-63 count summary. The Red-headed Woodpecker is perhaps a poor species to use in a comparison of this type for two reasons. First, it has a tendency to occur in flocks in winter; thus the single flock of 116 at Brooke in 1962 is apt to give a false impression of the over-all abundance of the bird. Second, the species may vary greatly from year to year in one locality without any relation to other parts of the state. Thus the fact that it might be rare in the Norfolk area and common in northern Virginia in one winter, and vice versa the next winter, would not be evident from Table 2. In any event, this is one way to measure

the extreme variation of this species from year to year. Only ten years ago we were extremely worried over the future of this bird in Virginia.

Two of the northern species that showed up in excellent numbers this year were the Black-capped Chickadee and the Red-breasted Nuthatch. As usual, the former was confined to northern Virginia and Valley counts. The nuthatch was recorded on 14 counts for a total of 298 birds, surely a record total. This compares with two birds on only two counts last year. Even the White-breasted Nuthatch was far above normal and was reported on 18 of the counts.

The status of the Hermit Thrush, one of the so-called disaster species along with the Eastern Bluebird, is shown in Table 2. This seems to be making a satisfactory recovery from its 1961-62 low point, at least on the basis of this winter's counts. One hundred and twenty-seven Eastern Bluebirds were reported on nine counts, a slight increase over last year. In terms of party-hours, this works out to 17 birds per 100 party-hours, which compares with 16 last year.

The Swainson's Thrush reported at Blacksburg is, strange to say, the seventh Christmas count record in recent years. The increase in wintering Ruby-crowned Kinglets seems to continue year after year. The Wilson's Warbler at Little Creek was the second Virginia count record, the first being at Brooke in 1952.

Lynchburg had the distinction of having the only sizable blackbird roost in its count area. Its estimate of 15,000 Rusty Blackbirds is probably the largest flock ever reported in Virginia. The count of 34 Baltimore Orioles at Newport News was an amazing development. This flock has reportedly increased even more since the count.

Five hundred and eleven Evening Grosbeaks on 14 counts and 48 Red Crossbills on four counts are both records for the state. In the last nine years the grosbeak has formed a distinct two-year cycle, being either rare or absent during the off years. It will be interesting to see if this cycle continues. Pine Siskins did well also and were recorded on a record 14 counts.

The Tree Sparrow, whose wintering numbers have been creeping up in recent years, took a jump this winter. The 13 at Little Creek and the 25 at Hopewell were both record local counts.

1. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 2 miles north of center of Chincoteague as in previous 9 years; open farmland 18%, insular pine woodland 8%, mainland woodland 23%, low pine and myrtle 1%, fresh-water marshes and impoundments 10%, salt marshes 25%, sheltered bays 10%, dunes 3%, mud and sand flats 1%, ocean beach 1%).—Dec. 27; 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Partly cloudy, becoming overcast by 4 p.m.; temp. 33° to 48°; wind N to NE, 2 to 16 m.p.h.; ground bare, fresh-water impoundments largely frozen. Seventeen observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 73 (59 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 258 (50 on foot, 208 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: **Glossy Ibis.** Observers: J. M. Abbott, W. J. Borda, L. L. Calvert, J. Diamond, J. L. Fountain, J. P. Hailman, D. L. Hall, R. Hammill, J. E. Johnson, R. McClure, G. M. Meade, J. B. Meade, M. C. Newlon, F. G. Scheider, F. R. Scott (compiler), J. W. Terborgh, J. S. Weske. This count included parts of extreme southern Worcester Co., Md. A breakdown of the count by state is available from the compiler. Several species on this count were seen only in the Maryland part of the area. These were the Black Vulture, American Coot, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, and Vesper Sparrow. The Cattle Egrets, first winter record for the area, were seen by two parties led by Scott and G. M. Meade, and the Snowy Egrets were reported by J. B. Meade, Newlon, and Scheider. Single Whimbrels and Willets were seen by two different parties some distance apart—Abbott, Johnson, Newlon, and Scheider. This is the first winter record for the Whimbrel. The Pectoral Sandpipers

were found by the G. M. Meade party. The Black-capped Chickadees are the second winter record for the area and were reported by Abbott and Johnson. The Red Crossbills, apparently the first Eastern Shore record, were found by three parties, G. M. Meade *et al.*, J. B. Meade and Scheider, and Terborgh *et al.*

2. Little Creek (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1.5 miles NE of Kempsville, including Lynnhaven Inlet, Little Creek, eastern portion of Norfolk City, Stumpy Lake; open farmland 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 30%, salt marsh, sand beach, bay, rivers 10%, suburbs 30%).—Dec. 21; 4:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clear; temp. 19° to 31°; wind NW, 0-13 m.p.h.; ground bare, nearly all fresh-water lakes frozen. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 39 (25 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 283 (12 on foot, 271 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: **Evening Grosbeak, Dickcissel.** Observers: S. E. Breneiser, Mrs. F. C. Burford, D. S. Gordon, D. D. Green, F. S. Hespenheide, W. W. Pinkham, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler). The Brant were seen by Gordon, Hespenheide, and Sykes and the Rough-legged Hawk, in the dark phase, by Richardson and Rountrey. The latter two observers also found the immature Iceland Gull and observed it in comparison with both Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. The male Wilson's Warbler was observed closely under good conditions by Richardson and Rountrey, and the Tree Sparrows, a rather high count for the area, were found in two flocks by Mrs. Burford. The Dickcissel was present at a feeding station for several weeks but was missed on the count day.

3. Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1.5 miles east of Back Bay, including much of the mainland of the city of Virginia Beach; open farmland 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 20%, open beach 5%, marshes and bay 45%).—Dec. 28; 4 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear until 10:30 a.m., then cloudy; temp. 25° to 39°; wind SE to NE, 0-12 m.p.h.; ground bare, a small portion of fresh water frozen. Seventeen observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 56 (45 on foot, 11 by car); total party-miles, 278 (32 on foot, 246 by car). Observers: S. E. Breneiser, Mrs. F. C. Burford, Mrs. C. W. Darden, Jr., J. C. Fields, G. W. Gibbins, D. S. Gordon, Mr. & Mrs. D. D. Green, Miss G. Grimm, Miss T. G. Gwathmey, W. W. Pinkham, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, Miss E. H. Scott, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), H. E. Watson, Mrs. S. C. Wilcox. The Long-billed Dowitcher was seen under optimum conditions and the call note repeatedly heard by Pinkham and Sykes. The Dovekie was observed flying just offshore by Sykes.

4. Nansemond River (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1.5 miles NE of Driver, including Craney Island Disposal Area, Nansemond River, Chuckatuck Creek, and Chuckatuck; open farmland 25%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 15%, suburbs 10%, marsh, beach, rivers, and bay 40%).—Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy until 11 a.m., then clear; temp. 30° to 35°; wind N, 10-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Four observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 17.5 (14.5 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles, 131 (8 on foot, 123 by car). Observers: C. W. Hacker, B. W. Harrison, F. S. Hespenheide, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler). The Black Skimmers, all immatures, were seen by both parties.

5. Newport News (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle bounded by Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River, and Grafton; woodland 30%, open fields 30%, fresh-water ponds 10%, waterfront 30%).—Dec. 28; 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Clear; temp. 28° to 40°; wind NW, 5-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, fresh water partly frozen. Twenty-one observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 51 (28 on foot, 23 by car); total party-miles, 275 (30 on foot, 245 by car). Observers: Martha Armstrong, Carolyn Ayers, Frances Cumming, Georgianna Cumming, J. H. Grey, Jr., C. W. Hacker, Jean Hacker, Ben Harrison, Edward Katz, Robin Machen, Roger Miller, Dorothy Mitchell, Sydney Mitchell, Ricky

Moore, M. E. Moore, Ash Rawls, Doris Smith, W. P. Smith (compiler), Bonnie Williams, Jay Williams, J. D. Williams (Hampton Roads Bird Club). The 34 Baltimore Orioles were a simultaneous count at three feeding stations. The Dickcissel was a male at the Smith's feeding station; a female seen earlier in the winter was not seen on the count day. The 80 Evening Grosbeaks consisted of about 6 different reports; this was only the second count record for this area. The Chipping Sparrows were seen by Mrs. Mitchell.

6. Hopewell (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center in Curles Neck as in last 9 years; includes Presquile National Wildlife Refuge; open farmland 30%, brushy fields 10%, marshes and river shore 10%, deciduous wooded swamp 10%, woodland 40%).—Dec. 30; 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 16° to 34°; wind NE, 2-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, all still water frozen. Eight observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 31 (19 on foot, 6 by car, 6 by boat); total party-miles, 224 (13 on foot, 186 by car, 25 by boat). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: **Laughing Gull**. Observers: Cleo Allen, J. J. Parlow, J. H. Roberts, F. R. Scott (compiler), C. E. Stevens, Mary Tompkins, R. J. Watson, R. K. Williams. The Ospreys were seen by two parties many miles apart, one by Stevens and the other by the Misses Allen and Tompkins. The Bonaparte's Gulls were reported by Scott and the Baltimore Oriole by the Misses Allen and Tompkins.

7. 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 14%, marsh 9%, deciduous wooded swamp 9%, fields 15%, hedgerows 7%, mixed forest edge 16%, deciduous woods 22%, pine woods 6%, slash 2%).—Dec. 19; 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear except for some haze at midday; temp. 15° to 31°; wind W, 0-20 m.p.h.; thin film of powdery snow, marshes and tidal bays frozen, Potomac River open except for patches of mush ice. Fourteen observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 69 (62 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 123 (57 on foot, 66 by car). Observers: C. A. Anderson, Roy Bailey, A. A. Baker, Henry Bell, III, E. L. Boudette, J. H. Eric, E. T. McKnight (compiler), T. B. Nolan, B. J. Skinner, R. L. Smith, D. B. Stewart, A. M. White, D. R. Wiesnet, D. R. Wones. The Baltimore Orioles were seen by Skinner.

8. Fort Belvoir (all points within 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Lebanon, Fairfax Co.; habitats same as last year).—Dec. 21; 5:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 11° to 35°; wind NW, 0-7 m.p.h.; 0.5 in. snow on ground, most calm water frozen. Twenty-five observers in 14 parties. Total party-hours, 140 (91 on foot, 49 by car); total party-miles, 272 (80 on foot, 192 by car). Observers: J. M. Abbott (compiler), E. J. Bierley, Dr. & Mrs. E. G. Davis, W. Del Grande, E. Estes, D. Feaser, Mr. & Mrs. I. C. Hoover, Col. & Mrs. W. A. Houston, Sylvia Johnson, D. F. Keeney, E. Kunze, G. Monson, R. Pyle, Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Rothery, G. Sigel, E. R. Stillwell, Harriet Sutton, Mr. & Mrs. R. P. Teele, Claire Thompson, B. B. Warfield. The Chipping Sparrows were seen by Abbott and Del Grande.

9. Charlottesville (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Ivy as in previous years; habitats same as last year).—Dec. 21; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 6° to 29°; wind W, 0-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, most ponds and rivers frozen. Three observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 26 (22 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 112 (36 on foot, 76 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: **Dickcissel**. Observers: Kenneth Lawless, R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler). The Red Crossbill was found by Stevens.

10. Warren (about same area and habitats as in previous years).—Dec. 31; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 6° to 28°; wind W, 0-15 m.p.h.; up to 5 in. snow on ground, ponds frozen and James River partially frozen. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 20 (18 on foot, 2 by car); total party-

miles, 80 (25 on foot, 55 by car). Observers: R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler). The Red Crossbills were found by Merkel.

11. Sweet Briar (all points within a 3-mile-diameter circle, center at Sweet Briar College; weather reduced area covered to about one-third of normal; open farmland 50%, hedgerows 10%, deciduous woodland 10%, pond edge 10%, buildings and barns 20%).—Jan. 1; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Snow and sleet in a.m., cloudy with some sleet in p.m.; temp. 18° to 28°; wind N to NE, 5-15 m.p.h.; 6 in. snow cover, ponds frozen. Five observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 23 (5 on foot, 1 by car, 17 at feeding stations); total party-miles, 5 (2 on foot, 3 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Bobwhite, Red-headed Woodpecker. Seen day after count period (Jan. 2): White-winged Crossbill. Observers: Jeanette Boone, Katherine MacDonald, Gertrude Prior (compiler), Harriet Rogers, Jean L. Williams.

12. Lynchburg (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Lynchburg College, including James River, College and Timberlake Lakes, Tomahawk and Blackwater Creeks, airport, and Graves Mill; open farmland 42%, mixed woods 28%, lowland woods 18%, lakes and marshes 8%, river 4%).—Dec. 30; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 21° to 32°; wind NE, 5-15 m.p.h.; ground mostly covered by 1 to 3 in. crust of snow, lakes frozen, streams and river partially frozen. Twenty-three observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 57 (38 on foot, 19 by car); total party-miles, 254 (36 on foot, 218 by car). Observers: Evelyn Barbig, Thomas Barbig, Jeanette Boone, John Cousins, Porter Echols, Jr., Larry Farmer (compiler), R. S. Freer, Katherine MacDonald, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore, Gertrude Prior, Rosalie Rosser, Bethea Stough, J. S. Thornhill, S. L. Thornhill, M. B. Tillotson, Bill Whitmore, Claire Whitmore, Sharon Whitmore, Grace Wiltshire, James Wiltshire, John Withrow, James Wright. The composition of the blackbird roost was estimated principally by Tillotson.

13. Shenandoah National Park (all points within a 15-mile-diameter, center at Panorama Gap, the intersection of Route 211 and Skyline Drive; all points within Park boundaries including Park headquarters, Piney River, Skyland, and east on Route 211 to Park boundary; mixed hardwoods 90%, mixed evergreens, mostly pines 8%, open areas 2%).—Dec. 30; 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 5° to 25°; wind NW, 0-15 m.p.h.; 6 in. snow on ground, all water frozen. Three observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 7 (0.5 on foot, 6.5 by car); total party-miles, 59 (1 on foot, 58 by car). Observers: George Dowery, J. D. Lehman (compiler), Ray Schaffner.

14. Luray (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at intersection of Routes 211 and 340, including Hawksbill Creek, Kimball, Ida Valley, Shenandoah River; open farmland 50%, mixed hardwoods 30%, cedar and pine woodland 10%, stream and creek bottoms 10%).—Dec. 31; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast, heavy in p.m.; temp. 0° to 20°; wind negligible; 5 in. snow on ground, most water frozen. Two observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 8 (2 on foot, 6 by car); total party-miles, 62 (3 on foot, 59 by car). Observers: J. D. Lehman (compiler), Vernon Mast.

15. Rockingham County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Ottobine, including Silver Lake in Dayton; lawns and shade trees in town 5%, cottonwood-sycamore river bottoms 5%, open farmland and farm woodlots 55%, mixed Appalachian conifers and hardwoods in mountains 35%; elevation, 1160 to 3200 feet).—Dec. 19; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 14° to 20°; wind N, 8-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, most water frozen. Six observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 33 (10 on foot, 23 by car); total party-miles, 161 (16 on foot, 145 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Great Blue Heron, Common Raven. Observers: R. K. Burns, Max Carpenter (compiler), H. G. Helbert, H. G. M. Jopson, Gordon Shantz, R. H. Smith, Jr.

16. Big Flat Mountain (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center on the crest of the Blue Ridge on the Albemarle-Rockingham Counties bound-

ary; some additional coverage in southern section of Shenandoah National Park; same habitats as in previous years).—Dec. 22; 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 0° to 28°; wind NW, 0-10 m.p.h.; 1 in. snow at higher elevations, reservoir frozen. Two observers in 1-2 parties. Total party-hours, 16 (15 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 36 (26 on foot, 10 by car). Observers: R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler). The Brown Thrasher was seen at Browns Gap at 2580 feet elevation just inside Rockingham County. The Red Crossbills were found by both observers.

17. Lexington (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Washington and Lee University; open farmland 38%, deciduous woodland 20%, cedar and pine woodlands 25%, scrub 17%).—Dec. 26; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 10° to 52°; wind, none; 6 in. old snow, streams frozen. Ten observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (31 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 111 (18 on foot, 93 by car). Observers: R. P. Carroll, R. P. Carroll, Jr., Gordon Echols, D. W. Huffman, Terry Huffman, J. J. Murray (compiler), Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Murray, Jr., R. O. Paxton, Joshua Womeldorf.

18. Roanoke (same territory as in previous years; Murray's Pond, Woodrum Field airport, Peters Creek Road, Carvins Cove Dam; creek bottom and pond 20%, open fields 30%, woodland 20%, farmland 30%).—Dec. 22; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fair; temp. 25° to 33°; wind, none; ground bare, Murray's Pond frozen, creeks partly frozen, Carvins Cove open. Eight observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 11 (10 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 40 (8 on foot, 32 by car). Observers: Gary Davis, Ben Dulaney, P. F. Kendig, Billy Kendig, A. O. English (compiler), Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Lewis, Mrs. W. J. Nelson.

19. Blacksburg (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Linkous Store; pasture and plowed land 20%, town and suburbs 10%, mature white oak wood lots 20%, mixed pine and oak wood lots 20%, river and creek bottoms 30%).—Dec. 23; 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cloudy, snowing in a.m.; temp. 26° to 34°; wind N, 0-10 m.p.h.; 3 to 11 in. snow cover, ponds frozen, streams partly frozen. Twelve observers in 4 parties and 2 at feeding stations. Total party-hours, 20.5 (17 on foot, 3.5 by car); total party-miles, 72 (15.5 on foot, 56.5 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Red-tailed Hawk, Bobwhite, Screech Owl, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Observers: D. G. Cochran, R. V. Dietrich, R. V. Dietrich, Jr., M. G. Hale, Mrs. W. D. Lowry, J. W. Murray (compiler), C. W. Roane, Douglas Shear, G. M. Shear, Ronald Shear, E. A. Smyth, M. L. Smyth. The Swainson's Thrush was seen by Dietrich and Cochran.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

Table 1. The 1963-64 Christmas bird counts for Virginia. Notations in boldface type indicate an unusual species or an unusual number of individuals for that particular count. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are commented on further under count headings.

	1. Chincoteague	2. Little Creek	3. Back Bay	4. Nansemond River	5. Newport News	6. Hopewell	7. Brooke	8. Fort Belvoir	9. Charlottesville	10. Warren	11. Sweet Briar	12. Lynchburg	13. Shenandoah National Park	14. Luray	15. Rockingham County	16. Big Flat	17. Lexington	18. Roanoke	19. Blacksburg
Date	12-27	12-21	12-28	12-29	12-28	12-30	12-19	12-21	12-21	12-31	1-1	12-30	12-30	12-31	12-19	12-22	12-26	12-22	12-23
Common Loon	18	1	....	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Red-throated Loon	....	1	15	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Horned Grebe	166	76	11	22	50	1	8	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Pied-billed Grebe	15	61	5	2	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	1
Gannet	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Double-crested Cormorant	....	1	....	24	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Great Blue Heron	49	46	5	17	5	39	47	3	....	....	....	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....
Green Heron	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Little Blue Heron	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Cattle Egret	2*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Common Egret	3	1	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Snowy Egret	2*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Black-crowned Night Heron	5	8	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
American Bittern	5	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Whistling Swan	8	....	445	....	....	....	240	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Canada Goose	461	176	8155	295	....	7500	80	....	58*	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Brant	14,000	250*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Snow Goose	3800	....	40,000	....	....	12	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Blue Goose	6	....	10	....	....	65	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Mallard	710	143	1500	20	76	4000	100	6	20	22	....	....	....	21	84	....	6	125	52
Black Duck	7100	480	2500	489	32	4500	120	90	7	9	....	....	....	....	19	....	3	....	3
Gadwall	87	1	5	24	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	....	....	....	7	....	....	....	....
Pintail	1032	11	600	287	....	1200	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	5	....	....	....	....
Green-winged Teal	37	39	62	25	2	12	1	3
American Widgeon	133	350	134	168	1141	108	2	2

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	1. Chincoteague	2. Little Creek	3. Back Bay	4. Nansemond River	5. Newport News	6. Hopewell	7. Brooke	8. Fort Belvoir	9. Charlottesville	10. Warren	11. Sweet Briar	12. Lynchburg	13. Shenandoah National Park	14. Luray	15. Rockingham County	16. Big Flat	17. Lexington	18. Roanoke	19. Blacksburg
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Willet	2*
Greater Yellowlegs	13
Lesser Yellowlegs	3	1	1
Purple Sandpiper	2	41
Pectoral Sandpiper	5*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Dunlin	1234	2	23	305	41	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Long-billed Dowitcher	3	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Dowitcher (sp. ?)	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Semipalmated Sandpiper	7	....	....	172	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Western Sandpiper	11	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Sanderling	272	107	25	47	145	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Iceland Gull	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Great Black-backed Gull	104	24	51	121	27	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Herring Gull	2876	8798	991	10,100	11,703	15	500	128	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....
Ring-billed Gull	861	5060	714	5400	1474	510	60	402	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....
Bonaparte's Gull	18	27	....	16	404	5*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Forster's Tern	....	22	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Royal Tern	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Black Skimmer	....	....	....	4*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Dovekie	....	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Mourning Dove	132	209	45	17	28	27	170	412	347	90	46	237	....	46	52	....	70	205	53
Barn Owl	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Screech Owl	4	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	1	....	....	1	....	....	....
Great Horned Owl	3	5	2	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....
Barred Owl	....	....	3	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Short-eared Owl	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Belted Kingfisher	14	9	7	5	6	7	12	7	5	....	....	....	....	3	....	....	4	1	2
Yellow-shafted Flicker	77	70	86	18	59	28	44	81	12	6	....	2	14	....	1	3	6	1	....
Pileated Woodpecker	1	10	5	....	10	7	19	10	12	7	2	14	3	....	....	10	13	2	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	8	37	32	10	82	30	75	114	37	20	4	29	2	1	2	14	14	....	4

Red-headed Woodpecker	....	....	1	....	1	3	8	3	5	1	....	13	....	....	1	....	1	....	10
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	....	6	3	....	2	7	4	24	5	4	1	9	....	....	....	5	4	....	2
Hairy Woodpecker	23	7	1	....	1	2	4	6	18	8	8	8	1	....	1	3	4	....	1
Downy Woodpecker	71	25	35	....	7	69	23	75	130	37	29	8	53	1	....	4	5	....	4
Eastern Phoebe	1	2	2	....	....	....	3	....	....	....	1	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	13
Horned Lark	61	....	....	....	....	4	380	15	4	20	42	....	60	....	....	....	....	15	6
Tree Swallow	....	....	16	....	....	76	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Blue Jay	25	40	5	....	16	97	37	400	334	96	83	24	120	13	24	25	10	214	17
Common Raven	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Common Crow	2000	310	210	....	158	405	158	200	393	259	123	23	184	25	111	183	10	395	5
Fish Crow	300	64	23	1069	13	....	....	1	7	3	1	....	....	....	....	4	....	....	....
Black-capped Chickadee	2*	....	....	....	....	....	....	15	25	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Carolina Chickadee	77	97	76	....	25	134	87	270	385	103	71	10	134	10	18	48	77	63	16
Tufted Titmouse	33	44	37	....	10	93	31	80	211	44	9	10	89	3	16	14	24	31	6
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	1	4	....	....	7	17	27	86	15	7	8	29	4	1	13	16	23	5
Red-breasted Nuthatch	19	3	....	....	....	4	1	24	132	24	9	....	62	....	....	1	9	7	1
Brown-headed Nuthatch	7	5	14	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Brown Creeper	18	4	9	....	....	2	10	9	21	3	2	1	2	....	....	....	2	1	....
House Wren	2	1	1	....	1	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....
Winter Wren	3	3	2	....	....	....	1	4	4	1	1	....	1	....	....	3	....	2	....
Carolina Wren	43	44	72	13	48	46	50	61	12	1	1	1	18	....	....	2	....	7	2
Long-billed Marsh Wren	7	2	3	....	....	2	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Short-billed Marsh Wren	15	....	8	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Mockingbird	25	81	88	30	104	35	100	194	106	47	....	9	81	2	25	28	4	90	24
Catbird	17	2	12	1	2	....	1	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Brown Thrasher	17	14	15	2	8	2	1	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	1*	....	....
Robin	419	82	105	47	65	32	7	15	16	9	....	....	....	....	....	....	13	....	....
Hermit Thrush	33	4	2	4	1	7	7	8	3	7	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....
Swainson's Thrush	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1*
Eastern Bluebird	16	....	31	3	8	28	11	2	....	....	....	....	26	....	....	....	....	2	....
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	12	4	2	....	22	....	47	12	17	....	....	25	1	....	5	10	1	....
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	9	1	4	12	17	3	15	8	8	....	1	32	2	2	....	1	2	....
Water Pipit	4	8	4	....	....	20	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Cedar Waxwing	....	39	6	....	82	8	180	150	44	22	....	....	8	....	....	....	12	3	13
Loggerhead Shrike	....	....	2	....	....	5	3	1	1	6	....	....	2	....	....	1	1	5	1
Starling	1200	1588	1010	817	2011	843	500	2311	812	190	200	450,000	315	383	2055	6586	1365	300	579
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Myrtle Warbler	3200	453	793	270	226	30	100	88	6	12	2	9	....	....	....	....	....	....	3
Pine Warbler	....	2	11	....	6	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Palm Warbler	27	40	8	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Yellowthroat	2	....	3	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Yellow-breasted Chat	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Wilson's Warbler	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
House Sparrow	460	249	400	55	837	149	90	694	25	29	60	173	2	78	178	318	80	293
Eastern Meadowlark	807	411	697	311	171	291	100	15	31	92	13	47	5	13	59	11	2

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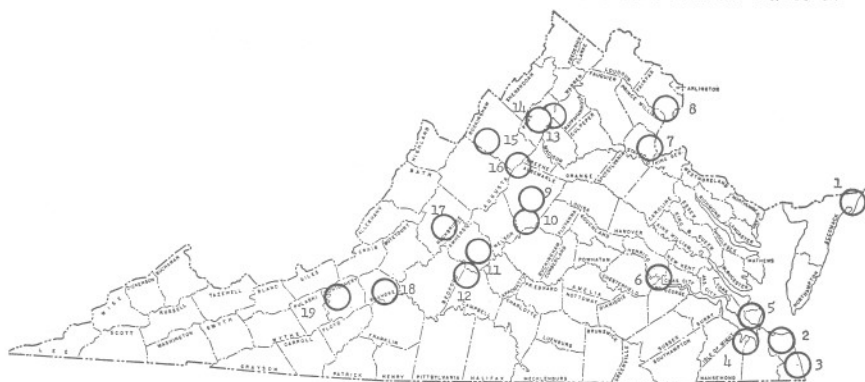
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Red-winged Blackbird	13,200	2685	6269	15,775	1206	85	800	374	26	43	10	75,000
Baltimore Oriole	34*	1*	2*
Rusty Blackbird	8	7	160	106	8	1	15,000*
Boat-tailed Grackle	695	170
Common Grackle	10,000	40	541	121	199	1600	54	152	10	187,500	4
Brown-headed Cowbird	656	204	214	623	289	700	2	34	50	22,500	1	7
Cardinal	127	196	205	38	176	185	220	322	221	219	42	178	12	66	59	19	142	28	76
Dickcissel	1*
Evening Grosbeak	65	80*	27	40	94	34	36	12	71	7	1	34	1	9
Purple Finch	10	31	1	2	8	13	50	71	21	8	64	14	28	7	1
Pine Siskin	63	34	6	3	6	5	4	6	2	29	2	10
American Goldfinch	457	277	136	8	464	67	130	377	71	36	89	44	20	12	3	63
Red Crossbill	20*	1*	4*	23*
Rufous-sided Towhee	60	55	55	38	102	8	27	68	4	2	5	52	2	6	34
Ipswich Sparrow	2
Savannah Sparrow	206	87	161	39	172	9	29	9	1	5	4
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	7	31	2
Seaside Sparrow	4	2
Vesper Sparrow	8
Slate-colored Junco	310	445	395	134	642	230	500	1622	232	484	75	485	91	224	60	36	366	42	140
Tree Sparrow	2	13*	25	45	80	9	25	6	14	19	4	1
Chipping Sparrow	1	2*	2*	2
Field Sparrow	104	131	175	20	194	63	80	191	50	70	1	72	32	1	4	16	25	16
White-crowned Sparrow	7	10	1	40	28	8	20	7	4	44
White-throated Sparrow	1326	784	717	213	595	485	700	474	148	56	52	253	2	8	9	50	55	24
Fox Sparrow	93	110	66	15	201	45	13	11	2	3
Swamp Sparrow	385	132	166	46	16	44	37	96	7	3	10	1	1
Song Sparrow	807	155	216	109	136	125	180	320	138	126	5	137	1	22	10	1	30	29
Snow Bunting	25
Total Species	131	113	110	90	87	87	88	85	60	62	35	60	24	29	53	39	52	45	48
Total Individuals	73,188	25,864	69,207	40,020	24,830	25,062	31,878	11,280	3874	2285	727	753,049	511	1194	3201	7004	3544	1064	1834
Total Party-hours	73	39	56	17.5	51	31	69	140	26	20	23	57	7	8	33	16	35	11	20.5
No. of Observers	17	9	17	4	21	8	14	25	3	2	5	23	3	2	6	2	10	8	12

Table 2. Variation in winter populations of Red-headed Woodpeckers and Hermit Thrushes in Virginia based on Christmas bird counts.

The second column under each bird is the number of individuals seen per 100 party-hours.

Season	Total	Red-headed Woodpecker		Hermit Thrush	
	Party-hours	Total	Per 100 p-h	Total	Per 100 p-h
1955-56	515	23	5	128	25
1956-57	473	6	1	46	10
1957-58	634	21	3	64	10
1958-59	599	50	8	79	13
1959-60	682	95	14	88	13
1960-61	730	15	2	43	6
1961-62	624	4	1	34	5
1962-63	675	134	20	45	7
1963-64	733	47	6	77	11

Figure 1. Locations of the 1963-64 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The count numbers coincide with those used in the text and in Table 1.



IN MEMORIAM: HARRY C. OBERHOLSER

Dr. Harry Church Oberholser, one of the notable figures in American ornithology for the past sixty years, died on Christmas Day 1963 in Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio. He was an official of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for 46 years, entering it in 1895, when it was known as the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy, and retiring in 1941. His service was extended by presidential order for a year past the maximum retirement age. From 1941 to 1947 he acted as Curator of Ornithology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Dr. Oberholser was one of the pioneers in the study of the distribution and migration of North American birds. He helped organize the Federal bird-banding work and directed the early nation-wide inventories of migratory wildfowl. An active systematist, he named, according to the *Washington Post*, some 560 species and subspecies of birds, as well as many genera and several new families.

A voluminous writer, he had to his credit upwards of 900 titles, most of them technical. Among his large popular volumes is his "The Bird Life of

Louisiana." During his later years he was at work on a book on the birds of Texas. While in Austin, Texas, I saw the manuscript which he prepared for this book. It stood nearly two feet thick. The work was planned for four volumes, but it is now being edited down for probable publication to two volumes.

He built up a very remarkable library of ornithology, filling all available space in his Washington home. When he showed this library to the writer, it filled several rooms and overflowed into every corner of the house. Even the wide drawers in the kitchen cabinets were filled with rare and valuable folio editions. He held membership in practically all of the ornithological societies in the world, being elected a Fellow in the American Ornithologists' Union in 1902. Among his many interests outside his professional work was the Sunday School class which for years he taught in Washington. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary Oberholser.

Dr. Oberholser joined the VSO in 1931, the second year of its existence. An active member thereafter, he was a frequent attendant at its meetings.

J. J. MURRAY

VSO LOCAL CLUBS, MARCH 1964

Club Name	Members		Members of V.S.O.		Percentage	
	1963	1964	1963	1964	1963	1964
Cape Henry Bird Club	100	104	39	42	39	40
Damascus Bird Club	18	....	4	....	22	....
Hampton Bird Club	25	30	17	13	68	43
John S. Battle Bird Club	....	....	....	....	....	....
Lynchburg Bird Club	123	....	23	....	19	....
Northern Virginia Bird Club	162	....	60	....	37	....
Richmond Natural History Society	53	....	21	....	40	....
Roanoke Valley Bird Club	149	....	28	....	19	....
Rockbridge Bird Club	40	44	6	6	15	14
Turkey Sag Bird Club	35	....	12	....	34	....
New River Valley Bird Club	....	11	....	....	....	....

NEWS AND NOTES

RECENT DEATHS. VSO members will learn with deep regret of three recent deaths among ornithologists. Jack Perkins, former manager of the Back Bay Refuge and for several terms president of the VSO, died last fall. A memorial is planned for an early issue of *The Raven*. The January issue of *The Auk* brings the news of the unexpected death of Dr. Arthur A. Allen on 17 January at Ithaca, New York. As the editor of *The Auk* remarks, "Dr. Allen's many services to ornithology, at all levels, are legendary." Probably no ornithologist in America, since Dr. Frank Chapman, has been such an inspiration and such a help to amateur ornithologists. The third of these men is Dr. H. C. Oberholser. A memorial to Dr. Oberholser appears in this issue of *The Raven*.

VSO ANNUAL MEETING. Friday and Saturday, 1 and 2 May 1964, are the dates set for the Annual Meeting of the VSO in the Alexandria-Arlington-Falls Church area. The Friday sessions and banquet will be at the Park Arlington Motel, Arlington Boulevard and Court House Road, Arlington 1,

Virginia. The motel is on U. S. 50, between Fort Myer and Arlington National Cemetery. Rates: \$9-\$11 single, \$15 double, and \$2 for each additional person in a double room. Because of the great number of visitors in the Washington area at that season reservations for the night of 1 May should be made as soon as you read this. Be sure to identify yourself as a VSO member. Those who plan to present papers or moving pictures should notify Dr. Robert J. Watson, 2636 Marcey Road, Arlington 7, Virginia.

THE EDITOR RETURNS. The Editor is back in Virginia after an extended and in part frustrating trip around the Caribbean. Panama was disappointing as far as birds were concerned but somewhat exciting. We were refuged back to Miami after two days at the Tivoli Hotel and three days of being shut up in Albroom Air Base. Panamanian snipers cancelled for us the trips planned for Barro Colorado and Cerro Punta. Trinidad was rewarding, especially the Caroni (Scarlet Ibises) and Nariva (parrots) Swamps. Martinique, interesting in many other ways, was not very profitable for birds.

DEADLINES FOR MATERIAL. It should again be emphasized that deadlines for contributions of material for *The Raven* fall on the fifteenth of the month preceding publication, that is, on 15 February, May, August, and November.

REPORTS WANTED ON EVENING GROSBEAKS. Apparently Virginia has had another remarkable invasion in 1963-64 of Evening Grosbeaks. Arthur H. Fast (4924 Rock Spring Road, Arlington 7, Virginia) has been asked to summarize the records for *The Raven*. Please send your records to him by 10 May.

RESEARCH TRIPS. The Executive Committee is interested in planning research trips in various parts of the State. These trips should be made by small groups of three or four or not over five people who are willing to work in the suggested area for several days in early summer, possibly continuing the survey for several summers in the same area. Members interested in this kind of work are asked to write to F. R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26.

ROANOKE BIRD CLUB. The new president of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club is David C. Ochsner, 2615 Lindenwood Drive, Vinton, Virginia. He is Assistant Park Naturalist for the Blue Ridge area.

REPORTS ON RED AND WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS. This seems to be a very unusual year in the State for crossbills. A number of reports are in hand, but it seems best to wait until the June issue for this report also. Send your records direct to F. R. Scott. Include any other northern species except Evening Grosbeaks.

THE BIRD BANDING MITCHELLS. Dorothy and Sydney ('Mike') Mitchell were recently written up, with photographs, in a Peninsula newspaper for their bird banding work at their home in Newport News.

BOOK DISCOUNTS. VSO members should take note of the fact that the Audubon Naturalist Society generously offers to us a 10% discount on books purchased from the Audubon Naturalist Bookshop, 1621 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W., Washington 7, D. C., when the purchase amounts to \$1.00 or more.

VSO MEMBERSHIP. The distribution of VSO members according to the list in the last issue of *The Raven* shows, in addition to the District of Columbia, Ontario, and Sweden, the following 20 states: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

BLUEBIRD BOXES. Royster Lyle of the Rockbridge Bird Club is very much concerned about the scarcity of Bluebirds. He has gotten out a letter to shop instructors in the high schools of Rockbridge County on building nesting boxes for Bluebirds, with a design for a good box and instructions on locating it. He would be glad to send a copy to anyone who is interested. Similar plans are being issued in Lynchburg and other places in the State. Lyle gives one encouraging Bluebird count, 22 birds listed on a recent trip over the 30 miles from Charlottesville to Orange.

SPRING HAWK FLIGHT. On 18 April 1963 Max Carpenter, Jack Gwynn, and Ned Thornton were checking deer pellets on a wildlife clearing in Barbs Gap, just north of Orkney Springs, Shenandoah County. Happening to look up, they were surprised to see several hawks riding thermals and heading northward. Checking more carefully, they counted 65 hawks passing northward in 30 minutes. Except for one Red-tailed Hawk, all of these were Broad-winged Hawks. At the time the wind was coming very strongly from the southwest. Migrating flocks of hawks are very rarely reported in the spring.

RED-TAILED HAWK AND RAVENS ASSOCIATED. Richard B. Almy (334 Grand Avenue, Front Royal) reports twice seeing a Red-tailed Hawk and Ravens in close association in the air in the Shenandoah National Park: one Red-tail and two Ravens soaring together near Front Royal on 12 October 1963; and one Red-tail and one Raven together in the air at Booten's Gap, 55 miles south of Front Royal, on 20 October 1963. Occasionally one of the latter two would make a slight pass at the other, apparently more playful than belligerent.

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW NEAR NATURAL BRIDGE. On 27 August 1963 Joshua Womeldorf brought to J. J. Murray a Chuck-will's-widow which he had just picked up by the side of a road in Rockbridge County, a mile or so west of Natural Bridge. It was a female which had just completed the molt, much emaciated and with no sign of fat whatever. This is the first record, so far as we have been able to ascertain, anywhere in the Appalachian mountain area.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE. Charles O. Handley, Jr., heard two singing at Falls Church on 9 November 1963.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER BANDED. Mrs. Elizabeth D. Peacock banded a Connecticut Warbler in Gloucester County on 24 September 1963.

ALBINO CARDINAL. Mrs. Ruth Smiley Venn of Salem has been seeing at her window feeder in the past fall an albino female cardinal. The bird is grayish-white, with pink wing and tail feathers, a pink crest line on her light head, pink bill, and dark eyes.

The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

VOLUME 35

JUNE 1964

NUMBER 2



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, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

President: MRS. JAMES W. WILTSHIRE, 201 Woodland Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Vice-President: CHARLES W. HACKER, 218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton, Virginia.

Secretary: ROBERT J. WATSON, 2636 Marcey Road, Arlington 7, Virginia.

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Published four times a year in March, June, September and December at Charlottesville, Virginia. Membership includes subscription to *The Raven*. Annual subscription price to non-members is \$3.00. Individual issues are priced at 75¢.

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The business and mailing address for *The Raven* is Box 57, Charlottesville, Virginia.

THE VSO—1930-1964

By J. J. MURRAY

This meeting marks the thirty-fifth year of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. The idea of a State group for the study of Virginia birds was proposed in 1929 by Professor Ruskin S. Freer of Lynchburg College. From Miss Katharine Stuart, Mrs. Joseph Dise, and others, he collected a list of people in the State who were interested in birds. Miss Stuart, who was then president of the Alexandria, Arlington, and Mt. Vernon Audubon Society, died in August 1929, before plans for the organization were completed. Mrs. Dise, who had long been a teacher in Amherst County but who was at this time out of the State, became one of the charter members.

Freer came to Lexington to discuss this idea with M. G. Lewis, Rockbridge County Agricultural Agent, and the writer. We agreed to support the project, and in December 1929 Freer sent out a mimeographed letter to 65 prospects. From some 35 of these he received replies, nearly all of them favorable. We then called a meeting for 7 December 1929 at Lynchburg College to consider the organization of a Virginia group. Of the 18 people who came few had had much field experience but all were enthusiastic. By the time the list of charter members was closed in April we had 42 members. Of these the following after 35 years are still on the roll: Mrs. C. L. Burgess, R. P. Carroll, Miss Bertha Daniel, A. O. English, R. S. Freer, Dr. Florence S. Hague, C. O. Handley, Sr., Miss Lena B. Henderson, J. J. Murray, Mrs. B. A. Ragsdale, and Mrs. James W. Wiltshire (then Miss Grace Taylor).

Two men were soon elected as Life Members: Dr. William Cabell Rives, a physician then retired and living in Washington but formerly of Newport, Rhode Island, and author of *A Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias*; and Dr. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., of Salem, retired Professor of Biology at V. P. I.

The name first used, the Virginia Society of Ornithologists, was almost at once revised to the less pretentious title of Virginia Society of Ornithology. There are some who at times hint that this is still too big a name for so humble a group. The officers elected to guide the infant group were: President, Ruskin S. Freer; Vice-President, C. O. Handley, of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Lena B. Henderson, of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg. The editor for *The Raven*, appointed at that meeting, still carries on.

It was agreed from the beginning that the society would have two primary aims. The first was "to draw together the bird students of the State into a group where they may know and help one another;" and the second was "to gather and assemble data on the birds of Virginia . . . and thus to lay the foundation for the preparation of a revised catalogue of the birds of Virginia." Although all of us in that early group and most of those who have come into the society since were of strictly amateur standing, it was decided at the first that our aims would be chiefly scientific, in the sense that we were seeking to work up an accurate study of the status of Virginia birds. All would be welcome, however slight their knowledge or casual their interest, but we would always be more concerned with thoroughness of work than with the number of members. While the society has grown, both in membership and in the scope of its work, we have adhered to these early objectives. "It was made clear that for our purposes a report on the status through the year in any locality of a common bird, such as the Cardinal, was of more value than the occurrence of some rare species."

C. O. Handley later made the suggestion, which was adopted by the Executive Committee, that the name of our bulletin would be *The Raven*. We were helped in our infant months by a generous appropriation from the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, which enabled us to start

our journal. At this time only two Southern states were publishing state journals, Kentucky, begun in 1925, and Florida, begun in 1928. The Tennessee Ornithological Society initiated *The Migrant* in the same year as *The Raven*, but a few weeks later. Our first issue came out in January 1930.

Two histories of the work of the VSO have been published. The first was "A History of the Virginia Society of Ornithology," by Ruskin S. Freer (*The Raven*, 15, 24-31). The second was read at the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting, "The Contribution of the V. S. O. to Virginia Ornithology," by the present writer (*The Raven*, 25, 54-57). The second of these papers began with the statement, "Pre-VSO ornithology in Virginia was an individual matter, with the individuals few and far between. To be sure, there had always been an active group of professional workers around Washington, (a) few of whom lived on our side of the river and others of whom had been doing field work and collecting in our State. Their activities, however, were centered in the Capitol City. There was also a rather active Audubon Society in Alexandria Apart from these only two or three people in the State were making any serious effort at bird study in 1929."

The first move toward the realization of our objectives was the publication in 1931 of "A Consolidated List of the Birds of Nine Local Regions of Virginia." This list, which included 279 forms, was the basis for our future field work.

Our most important publication, "A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia," a booklet of 113 pages, was issued in 1952. It was a cooperative undertaking in which many VSO members had a part. It was understood at the time that this was simply another preliminary venture, issued to show the gaps in our knowledge rather than with any claim to be a thorough study of bird distribution in Virginia. Additions to and revisions of this "Check-List" were published in *The Raven* in May-June 1953, July-August 1953, June-July 1955, May-June 1957, and June 1963. We hope in the not too distant future to publish a new edition.

The "Check-List" presented a selected bibliography (pages 20-26), covering the work done in the State through 1951. The following regional lists, each of them based on a minimum of five years of work and some of them covering much more time, are particularly important: Cape Henry Region (John H. Grey, Jr., 1950); Richmond (F. R. Scott, 1951); Albemarle County (John H. Grey, Jr., and C. E. Stevens, Jr., 1949); Amelia and Brunswick Counties (John B. Lewis, 1938); Chatham (Eleanor Herrick, 1937); and Rockbridge County (J. J. Murray, 1944; later revised and published by the VSO as *Virginia Avifauna Number 1*). Also, *The Birds of Lynchburg, Virginia, and Vicinity*, by Ruskin S. Freer, was published as a *Bulletin of Lynchburg College* (Lynchburg, Virginia, January 1939, pages 1-27). Many other shorter faunal lists are noted in the bibliography in the "Check-List," plotting almost the whole map of Virginia, from the Eastern Shore to Bristol, and lacking only the lower Shenandoah Valley, the lower Potomac River, and extreme Southwest Virginia.

The most important life history papers in *The Raven* prior to 1952 treat of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Mrs. A. C. Reed, 13, 34-41); the Brown-headed Nuthatch (Mrs. Floy Burford, 14, 34-37); the Mockingbird (Mrs. A. C. Reed, 17, 31-40); and the Brown Thrasher (Edna Becker, 12, 32-43).

The twenty-fifth anniversary meeting, making a sentimental pilgrimage to our birthplace, was held at Lynchburg College. At this meeting Murray presented the history of the first twenty-five years, while Grey outlined a program for the future. The climax of the meeting was the address by Dr. Maurice Brooks on "Southern Appalachia as a Place for Bird Study," in which he not only gave a fascinating study of the ecology of this region but pointed out opportunities for significant future field work (*The Raven*, 25, 144-751).

The membership of the VSO has never been large but it has shown a steady

increase from 42 charter members in 1930 to 387 members in December 1963. The growth of the membership in the intervening years ran as follows: 1934, 68; 1939, about 70; 1944, 132; 1949, 196; 1954, 300; 1959, 318; 1964, 387.

A bibliography of the more important articles on faunal distribution and life-history of birds which have appeared in *The Raven* since the publication of the 1952 "Check-List" is appended to this paper. Two of them call for special mention as among the most important work done by VSO members. The VSO was the inspiration for the only Ph. D. degree in ornithology ever given by a Virginia institution. This was awarded in 1938 by the University of Virginia to Dr. D. Ralph Hostetter for his thesis on the "Life History of the Carolina Junco." This thesis was published in a shortened form in *The Raven* (32, 97-170). The other publication was "The Cattle Egret at Chincoteague, Virginia," by Jacob M. Valentine, Jr. (*The Raven*, 29, 67-96). This is probably the best study made of this bird since the appearance of the species in North America.

Other significant papers in *The Raven* from this period are the following: "Nesting Ecology of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Virginia," by C. C. Steirly (28, 24-36); "A Study of Tree Species Preference of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker," by C. C. Steirly (32, 31-33); "The Fulvous Tree Duck Invasion into Southeastern Virginia," by Paul W. Sykes, Jr. (32, 60-63); and "Further Observations on the Yellow-crowned Night Heron," by Mrs. Colgate W. Darden (33, 3-6).

Some important faunal lists have appeared in the past ten years. The Editor has continued his studies of faunal zones in Virginia and published several papers in *The Raven* and elsewhere, among them "Biotic Zonation in the Southern Appalachians" (*The Raven*, 25, 92-96). Other papers in *The Raven* in this and allied fields are as follows: "The Birds of Pittsylvania County, Virginia," by Robert B. Eggleston and Royster Lyle, Jr. (23, 36-54); "The Summer Birds of Prince William Forest Park," by James Baird (23, 77-84); "Notes on Birds around Front Royal, Virginia," by John W. Taylor (24, 18-23); "Ornithological Field Work Needed in Virginia," by John H. Grey, Jr., and F. R. Scott (30, 38-46); "Bird Specimens from Assateague Island and Neighboring Areas," by Bernard Feinstein (31, 33-43); "Recent Records of Interest from Northern Virginia," by Thomas D. Burleigh (33, 3-6); "Population Studies of the 1929 Foray of the Brooks Bird Club at Mountain Lake, Virginia," by E. R. Chandler (31, 63-67); "Preliminary Report on Mourning Dove Food Habits in Piedmont Virginia," by J. L. Chamberlain (31, 101-104).

A series of area descriptions appeared in *The Raven* in 1954 and 1955: "The Eastern Shore of Virginia," by F. R. Scott (25, 70-77); "The Washington Region," by James W. Eike and Robert J. Watson (25, 116-119); "The Richmond Area," by F. R. Scott (26, 33-37).

Special surveys of the recent invasions of the Evening Grosbeak were published in *The Raven* by Robert O. Paxton (July-August 1952, May-June 1958, July-August 1960); J. J. Murray (November-December 1961); Murray & Paxton (June 1962); Arthur H. Fast (December 1962).

In the early years of the VSO there was very little bird banding done in Virginia, but in the past 20 years, stimulated, I am sure, by the Evening Grosbeak invasions which began in 1944, there has been a rapid increase in this type of field work. This has resulted in a much better knowledge of the movements of birds, and, which is less important, in the addition of a number of exotic birds to our list. The largest part of this banding has been done in Northern Virginia, where Arthur Fast and Mrs. Elizabeth D. Peacock have been the guiding lights. In the spring of 1947, when there were large numbers of Cedar Waxwings present, Fast banded 875 of these birds, or more than twice as many as were banded by all others in the United States and Canada. Large numbers of Pine Siskins, Purple Finches, Juncos, and White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows have been banded in this area. From

1946 to the present Fast banded 23,000 birds of 46 species. Mrs. Peacock has had remarkable success not only in banding in general but in getting unusual records and additions to the Virginia list. Others who have banded in the same general area are: Jackson M. Abbott, Mrs. William Babcock, Mrs. David Beach, Mrs. Herbert M. Church, Mrs. Dorothy Dreesse, Col. W. A. Houston, Mr. & Mrs. William Mull, Mrs. Mary Pulley, and John Terborgh. Rev. & Mrs. George M. Smith have banded at Strasburg, and A. O. English at Roanoke. F. R. Scott has worked at Richmond, on the Eastern Shore, and elsewhere. *The Raven* was privileged to copy from *Atlantic Naturalist* (January-March, 1961) an article by Fast, "What We Learned about Birds from Banding" (32, 39-48).

We are still not doing much in the important field of population studies. Such work involves a good deal of drudgery and a great deal of time but such studies both in relation to breeding and winter populations are important. Steve Messenger did a good winter study in Cumberland County in 1952-53 (*The Raven*, 25, 80-83). Other winter counts have been made by Col. and Mrs. Louis B. Ely, Gertrude Prior, C. E. Stevens, Jr., C. C. Steirly, and R. J. Watson. Some breeding bird censuses have been reported by Morton Marshall, J. J. Murray, Robert O. Paxton, Mrs. A. C. Reed, F. R. Scott, and C. C. Steirly, and by the Brooks Bird Club at Mountain Lake. We badly need more intensive cooperative studies of small areas during the breeding season.

The VSO, while still not large in numbers, is well established as a working group. We have a rich and varied territory, stretching from salt water to more than a mile high on mountain peaks of Rogers and White Top, touching the Austroriparian Zone in the southeast and the Canadian in the west, with wide stretches of Carolinian and Alleghanian territory in between. We need continually as individuals, regularly in small working groups, and occasionally as a whole force, to apply ourselves to the problems and opportunities of ornithology in the Old Dominion.

[Read at the 1964 Meeting of the VSO]

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THE 1964 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

BY ROBERT J. WATSON, SECRETARY

The 1964 annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology was held on 1 May 1964 in the Jefferson Room of the Park-Arlington Motel, in Arlington. The Northern Virginia Chapter served as host for the meeting. Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, President of the VSO, opened the meeting and called on James W. Eike, President of the Chapter, who outlined the program and extended a welcome to those attending. Mrs. Wiltshire responded with thanks and then appointed a Courtesy Committee consisting of Bernard Thielen, Mrs.

W. P. Smith, and Don Messersmith to prepare suitable resolutions expressing the appreciation of members for the work of those responsible for the meeting. (These resolutions were submitted and approved the following day, after the luncheon which concluded the field trip.)

J. J. Murray led off the afternoon portion of the program with a summary of "The VSO, 1930-1964," in which he cast a backward eye over the Society's history and looked ahead toward the work still to be done. D. R. Hostetter described birds seen on a recent tour to East Africa. Robert W. Ficken, of the University of Maryland, presented the findings of an intensive field study of certain behavior characteristics of Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers and their hybrids. A new method of trapping terns and skimmers for banding purposes was described by John H. Grey.

A break for refreshments, served by ladies of the Northern Virginia Chapter, was followed by a talk by John V. Dennis, of the U. S. National Museum, on woodpecker damage to utility poles, and a report by Thomas L. Kimball on the work of the National Wildlife Federation, of which he is Executive Director. Col. and Mrs. Louis B. Ely closed the afternoon program with a display of slides, taken by themselves and by Miss Helen Goldstick, which illustrated the charm of "Spring in Virginia."

The evening banquet was attended by 72 people, and was followed by a short business meeting. President Wiltshire announced the organization of a new chapter, the New River Bird Club, in Radford and vicinity. C. W. Hacker, chairman of the Trip Committee, outlined plans for projected trips to Skyland and Wachapreague.

Paul S. Dulaney presented the report of the Nominating Committee, which consisted of himself as chairman, James W. Eike, and Mrs. Floy Burford. He submitted the following nominees:

For President: Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Lynchburg.

For Vice-President: C. W. Hacker, Hampton.

For Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington.

For Treasurer: Helen L. Goldstick, Arlington.

For the Executive Committee: Arthur H. Fast, Arlington; Charles E. Stevens, Charlottesville; Mrs. Sally Nelson, Roanoke.

With Mr. Dulaney in the chair, a motion to close the nominations was carried. The Secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the above nominees.

Mrs. Wiltshire then turned the meeting over to Vice-President Hacker, who called on Arthur Fast to introduce the principal speakers, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Sutherland. Their excellent motion picture of "Glamor Birds of the Everglades" was extremely well received.

OBITUARIES

JACK E. PERKINS

We realize that no mere tribute of words can be a fitting memorial to a man. It is only in the memory of those who knew him, in the hearts of those who loved him, and in the lives of those whose lives were bettered by having known him, that the true memorial lives.

Yet words can crystallize and shape into form, perhaps better than any other medium, our own thoughts and reactions. And however inadequate they may appear, they still have the power of stimulating our reflections and recalling our memories of the departed dead.

The biographical facts of Jack Perkins's life are simple. The son of Charles Edward Perkins and May Dorothy Conaty, he was born April 27, 1914, at New Haven, Connecticut. He was educated in the schools of New Haven and

New Orleans; he graduated from Tulane University in 1938, and went into the services of the Biological Survey. He accompanied the Byrd Expedition to the Antarctic in 1939-1941 in the capacity of biologist. He was a member of Operation Highjump in 1946-47. Most of his career was spent in Conservation and Wildlife work. He was the manager of the Lacassine Wildlife Refuge when his death came on November 4, 1963. For three years, 1954-1956, he was President of the VSO.

It is usually difficult for one man to appraise another, for each man presents to the world a mask of self-protection, as it were. Jack was so sincere, so earnest, so strongly his own self that no such protective mask appeared. His nature stood forth so clearly that it could not be mistaken. Here there was no deception and no uncertainty. One instinctively felt, even upon first acquaintance, that he had known Jack for a lifetime.

He was possessed of few faults and many virtues. He was a man of wide experiences and accomplishments, and this must have been a source of quiet satisfaction to him, yet he seldom spoke of his achievements. If his family life was aught than ideal, we never heard of it. By any standard, his life was a success.

When we come to appraise the qualities that made Jack what he was, one image emerges, clearer and more compelling than all the rest. It was the inner nature of the man himself that stood forth preeminent. Here was the strength and the self-reliance to uphold his concept of what was right and good. He had, and in abundance, the one gift to which all other attributes must pay homage—the gift of character. This, those of us who knew and admired him, this, we shall remember to the end of our days.

(This memorial was prepared by one of Jack Perkins' neighbors in Lake Arthur, Louisiana)

MRS. CHARLES W. HACKER

Jean Andrews Hacker, 44, of Hampton, Virginia, died unexpectedly on 17 March 1964. She was born in Kinston, North Carolina. She is survived by her husband, Charles W. Hacker, a son, Carl Hacker, a graduate student at Rice, and a daughter, Lynn.

(Mrs. Walter Post Smith, who prepared this obituary, was requested by the family to make it only a brief notice.)

IVEY F. LEWIS

Dr. Ivey Foreman Lewis, 81, retired dean of the University of Virginia and chief officer of numerous national scientific organizations and research councils, died 16 March 1964.

Dr. Lewis joined the University faculty as a professor of biology in 1915 and served as its dean from 1933 and was also dean of the college of arts and sciences when he retired in 1953. He was later named a professor emeritus.

He was one of the founders of the Virginia Academy of Science and served as its president in 1924. From 1934-46 he was director of the University's Mountain Lake biological station.

Before joining the University of Virginia faculty he held the chair of biology at Randolph-Macon College and taught at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Missouri.

He was graduated from the University of North Carolina with BA and MS degrees and took his doctorate from Johns Hopkins. He also studied at the University of Bonn in Germany and was awarded an honorary doctor of science degree from the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Lewis was a member of numerous professional and academic societies

including Phi Beta Kappa, Zeta Psi, Sigma Xi, the Raven Society and the Colonnade Club.

(The information above is taken from an obituary in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of 17 March 1964.)

Dr. Lewis was a charter member of the VSO. His interest in birds and in the activities of the VSO was always keen. Occupied with administrative duties and specializing in other fields in biology, he did not have much time for field work in ornithology, but he attended meetings of the VSO whenever it was possible and from time to time sent in field notes to *The Raven*.

He was a widely recognized and respected scholar, a deeply religious man, and an exceedingly popular teacher.

NEWS AND NOTES

CHECK-LIST REVISION. We hope next spring to publish a revised edition of our book, "A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia." All who have contributed lists for their areas are requested to send to the Editor as soon as possible any additions or changes since their last reports. Any new information from other members is greatly desired. The Executive Committee has set a cut-off date for changes for this revision of 31 December 1964.

HAWK LEAFLETS. The VSO has a supply of leaflets for hawk identification. A copy is being mailed with each copy of this issue of *The Raven*.

EXTENSION OF TIME ON GROSBEAK REPORTS. Arthur Fast is not planning to publish the 1963-1964 Evening Grosbeak summaries until the September or possibly even the December issue of *The Raven*. Consequently he wants reports on the birds through May instead of just to 10 May as originally set.

BACK BAY MANAGER. The new Manager at the Back Bay Migratory Wildfowl Refuge is Donald R. Ambrosen.

VSO ARM BANDS. A few VSO arm bands are still available at one dollar from Mrs. Hawes Coleman, Jr., 108 Gaymont Road, Richmond 29. These are to be worn on the left sleeve, with the top a few inches below the shoulder seam.

1964 FIELD TRIPS. Skyland, 18-20 June, with headquarters at Hepburn Cottage; Wachapreague, 8-9 August; hawk flight watching, Big Flat Mountain, 19-20 September. Information may be secured from Charles W. Hacker, 218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton.

BOOK DISCOUNTS. We again remind our members that the Audubon Naturalist Society of Washington generously offers members of the VSO their 10% discount on the purchase of books to the amount of \$1.00 or more from the Audubon Naturalist Bookshop, 1621 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W., Washington 7, D. C.

THE SISKIN. Under this title the Northern Virginia Chapter of the VSO publishes an interesting and useful news bulletin, listing field trips and other activities of the chapter.

BREEDING BIRD STUDIES. It was indicated at the 1964 annual meeting of the VSO that there are at least four neglected areas in Virginia which should be surveyed during the breeding season. The following members

were named as coordinators for the workers in these four areas: extreme Southwest Virginia (Lee-Wise-Scott Counties), J. J. Murray, 6 Jordan Street, Lexington; upper Wise County (Kentucky border), John H. Grey, Box 445, Williamsburg; the lower Shenandoah Valley, D. H. Messersmith, Department of Biology, Radford College, Radford; the lower Potomac area, F. R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26. This does not mean that the men named will be working in the areas of which they are coordinators but simply that people interested in a particular area may write to the man in charge of that area, and that he will then organize the group of workers for the area. It is too late, of course, for such work this summer, except where it has already been planned. Such work should be done in early June in the first three areas named, and in late May in the lower Potomac. Grey and Murray had already planned to spend the first week in June 1964 in Lee County.

SHOVELERS NEAR WYTHEVILLE. Bill Akers of Radford saw 6 male and 4 female Shovelers on the New River at Jackson's Ferry, 15 miles south-east of Wytheville, on 28 March 1964. This species is very uncommon in Western Virginia.

LATE HATCHING OF BOBWHITES. W. F. Rountrey reports the hatching of a brood of Bobwhites at his home in Norfolk on 18 September 1963. He writes that this is the second time he has had to rescue young Bobwhites from a lawn mower because they were too small to navigate in the high grass.

COMMON GALLINULE AT WARM SPRINGS. Mrs. Carl Byer writes that an exhausted Common (Florida) Gallinule was picked up on Warm Springs Mountain, Bath County, in April 1963. After being kept for three days the bird was released.

OYSTERCATCHER AT HAMPTON. An American Oystercatcher was seen at Grandview Beach, Hampton, on 15 March 1964 by Walter Post Smith, C. W. Hacker, and D. H. Messersmith. This is not only a very early date but one of the few records for the Peninsula.

SHORE-BIRDS AND PHALAROPE AT CHINCOTEAGUE. On 27 May 1964 F. R. Scott saw at Chincoteague a Baird's Sandpiper, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and a Northern Phalarope.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER ON ASSATEAGUE ISLAND. Peter W. Post (575 West 183 Street, New York), in company with several other observers, saw a Buff-breasted Sandpiper in the Virginia part of Assateague Island on 1 May 1964. The men in the group are familiar with this bird on Long Island in fall and noted all the critical points. They also realize that this is possibly the only spring record on the Atlantic coast up to that time. Scott's record above is another.

BLACK TERN IN SPRING AT LITTLE CREEK. G. W. Gibbins saw a Black Tern at the Naval Amphibious Base at Little Creek, Norfolk, on 3 May 1964.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE IN WINTER AT RADFORD. Messersmith photographed a Baltimore Oriole at a feeding station in Radford on 30 December 1963. The bird was seen by others once before and once after this date.

SCARLET TANAGER AND BLUE GROSBEAK AT NEWPORT NEWS. Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell reports 3 male Scarlet Tanagers at her home at Newport News on 26 April 1964, and a Blue Grosbeak on 25 and 26 April 1964.

The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

VOLUME 35

SEPTEMBER 1964

NUMBER 3



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, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

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Published four times a year in March, June, September and December at Charlottesville, Virginia. Membership includes subscription to *The Raven*. Annual subscription price to non-members is \$3.00. Individual issues are priced at 75¢.

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The business and mailing address for *The Raven* is Box 57, Charlottesville, Virginia.

THE 1963-64 CROSSBILL FLIGHT IN VIRGINIA

F. R. SCOTT

Northern and western Virginia was host this past winter to the greatest flight of crossbills during this century. More surprising still, the White-winged Crossbill, considered the more northern species, was more common in the state than the Red Crossbill. Because of the rarity of a big crossbill flight in Virginia, this occurrence is examined at some length below. Detailed records of each species are tabulated at the end.

From a national standpoint, this crossbill invasion has been briefly summarized by Baird (1964) and James (1964), and the interested reader is referred to these papers and the more local reviews by Hall *et al.* (1964). There will undoubtedly be other analyses of this remarkable flight as yet unpublished. It will suffice to say here that the flights of both crossbills were general in nature and not purely local, and that the movements of both species appeared to indicate a dispersion from a wide area rather than from a single center. For the East Coast Cruickshank (1964) evolved the significant statistics that of the 144 Christmas bird counts from Massachusetts through Maryland published in *Audubon Field Notes*, 77 (over half) listed the White-winged Crossbill, whereas 51 (over a third) noted the Red Crossbill.

White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera* Gmelin

In his recent check-list of Virginia birds Murray (1952) listed only four state records for this species, and since then about five additional records have appeared in the pages of *The Raven*. How many individual records there were of this bird in Virginia this past winter will have to remain unknown, but the data reveal that the White-winged Crossbill was reliably reported from 30 different localities by at least 52 observers.

The first appearance of the bird was in Amherst County (near Lynchburg) on 31 December, but the Valley and northern Virginia quickly reported birds in early January. The eastern limit of the species south of northern Virginia was, with one exception, the foothills of the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge (Lynchburg and Charlottesville areas), and to the south the records extended to the Tennessee line (Damascus, Washington County). The one "extralimital" record was from Gloucester County on the lower York River. By mid March the Blue Ridge and Valley birds had left, but a very few lingered in northern Virginia until 2 May.

Many of the records tabulated below consist of only a few birds often seen in a backyard near or at a feeding station. The largest group was a remarkable flight seen at the Peaks of Otter on 2 February by Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Moore which consisted of approximately 300 mixed crossbills, of which about 40%, or 120 birds, were White-winged Crossbills. Elsewhere, up to 20 in a flock were reported in northern Virginia, 30 or more in Amherst County, and smaller numbers elsewhere. The White-winged Crossbill very definitely outnumbered the Red Crossbill wherever the two occurred, with the exception of Albemarle County.

There appear to be no summer records of the White-winged Crossbill from Virginia, though some were found in the mountains of West Virginia during the summer of 1941 (Brooks, 1944; Brooks and Lunk, 1942), and there is one summer record from Maryland (Stewart and Robbins, 1958).

The White-winged Crossbill was apparently associated principally with various coniferous habitats, particularly pines and hemlocks. Hemlocks were reported as a source of food in Amherst County, and several observers reported the birds feeding on the ground under pines and hemlocks. The birds seen 2 May at Fort Hunt were feeding on elm seeds.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Linnaeus

The Red Crossbill has had a long and irregular history in Virginia. Briefly, it might be termed a highly irregular visitor throughout the year, with most records occurring from November to April principally in the mountains or in northern Virginia. This species is highly erratic throughout its range and may nest at any time of the year. Thus birds seen during the summer cannot automatically be assumed to be breeding birds (Bailey *et al.*, 1953; Griscom, 1937). Griscom (1937) in particular describes such incredible nomadism as a distinct subspecies invading and actually breeding for a year or two well within the breeding range of another distinct subspecies.

During the past winter in Virginia the Red Crossbill was somewhat more local in its distribution than the White-winged Crossbill. The first appearance of this bird was in the Blue Ridge of Rockingham County on 16 November, and there were a few other records in the Blue Ridge, the upper Valley, and Albemarle County up to the end of the year. In northern Virginia the first birds did not appear until 19 January, and most records seemed to be in March and April. The species was reported south in the western part of the state to Bedford, Montgomery, and Tazewell Counties (one record each), and in the east there were three records from the Eastern Shore and one from Dismal Swamp. The birds remained until May 29 in Fairfax County, May 30 on the Eastern Shore, and June 2 in Charlottesville. In Highland County there were two June and July records, and there was a single report at Skyland in the Blue Ridge in June. A few birds apparently summered on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and a number were seen during June and July in various places in West Virginia a short distance from the Highland County, Virginia, border.

Curiously, the largest flock reported was the one record from Bedford County, where Mr. and Mrs. Moore estimated 180 Red and 120 White-winged Crossbills in three flocks at the Peaks of Otter on 2 February. Other counts included up to 20 on the Eastern Shore, 17 in northern Virginia, and up to 23 in the central Blue Ridge. Strangely, the Red Crossbill outnumbered the White-wing only in Albemarle County and nearby parts of the Blue Ridge. Over-all, the Red Crossbill was reported in 23 localities by over 40 observers.

Like the White-winged Crossbills, the Red Crossbill showed a preference for coniferous habitat, especially pines. In Albemarle County Stevens found it particularly in Table Mountain and pitch pines, but only once in hemlocks. In northern Virginia both Mrs. M. B. Peacock and Miss Marcia Lakeman noted these birds eating sunflower seeds.

It is apparent that the Red Crossbill was far more common in the mid-Atlantic states during the nineteenth century. Maynard (1898) reported it as being an irregular winter visitor, "sometimes abundant" in the Washington area. Richmond, the compiler of a tabulated list in Maynard's book, described it as "formerly rare and irregular; now common in winter." Even Cooke (1929) reported it as "sometimes common" in winter, whereas Stewart and Robbins (1958) more recently termed it "rare and irregular" in Maryland and Washington, D. C.

Following invasions of the type described here, the Red Crossbill has been known to nest for one or two seasons far from its normal breeding range (Griscom, 1937). Presumably, that has occurred in the Southern Appalachians, but whether there is a resident breeding population here or not still seems to be in dispute. Positive evidence of this, however, seems to be accumulating, and there have been numerous indications of breeding, at least in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee (see, for example, Burleigh, 1941; Stupka, 1963). I cannot find any adequate breeding evidence from the spruce belt of West Virginia (centered on the Cheat Mountains), but the presence of the birds here in summer year after year is certainly suggestive (Lunk and

Brooks, 1940; also see recent volumes of *Audubon Field Notes* and field notes published in *The Redstart*). Some old breeding evidence from Piedmont Maryland (Stewart and Robbins, 1958) apparently referred to birds lingering after a winter flight and not to a resident population.

Virginia does not have sufficient northern coniferous habitat to sustain a resident population of crossbills, but there is enough for areas of the state to serve as temporary breeding areas for a year or two. Virginia, in fact, apparently has the only Red Crossbill nest report for the Southern Appalachians (Jones, 1932), a fact overlooked by a number of authors. This nest was reported under construction in the Bristol area on 1 June 1932. F. M. Jones, the observer, did not specify the exact location, but he reported the nest in a fir tree and a hundred feet from where a Golden-crowned Kinglet was also nest building. This immediately limits the area to one of perhaps three mountain tops in Russell, Smyth, and Grayson Counties, and the fact that Jones was known to visit Whitetop habitually (Jones, 1936), the only one of the three that had easy access, is rather suggestive.

Murray (1952) has listed most of the summer records from Virginia. In addition, S. M. Russell (1952) reported seeing 23 Red Crossbills on Mt. Rogers, on the Grayson-Smyth County line, on 13 June 1949, of which at least 8 appeared to be young. On 19 June 1949 he saw 5, including one immature, at the same location. These observations were at 4850 feet elevation, which was below the spruce-fir level. Finally, the VSO field trip to Mt. Rogers and Whitetop in 1961 reported at least 25 Red Crossbills in the spruce and fir areas on both 10 and 11 June (P. S. Dulaney, J. W. Eike, F. R. Scott, C. E. Stevens, *et al.*), principally on Whitetop. The possibility of the Red Crossbill nesting in Virginia later this year or early next year cannot be overlooked. Areas which should be checked for this include the Whitetop, Mt. Rogers, and Beartown Mountain area of southwestern Virginia, western Highland County near the West Virginia line, and the Skyland and Lumberlost area of Shenandoah National Park.

Detailed Records of the White-winged Crossbill

Northern Virginia

Arlington County

Marcey Road, 2 on 24 March (R. J. Watson).

Fairfax County

1. McLean, "several" on 20 January (M. Rosenquist, *vide* R. L. Pyle).
2. Vienna, 1 dead male, 8 January (Mrs. Laurence Gibson, *vide* J. W. Eike); 2 on 4 March (Mrs. D. Smiley, *vide* E. G. Davis).
3. Oakton, 5 on 15 January—1 male and 1 female collected (W. A. Weber, *vide* P. A. DuMont).
4. Pine Ridge, 8 January to 17 March by many observers; maximum of 15 to 20 on 19 January (Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Rule, Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Peacock, J. W. Eike, H. L. Goldstick, Mrs. R. L. Pyle, *et al.*). Mrs. Peacock also banded 6 birds, an adult male on 28 February and an adult male, an adult female, and 3 subadult males on 13 March.
5. Burke, 2 to 3 from 9 January to 5 February (Mary Pulley).
6. Falls Church, a "flock" on 11 and 13 January (Mrs. Bruce Simpson, *vide* R. L. Pyle).
7. Cobbdale, 6 males and 5 females, 2 to 25 January (Mary Pulley).
8. Fort Hunt, 6 (including at least 4 males and 1 female) on 2 May (J. M. Abbott, D. F. Keeney, D. H. Messersmith, F. R. Scott, C. E. Stevens).
9. Fort Belvoir, 6 on 24 March and 1 on 3 April (J. M. Abbott).
10. Stratford Landing, 12, 4 January to mid February (C. G. Petrow, *vide* J. M. Abbott).

Prince William County

Conway Robinson Memorial State Forest near Gainesville, 16 on 9 January (J. W. Eike).

Fauquier County

Catlett, first seen 22 January, last seen 9 February (Mrs. Louis B. Ely).

*Upper Piedmont***Albemarle County**

Charlottesville, 12 on 9 and 10 February (J. E. Ames, III); 1 male and 1 female with 8 Red Crossbills on 9 February (R. S. Merkel); 1 female on 22 February (R. S. Merkel and C. E. Stevens).

Amherst County

1. Breezy Hill Farm, 25-30 seen almost daily, 31 December to about 16 January (Mrs. R. E. Ricketts, *vide* R. S. Freer).
2. Sweet Briar, 3 females on 2 January (Gertrude Prior); "large flock" near Sweet Briar on U. S. 29, 7 January (Carter and Janet Ambler, Mrs. Talmage Brown, *vide* Freer); apparently the same flock seen in the same place on 8 January (a Dr. Bricken, *vide* Freer).
3. Near Galts Mills, 1 male and 2 females on 9 and 10 January (Mrs. C. W. Harris, *vide* Freer).
4. Madison Heights, 1 on 24 February (L. J. Uttal, *vide* Freer).

Lynchburg

Garland-Rodes School, 1 male found dead on 10 January (John Withrow). Freer now has specimen.

Bedford County

1. Peaks of Otter camp ground, 2 February, at least 300 crossbills in three flocks, an estimated 40% of them White-wings (Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Moore).
2. Boonesboro Country Club, 1 on March 18 (Mrs. H. C. Petry, *vide* Freer).

*Upper Valley***Rockingham County**

1. Runious Creek, 2 (with 6 Red Crossbills), 27 January (Gorden Souder, *vide* M. M. Carpenter).
2. Marshall Run near Broadway, 2 on 6 February (Gorden Souder, *vide* M. M. Carpenter).

Augusta County

1. Mt. Solon, 1 male collected on 25 January (M. M. Carpenter).
2. Waynesboro, 1 pair about 5 January (Monroe Couper).

*Southwestern Virginia***Montgomery County**

1. Blacksburg, 2 on 10 January (David West); about 12 on 28 January (Robert McDowell) and 24 and 27 February (W. W. Pinkham—*vide* J. W. Murray).
2. Radford, 4 males and 3 females on 16 February (Bill Akers, Sara Lockhart, D. H. Messersmith).

Washington County

1. Damascus, up to 9 in a flock, 9 February to 6 March (most records by Mr. and Mrs. Edgar L. Umbarger—also seen by C. F. Fleenor, Mr. and Mrs. James Greer, Miss Emily Umbarger, and Mr. and Mrs. John Wingfield).
2. Holston, "large flock" on 17 February (C. F. Fleenor, *vide* J. W. Coffey).

*Lower Coastal Plain***Gloucester County**

Capahosic, 1 adult male on 28 January (Mrs. M. B. Peacock).

Detailed Records of the Red Crossbill

*Eastern Shore***Accomack County**

1. Assateague Island, 20 on 27 December (seen by three parties on Christmas bird count—G. M. Meade *et al.*, J. B. Meade and F. G. Scheider, J. W. Terborgh *et al.*); 1 on 30 May (H. M. Johnson, Marcia Lakeman, Marcia Nelson, F. G. Scheider).
2. Chincoteague Island, 1 male (nearly adult) and 1 female on 1 May (Michael Gochfeld, Michel Kleinbaum, P. W. Post, Tom Robben, Guy Tudor).

*Northern Virginia***Fairfax County**

1. McLean (Providence Forest), 6 to 10 (at least 1 adult male, 3 immature males, and 6 females), about 16 March to 11 May (Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Hennessey, Marcia Lakeman, R. L. Pyle, *et al.*). R. L. Pyle banded 1 male and 4 females here on April 12.
2. Vienna, a flock (17 on 9 May), 29 February to 29 May (Mrs. Elizabeth Coffey *et al.*, *fide* Mrs. M. B. Peacock). Mrs. Peacock banded 7 here between May 13 and 22.
3. Pine Ridge, up to 4, 19 January to 2 May (Mrs. M. B. Peacock *et al.*).

Fauquier County

Catlett, first noted on 22 January, seen once in February, and last seen on 9 March (Mrs. Louis B. Ely).

*Upper Piedmont***Albemarle County**

1. Charlottesville area, 1 to 12 birds, 21 December to 2 June (R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens, *et al.*). Peak of 12 seen 9 March (Merkel).
2. Big Flat Mountain, 23 on 22 December (R. S. Merkel and C. E. Stevens).
3. Warren, 4 on 31 December (R. S. Merkel).
4. Sugar Hollow, 3 on 22 February (C. E. Stevens).
5. Black Rock Gap (corner of Albemarle, Rockingham, and Augusta Counties), 11 on 23 May (C. E. Stevens).

Bedford County

Peaks of Otter camp ground, 2 February, at least 300 crossbills in three flocks, estimated at 60% Red and 40% White-winged Crossbills (Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Moore).

*Upper Valley and Nearby Mountains***Page County**

Skyland, 5 on 21 June (Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell, C. W. Hacker, David Pierce, *et al.*).

Rockingham County

1. Browns Gap (Blue Ridge), 15 on 16 November (C. E. Stevens).
2. Harrisonburg, 8 on 27 November (Gordon Shantz, *fide* M. M. Carpenter).
3. Runious Creek, 6 (with 2 White-wings), 27 January (Gordon Souder, *fide* M. M. Carpenter).

Augusta County

1. Near Elk Mountain, 18 (flying into Nelson County), 28 November (C. E. Stevens); 11 on 4 January (C. E. Stevens).
2. Big Levels, 10, 9 February (C. E. Stevens).

Highland County

1. Shenandoah Mountain near Headwaters, 1 on June 6 (C. E. Stevens and R. J. Watson).
2. Allegheny Mountain, northern Highland County, 1 on July 7 flying across the state line into Virginia (C. E. Stevens).

Bath County

East side of Warm Springs Mountain near Dry Run, 8 on 28 January (J. W. Ergle, Jr., *vide* M. M. Carpenter).

*Southwestern Virginia***Montgomery County**

Radford, 1 on 17 February (Mrs. Connie Stone, *vide* D. H. Messersmith).

Tazewell County

Bluefield, 1 on 23 December (Sara Lockhart, *vide* D. H. Messersmith).

*Southeastern Virginia***Nansemond County**

Dismal Swamp southwest of Lake Drummond, 3 males and 1 female, 25 April (J. E. Ames, Jr., F. C. Richardson, C. J. Riddick, Jr., W. F. Rountrey).

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115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

SOME NORTHERN BIRDS IN VIRGINIA—WINTER OF 1963-64

F. R. SCOTT

The winter of 1963-64 in Virginia was witness to the greatest invasion of northern birds on record. The three most prominent visitors, the Evening Grosbeak and the two crossbills, are to be reviewed in separate papers. The present note reviews the status of several other birds of northern affinities which seemed unusually abundant during the past winter.

Unfortunately, in the compilation of these data the writer has had to rely on material submitted to him, and it is apparent that most field observers were so overwhelmed with the Evening Grosbeaks and crossbills that they failed to bother with the "more common" northern birds such as the Purple Finch and Pine Siskin. Hence there are many obvious gaps in the summaries below, and relatively few individual records are cited.

Black-capped Chickadee *Parus atricapillus* Linnaeus

This is a little-known winter bird in Virginia, frequently mistaken by inexperienced birders for the more widespread Carolina Chickadee, *Parus carolinensis* Audubon. As a winter bird it is confined virtually exclusively to northern Virginia and the Great Valley west of the Blue Ridge. This past winter was considered a flight year for this species, and Virginia records seem to support this, although few observers went to the trouble of reporting this species.

Observers in the Valley generally reported good numbers throughout the winter, the extreme dates of occurrence at Blacksburg being 3 November 1963 and 8 April 1964 (J. W. Murray). In northern Virginia Mrs. Louis B. Ely reported a few at Catlett, Fauquier County, from early November to April, and at Arlington the first arrival was noted on 5 October (J. M. Abbott), an extremely early date. Christmas bird count totals included 15 at Brooke, Stafford County, and 25 at Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County. The Virginia part of the Washington, D. C., count totaled at least 24 Black-caps. Two were found at Chincoteague for only the second Christmas count record for the Eastern Shore.

A brief check of the Christmas bird counts for the last few years indicates that the last good invasion into northern Virginia was during the winter of 1954-55. There appears little correlation between the winter populations of northern Virginia and those of the Valley. This suggests that the Valley birds might originate from a different population center; i.e., they might come from the West Virginia or Highland County, Virginia, breeding areas rather than from more northern states. This would be an interesting problem for study.

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis* Linnaeus

This was a banner year for this species, probably the greatest flight on record. Fourteen of the 19 Christmas bird counts reported a total of 298 birds, and 132 were reported at Fort Belvoir alone. Special comments on the abun-

dance of this bird came from Falls Church (J. W. Eike), Lynchburg (R. S. Freer), Williamsburg (J. H. Grey), and Norfolk (P. W. Sykes). Extremely early arrivals were noted at Fort Belvoir, where Abbott found one on 27 August and 2 on 30 August 1963. They were found as late as 4 May 1964 at Gordonsville, Orange County (Louise Babcock), and 9 May at McLean, Fairfax County (Marcia Lakeman *et al.*).

Purple Finch *Carpodacus purpureus* (Gmelin)

This bird and the Evening Grosbeak are the only ones of our "northern" birds that are habitually abundant at feeding and banding stations. Hence it is somewhat easier for the average birder to assess the status of this bird than, for example, the Pine Siskin. As usual, this bird was irregular in abundance, being more common than usual at Radford (D. H. Messersmith) and Lynchburg (R. S. Freer) and either in normal numbers or less common than usual elsewhere. Fifteen of the 19 Christmas bird counts listed this species, the best count being 71 at Charlottesville. The only banding (trapping) totals available were 125 at Gordonsville (Louise Babcock) and 390 at Richmond (F. R. Scott). They were last reported on May 9 in northern Virginia at Springfield (Gale Monson) and Pine Ridge (R. H. Rule *et al.*).

Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator* (Linnaeus)

The first well-substantiated report of this bird in Virginia came when two specimens of the Newfoundland race were obtained from a flock of up to 22 that wintered in Shenandoah National Park during the winter of 1951-52. Since then about five additional reliable sight records have been published in *The Raven*, all from the mountains. This winter there were four additional reports, including one from northern and one from southeastern Virginia.

Perhaps the most unusual one was a brightly plumaged male that was photographed in color in Newport News between January 12 and 26 (William Sheldon and R. J. Beasley). Other records were one seen daily near Alexandria between January 15 and 18 (David R. Eike and family—*fide* J. W. Eike), 2 at Bluefield on March 11 (Sara Lockhart—*fide* D. H. Messersmith), and a flock of 15 on Rt. 130, Amherst County, on March 25 (R. S. Freer).

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* (Wilson)

It has often been said that 99 Pine Siskins are heard flying overhead for every one seen. This situation, combined with the fact that the species only occasionally visits feeding stations in any numbers, means that it takes a very active and rather sophisticated birder to be able to assess this bird's status with any reasonable degree of accuracy. This bird is habitually more regular in the mountains and along the coast than in central and Southside Virginia.

In spite of the problems indicated above, the reports at hand indicate that this past winter probably produced the greatest flight of Pine Siskins into Virginia on record, with the possible exception of the winter of 1952-53. On the coast the bird was particularly noted in the fall up through the end of the year. At Back Bay the VSO field trip estimated several flocks totaling over 200 birds on 7 December (F. R. Scott, P. W. Sykes, *et al.*). Twelve of the 19 Christmas bird counts listed this species, the best counts being 34 at Little Creek on 21 December (P. W. Sykes *et al.*) and 63 at Chincoteague on 27 December (G. M. Meade *et al.*). In northern Virginia the best count was a flock of 100 seen at Burke Lake, Fairfax County, in February (J. E. Johnson). Along the Blue Ridge and in the Valley the bird seemed particularly common. In Rockbridge County J. J. Murray felt they were more widespread than they have been any time in the past 40 years, and R. S. Freer felt they were more abundant in the Lynchburg area than they have been in the last 10 or 15 years.

Only a few arrival and departure dates were submitted, but these are of interest. The first record was a single bird at Glencarlyn Park, Arlington, on

10 October (J. W. Eike), and the last birds were reported from McLean, Fairfax County, on May 9 (3 Birds—Marcia Lakeman *et al.*) and Mendota, Washington County, on May 10 (10 birds—Wallace Coffey, *Migrant*, 35: 41, 1964).

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF LEE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

J. J. MURRAY AND JOHN H. GREY, JR.

One of the four Virginia areas designated at the 1964 Annual Meeting of the VSO as regions for special study was the Lee-Wise-Scott section. The writers spent most of the four days, 1-4 June 1964, in Lee County. We were in the field all the daylight hours of two of these days and most of the other two and drove considerable distances at night listening for owls and goat-suckers.

Basing at Jonesville, the county seat, we covered much of the county but particularly the territory west of Jonesville. Since we were especially interested in tracing possible Mississippi Valley influence, we worked almost entirely on the valley floor and mainly at elevations from 1200 to 1500 feet. The 1500 contour touches Jonesville, the county levels dropping away to the west. On 2 June a few hours were spent in the Cumberland Mountain foothills just west of Jonesville at 1500 to 1700 feet.

Lee County is a long area, roughly triangular in shape, at the extreme southwestern end of Virginia. It is bordered in a straight line on the south for 40 miles by Tennessee, on the northwest in an irregular line for 50 miles by Kentucky, and for only a little more than 20 miles at the eastern end of the triangle by Wise and Scott counties in Virginia. It is well down in Mississippi drainage, which in Virginia begins near Christiansburg, some 150 miles east of Jonesville.

The valley floor rises from 1200 feet along Powell River to around 1700 feet in the Cumberland Mountain foothills. Along the northern edge of the county the crest of the Cumberland Mountain runs from 2500 to 3500 feet. Along most of the southern border of the county the mountains rise almost directly from Powell River.

There are only two towns of any size in Lee County: Jonesville, the county seat, with a population of about 1500, and Pennington Gap with around 2000 people. There are only a few villages. The country-side in the valley floor is well settled, with prosperous farms. The county is drained by Powell River and its tributaries, being well watered with small streams, all draining into the Tennessee River. There are few farm ponds that are more than small pools. The area has none of the water impoundments so characteristic of other tributaries of the Tennessee River.

This area, so far as we know, has not been worked ornithologically. We heard of no one in the county with more than a casual interest in birds. Nor has any intensive work been done anywhere near in Virginia. There are no VSO members nearer than Bristol, 60 miles away.

In the four days we listed 72 species. In 30 years of field work in Rockbridge County, which is a more diversified and so a richer territory, the senior author has listed 110 native breeding species. Our results in Lee County for a mere four days, considering that we were working almost exclusively in Carolinian territory, were not unsatisfactory.

Certain interesting and some puzzling situations appeared. Whip-poor-wills were decidedly uncommon; we only heard them in the Cumberland Mountain National Park. On the other hand, we heard a Chuck-will's-widow in the open valley, with calls in the same neighborhood from what may have been a different bird. This was the first report of this species in Virginia west of the

Blue Ridge, apart from an emaciated wanderer found dead in Rockbridge. Hawks were very scarce. Except for Sparrow Hawks, which were rather uncommon, only a single Sharp-shin and one distant unidentified *Buteo* were seen. Chimney Swifts were rather scarce. A single Tree Swallow was observed. Rough-winged Swallows were found in a number of places, nesting not only normally in rocky banks but in old sawdust piles. We were pleased to find Bluebirds common, many family groups being noted. Surprisingly few warblers were seen, except for Prairie Warblers, Ovenbirds, Kentucky Warblers, Yellowthroats, and Chats. Naturally, in such open country Meadowlarks were abundant. There were surprisingly few Redwinged Blackbirds although there were suitable places for them. A flock of about 120 Cowbirds came into a blackbird roost in Jonesville, but we did not notice them otherwise. The boundary line between Scarlet and Summer Tanagers at about 1500 feet, which Murray has found regular in Rockbridge but which does not hold in eastern Virginia, seemed to be maintained here.

Not a single House Wren was seen, while two Bewick's Wrens were found. We were surprised to miss certain other species which we had confidently expected, most of which undoubtedly occur in the county: Spotted Sandpiper, Nighthawk, Crested Flycatcher, Prairie Horned Lark, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, Black and White Warbler, Sycamore, Cerulean, and Pine Warblers, Redstart, Bachman's Sparrow. Some of these misses seem almost inexplicable. We had hoped to find Dickcissels and Henslow's Sparrows but were not successful.

The following 21 species were common to abundant: Bobwhite, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird, Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Prairie Warbler, Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, House Sparrow, Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow. Fifteen species were fairly common: Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Phoebe, Wood Pewee, Barn Swallow, Carolina Wren, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Bluebird, Wood Thrush, Starling, Ovenbird, Grasshopper Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow.

The other 36 of the species observed were uncommon to rare. The list follows, with the numbers by days, 1 to 4 June. Green Heron, 0-0-3-1; Wood Duck, 1-0-0-0; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 0-1-0-0; Sparrow Hawk, 1-0-0-2; Killdeer, 0-0-6-0; Black-billed Cuckoo, 0-0-1-0; Chuck-will's-widow, 1-0-0-0; Whippoorwill, 0-4-0-0; Chimney Swift, 2-3-0-6; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 0-1-1-0; Belted Kingfisher, 0-1-1-1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 1-2-2-5 (nest with young); Pileated Woodpecker, 0-1-1-0; Downy Woodpecker, 0-0-8-0; Eastern Kingbird, 0-0-6-0; Acadian Flycatcher, 0-10-1-0; Tree Swallow, 0-1-0-0; Rough-winged Swallow, 0-4-8-4; Purple Martin, 6-0-0-0; Bewick's Wren, 0-0-2-0; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1-2-3-0; Loggerhead Shrike, 1-2-3-1; White-eyed Vireo, 1-5-2-1; Yellow-throated Vireo, 0-0-1-0; Warbling Vireo, 0-1-3-0; Parula Warbler, 1-1-0-0; Yellow Warbler, 0-0-1-1; Louisiana Waterthrush, 0-1-2-0; Kentucky Warbler, 0-1-3-3; Hooded Warbler, 0-1-0-0; Redwinged Blackbird, 0-1-2-4; Orchard Oriole, 0-3-3-1; Brown-headed Cowbird, 120-0-0-0; Scarlet Tanager, 0-3-0-0; Summer Tanager, 0-2-0-0; American Goldfinch, 0-15-3-1.

The designation by the VSO of Lee-Wise-Scott as an area for special study seems to be proper. Our work in Lee County this summer seems to have been only preliminary. We did not touch Scott, where apparently no work has been done, nor Wise, where but little has been done. There seems to be need for more work not only in the Lee-Wise-Scott group of counties but throughout extreme southwestern Virginia.

A certain amount of collecting for the determination of subspecies needs to be done in this area. On our trip we collected the following birds, on which a report will be made later: Blue Jay, Robin, Chickadee, Yellowthroat, and Rufous-sided Towhee. A Crow found dead on 4 June near the gate of the

Cumberland Mountain National Park had a wing measurement of 287 mm, which would seem certainly to make it *Corvus brachyrhynchos paulus*. The only thing in our field notes to suggest any Mississippi Valley influence is the presence of the Chuck-will's-widow.

6 Jordan Street, Lexington, Virginia;
P. O. Box 445, Williamsburg, Virginia

THE 1964 ANNUAL MEETING FIELD TRIPS

JAMES W. EIKE

Three field trips were associated with the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the VSO, which was the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Society.

Jackson M. Abbott led the trip to the Belle Haven-Hunting Creek area south of Alexandria for late waterfowl, shore, and marsh birds and other migrants. Mr. & Mrs. Richard H. Rule and Mr. & Mrs. M. Brantley Peacock led the trip in the Pine Ridge area, scene of the 1953 Annual Field Trip. The major trip was to Janelia Farms, including Selden's Island and the Potomac River shore, scene of a number of field trips by the Northern Virginia Chapter. Because of the extent of the territory here, the large group was subdivided into three field groups.

Following the field trips, approximately 100 members assembled at the lovely Janelia Farms home as luncheon guests of Mr. & Mrs. Robert S. Pickens and Mr. & Mrs. Herbert M. Church. Here all had a superb lunch on the beautifully landscaped grounds with Sugar Loaf Mountain across the Potomac in Maryland as hazy blue backdrop.

The total bird list for the day was 131 species, with 95 being seen at Janelia Farms by lunch time. Perhaps the most unusual record was a Rusty Blackbird observed at close range by a group which included at least two expert birders. Almost all species which could have been expected were seen. However, despite the fact that 24 species of warblers were recorded, a few were missed, such as the Magnolia, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, and Pine. Offsetting this were such birds as the Canada Goose, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, and Ruddy Duck. Six species of hawks represented a good score for the area. Five species of the swallow family were observed, only the Cliff Swallow being absent.

The amazing season for northern birds was emphasized by the sighting of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Evening Grosbeaks, Purple Finches, and Red and White-winged Crossbills.

Fortunately, after a week of rainy weather, the group was blessed with an ideal day for an outing. Many members passed up the meeting because of the days of unfavorable weather preceding the meeting.

Following lunch, our President, Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Jr., conducted a brief and spirited business meeting beside the swimming pool. At Mrs. Wiltshire's request, Colonel Bernard Thielen of Floyd, Virginia, read resolutions of appreciation for the hospitality of Mr. & Mrs. Pickens and Mr. & Mrs. Church and their son Jim, and for the contribution of the host, the Northern Virginia Chapter, to the success of the meeting.

Due to the distances members had to travel, the meeting ended about 2:00 p.m. We can only speculate on what the total bird count might have been had we not terminated the field trips before noon.

3307 North Tuckahoe Street, Falls Church, Virginia

NOTES ON HERONRIES IN CENTRAL VIRGINIA

F. R. SCOTT

In recent years, especially during the course of the Bald Eagle nest survey, several colonies of Great Blue Herons, *Ardea herodias* Linnaeus, have come under observation. One in the Chickahominy Swamp in extreme southwestern New Kent County was previously described some 16 years ago (*Raven* 19: 42-43, 1948). Checked by canoe by C. E. Stevens and the writer in 1948 it had an estimated 150 pairs. On 15 June 1958 it was located again and estimated to contain 130 pairs of Great Blue Herons and 10 pairs of Common Egrets, *Casmerodius albus* (Linnaeus). This heronry has remained reasonably static since then, and on 19 April 1964 it was estimated from the air to contain about 100 pairs of Great Blue Herons and 20 pairs of Common Egrets.

Another heronry, originally reported by John H. Grey, Jr., in 1953, is in the Powhatan Creek swamp of southwestern James City County, just north of Virginia Route 5 and a mile or less west of Five Forks. This heronry, which seems to vary in location slightly from year to year, is now in two parts separated about 200 yards. It was rediscovered accidentally by the author on foot on 9 February 1963 and was checked a number of times from the air in 1963 and 1964. On 19 April 1964 it was estimated to contain 150 pairs of Great Blue Herons.

Roger Miller, Chief Ranger for the Colonial National Historical Park at Yorktown, reported another heronry just 3 miles south of Yorktown on Beaverdam Creek, York County. The creek at this point forms the boundary between the Park property and the watershed of the City of Newport News Reservoir, and the heronry is on Park property. Miller and the author checked this heronry on foot on 8 May 1964 and estimated about 70 occupied nests of the Great Blue Heron. These were in swamp hardwood trees, principally sycamores. As a matter of interest, there was an occupied Bald Eagle nest within 200 feet of this heronry.

There appear to be only two other recent reports of heronries inland in Virginia. In the Blackwater River swamp of Sussex County, C. C. Steirly found a heronry in 1956 containing both Great Blue Herons and Common Egrets (*Raven* 27: 67-70, 1956). He was later instrumental in getting this heronry incorporated into the Virginia state park system as a natural area. A large heronry consisting of at least six species has been present apparently for a number of years on Hollis Marsh Island, Westmoreland County. It has recently been checked several times by J. M. Abbott and others (*Raven* 26: 102-103, 1955, and *Raven* 27: 59-60, 1956).

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

SIGHT RECORD OF A WESTERN GREBE

F. R. SCOTT

On 4 December 1963 the writer found a Western Grebe, *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (Lawrence), on the York River at Felgates Creek, a few miles west of Yorktown (York County). The bird was studied for some 20 minutes in excellent light with 9x, 35 mm binoculars and a 20x spotting scope. While the bird kept by itself for the most part, there were a number of Horned Grebes, Buffleheads, and Ruddy Ducks nearby, which allowed plenty of size comparisons.

The large size, long neck, extremely contrasting black and white plumage, and long, straight yellowish bill were distinctive. The bill was carried rather high. The bird most closely resembling the Western Grebe is probably the Great Crested Grebe, *Podiceps cristatus* (Linnaeus), of Europe, but the bill

color and lack of ear tufts immediately eliminated the slight possibility of this species.

This is apparently the first sight record of this bird in Virginia. As nearly as I can determine, only one specimen of this species has been obtained on the East Coast, and that in South Carolina (*Auk*, 53: 438, 1936). There are two recent sight records from North Carolina by J. F. Parnell and others (*Chat*, 26: 17-18, 1962).

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia

VSO MOUNTAIN FORAY

JOSEPHINE WOOD

The annual VSO Mountain Foray was held this year on June 18 to 21 with Hepburn cottage at Skyland again serving as headquarters.

On Friday, 19 June 1964, there was a heavy overcast with occasional mist and rather poor visibility as the group of 16 birders under the leadership of Charles Hacker started down the White Oak Canyon trail. Later the sun came out and it was quite warm with threats of a thunderstorm as the group made its way up the fire road that afternoon. The group had gone only a short distance down the trail when a Ruffed Grouse with at least eight young about the size of adult Bobwhites flushed from right beside the trail. The grouse crossed the trail and settled in the undergrowth where she gave several whistle-like calls to the young. Upon reaching the Limberlost, a check was made for the Barred Owl seen there on previous forays, but without success. However, several others who were behind the main group saw a Screech Owl near the trail before reaching the Limberlost. Lunch was enjoyed on the rocks overlooking the falls. A total of 36 species was tallied for the walk.

That afternoon a small group that hiked from the Little Stony Man Parking Area to Skyland along the Appalachian Trail recorded 18 species. Of special interest on this walk was a Winter Wren heard singing loudly near the trail.

On Saturday the group was split, half led by Charlie Hacker down the Dark Hollow Falls trail and the remainder led by Elliott Breneiser on the trail to Lewis Falls. The Lewis Falls group listed 45 species, and several nests were found. A Slate-colored Junco was feeding young in a nest hidden in a crevice of one of the rocky cliffs rising above the stream. An Ovenbird was seen at close range feeding her young in a nest hidden among the leaves right beside the trail. A female Slate-colored Junco and a female Black-throated Blue Warbler were both observed feeding different young Brown-headed Cowbirds.

The Dark Hollow Falls group encountered so many individuals of the species *Homo sapiens* that they did not see as many birds, but they were able to hear them and returned to Fisher's Gap with the total of 41 species either seen or heard. They also reported one Wood Thrush nest and both Carolina Chickadees and Tufted Titmice with young.

Beautiful close-up slides of birds she had banded were shown by Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell on Friday evening, and on Saturday evening the group enjoyed slides of the 1963 Skyland Foray which had been taken by Jim Eike.

During the two and one-half days of the foray, a total of 60 species was observed. This included 39 species that were seen about the Skyland cabins and office area. The number for the Skyland area included those heard calling from a distance such as the Great Horned Owl calling off Miller's Head just before midnight Saturday night and two Whip-poor-wills calling down the mountainside below Hepburn Cottage earlier on the same evening. A Chipping Sparrow was feeding young in a nest in the pine tree above the door of Hepburn Cottage, and a Least Flycatcher called near Skyland as in 1962. Five Red Crossbills were observed in evergreens near Hepburn Cottage on Sunday

morning. They showed no indication to pair off. This is believed to be the first observation of this species by a VSO Skyland Foray group.

On Sunday, 21 June, a number of members attend religious services at Skyland, and following breakfast most of the group dispersed for home, but a few remained to climb Stony Man. They found only 18 species but enjoyed the glorious view and a wonderful aerial display by two Broad-winged Hawks.

1016 University Drive, Alexandria, Virginia

VSO WACHAPREAGUE FIELD TRIP, AUGUST 1964

C. W. HACKER

This year's field trip to Wachapreague on 8 and 9 August was unusual in several respects. In the first place, our usual limit of 36 persons, as a rule, is a reasonable figure approximating rather closely the actual number of applicants. This year the hotel was overwhelmed with 80 or 90 requests for reservations, over half of which had to be rejected by the management. On second thought, the hotel manager found accommodations elsewhere for 12 more persons and arranged for two more boats. In addition, another 4 persons secured accommodations at a third place and provided their own water transportation. Summing up, we had 52 persons, 8 charter boats, and one private boat. Unfortunately, communications deteriorate as the numbers increase, and it should be recorded that some misunderstandings detracted from a great trip.

To get on with the details of the trip, the first stop on Saturday morning was made at Club House Point for a look at the heronry. Large numbers of herons were present, but nesting had been completed for all practical purposes. Evidently the season had been favorable, for in some previous years numerous nests have been found up to the end of August. Nearly all of the Glossy Ibis and Green Herons, as well as numbers of the other herons, had wandered into other areas. The customary pair of Barn Owls was absent since the nesting platform at the old water tower had finally collapsed. Some observers noted about 10 immature Laughing Gulls with broken wings.

Moving over to Cedar Island, an innovation of this year's trip was having the boats run up the western side of the island. The channel heads off at a point near the center of the length of the island. Here everyone waded ashore, a distance of about 150 yards, in knee-deep water. Remarkably, no casualties were suffered in this new experience. The landing point was at the large flat which is often flooded by a break-through from the ocean. Here the shorebirds were feeding in large numbers, and it was apparent that we were observing a fine migration. A half-hour's walk up the island, thence south to the lower end, put us at the boats at lunch time. Here a leisurely meal supplemented by a basket of peaches from one of our Charlottesville members was a welcome respite. This was followed by another innovation, an hour's free time when everyone was encouraged to range at will and indulge in personal whims. This activity should be repeated next year. Summarizing Cedar Island, the outstanding item would be the large numbers of the smaller migrating shorebirds. This event is associated with several variables and is often missed on our field trips. Seeing both plumages of Dunlin, Black-bellied Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones, and Dowitchers was interesting. Gull-billed Terns, immature Black Skimmers, and the plovers were in smaller numbers than would be expected.

After boarding the boats it was necessary to bypass Parramore Island because of the present policy of its owners. The return trip to the hotel's marina produced the usual rails, Whimbrels, and gulls demonstrating the value of marshes in providing food for countless numbers of birds.

In the late evening on Saturday a cold front moved in, bringing a steady

rain of some few hours duration. Sunday morning's weather opened with clear skies and a northwest wind, the ideal fall migration situation. After a leisurely breakfast, the group proceeded to Assateague Island in individual cars and at irregular intervals. Even on the island the cars moved and parked in small groups, which made this year's trip the best we have had from the standpoint of highway safety. With the assistance of the cold front and Dr. F. G. Scheider, the birding at Assateague was fabulous. The more noteworthy observations included several Northern Waterthrushes, an Avocet, the White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*), a Hudsonian Godwit, a Northern Phalarope, and a Golden Plover. At Assateague, the large numbers of Common, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets, Glossy Ibis, and Black Terns will command the attention of even the most sophisticated birder. When these are added to the countless numbers of "peeps" and other shorebirds, it is feared that our inland members leave the island in a state of utter confusion—and a vow to return next year for another try at it.

218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton, Virginia

IN MEMORIAM: A. L. DEAN

Abram Lawrence Dean, member of the VSO for thirty years, died in a Radford, Virginia, hospital on 26 June 1964. The funeral was held in the Blacksburg Methodist Church on Sunday afternoon, 28 June. He is survived by his wife and a brother. The only son, Lt. W. L. Dean, was killed in a plane crash in Hawaii.

A native of Massachusetts, he received the Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell. He retired from V. P. I. as associate professor of poultry science in January, 1957, having served there since 1920 both as a classroom teacher and as a specialist in the Agricultural Extension Service. His service to the poultry industry in Virginia was widely recognized. He was one of the first men in the State to see the opportunities in turkey raising, and was also interested in the rearing of rabbits for food.

He was intensely interested in birds and in developing that interest in others, particularly in young people. Many Virginia 4-H Club members owe their knowledge of birds to his lessons at their meetings. He also conducted nature study groups for ten years at Camp Easter Seal. He was a loyal VSO member.

J. J. Murray

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 1963

Virginia Society of Ornithology

Balance on hand, 31 December 1962

General Fund	\$685.06
Publication Fund	829.28

Total	\$1514.34
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Receipts

Memberships and subscriptions	\$1100.00
Sales and donations	26.30
Interest	43.37
Refund—annual meeting expenses	2.13

Total receipts	1171.80
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Expenditures

Raven publication	\$512.99
Newsletter and envelopes for Raven	41.37

Stationery		66.25
Secretary's expense—duplicating		10.63
Affiliations:		
National Audubon Society	\$15.00	
Virginia Wildlife Federation	75.00	
		<hr/>
		90.00
Annual meeting expenses		82.26
Postage		56.90
		<hr/>
Total Expenditures		860.40
Excess of receipts over expenditures		<hr/> \$311.40
Balance on hand, 31 December 1963		\$1825.74
Note: Of the above receipts, \$69.67 was credited to the Publication Fund.		
The balance on hand, 31 December 1963, breaks down as follows:		
General Fund		
Balance, 31 December 1962	\$685.06	
Additions during year	241.73	
	<hr/>	
Total, 31 December 1963		\$926.79
Publication Fund		
Balance, 31 December 1962	\$829.28	
Additions during year	69.67	
	<hr/>	
Total, 31 December 1963		898.95
		<hr/>
Balance on hand, 31 December 1963		\$1825.74

Helen L. Goldstick, 4912 S. 28th Street, Arlington 6, Virginia

NEWS AND NOTES

CHECK-LIST REVISION. This is a final reminder on the proposed new edition of the Virginia 'Check-List.' The Executive Committee has set 31 December 1964 as the cut-off date for changes from the old edition. Be sure to send in to the Editor before then any new data you may have on the birds of your area.

BREEDING BIRD STUDIES. Those who are interested in participating in one of the breeding bird studies announced at the last Annual Meeting should get in touch right away with the coordinator of the area in which you wish to work. Consult the notice in the June issue, pages 31-32. The first preliminary report from one of these areas appears in this issue.

STEIRLY HONORED. The Board of Conservation and Economic Development has honored Charles C. Steirly by the following action, communicated to him on 21 August by Marvin M. Sutherland, Director of the Department:

"The Heron Rookery in Surry County will henceforth be officially designated as the Charles C. Steirly Natural Area. In taking this action the Board gives recognition not only to your years of dedicated service to The Commonwealth, but also to your acumen and reputation as a naturalist and conservationist. We are indebted to you for your interest and efforts leading to the preservation of this valuable tract."

ARBOVIRUS INVESTIGATION. An investigation of migratory birds as possible disseminators of arboviruses has been undertaken by the U. S. Public Health Service. White feathers were attached in Honduras to the backs of 1052 birds, chiefly Catbirds, Orchard Orioles, and Indigo Buntings, and yel-

low feathers in Louisiana to the backs of 458 birds. Anyone observing any of these marked birds is requested to send the information (including color of the attached feather, species name of the bird, place, date, habitat, and weather) to the following address: Arbovirus Unit, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia 30333. If the bird seems to be taking up residence for the season, immediate notification is requested.

EVENING GROSBEAK DATA. There is still time to send your report on Evening Grosbeaks in the 1963-64 season to Arthur H. Fast, 4924 Rock Spring Road, Arlington 7, Virginia. His summary of the season will appear in the December issue.

FULMAR AT SANDBRIDGE. In *The Auk* for July 1964, page 437, Paul W. Sykes, Jr., reports a Fulmar found at Sandbridge on 3 March 1962. The bird was sent to the U. S. National Museum, where it was identified by John W. Aldrich as *Fulmarus g. glacialis* and where it is now specimen No. 478859. This is the second record for Virginia and the southernmost for the Atlantic coast.

GREEN HERON NESTING IN LOBLOLLY PINE PLANTATION. C. C. Steirly writes: "On 14 May 1964, while I was making a study of the saprophytic fungi of a 1954 loblolly pine planting in north Sussex County, Virginia, I was surprised to find the active nest of a Green Heron. My attention was first called to this by the presence of egg shells on the ground which indicated that young were present in the nest. The nest was loosely constructed of dead pine twigs in a crotch of a pine about twenty feet above the ground. This pine had been planted on an old field during the winter of 1953-54. The average height of the dominant trees was 28 feet and crown closure had taken place at age five. The nearest body of water was a small artificial pond on two intermittent streams of the Coppahaunk Swamp watershed some half a mile away."

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER ON ALLEGHENY MOUNTAIN. Ruskin S. Freer reports finding a Sapsucker in a spruce grove on Route 250 on the Virginia side of the State line on 20 June 1964, along with Bewick's Wrens, Veeries, and Bluebirds.

TRAIL'S FLYCATCHER AT LYNCHBURG AND AT MARION. Freer reports an Alder Flycatcher in his yard at Lynchburg on 23 August 1964. It was giving the characteristic call. He also reports seeing and hearing one at Marion, Virginia, on 16 June 1956. The latter date would indicate a breeding bird.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER AT WARWICK. Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell banded a Prothonotary Warbler in her woods on 26 May 1964. She also heard three singing at Harpersville Reservoir on 8 June 1964.

CERULEAN WARBLER AND YOUNG IN HENRICO COUNTY. F. R. Scott saw a Cerulean Warbler feeding a young bird on 21 June 1964 in the Chickahominy Swamp, northeast of Richmond and just out of the city limits.

HIGH CARDINAL NEST. Dr. and Mrs. Ellison A. Smyth showed the Editor a Cardinal's nest on 24 July 1954 in their yard at Blacksburg that was unusually high. It was slightly over 11 feet from the ground, located in a beauty bush.

PARTIALLY ALBINO REDWING AT LITTLE CREEK. G. W. Gibbins saw a partially albino Redwing at the Naval Amphibious Base at Little Creek, Norfolk, on 29 April 1964. "The bird's body plumage was almost pure white except for the reddish epaulets and some dark brown plumage about the head. The eyes, bill, and legs were apparently normal in color."

HENSLow'S SPARROW NEAR RADFORD. Messersmith saw a Henslow's Sparrow in good light with binoculars at about 15 feet near Radford

Arsenal in Montgomery County on 7 May 1964. This is a very unusual record for the area.

REVIEWS

The World of Birds, by James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson. Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y., 1964, 288 pages, large octavo, profusely illustrated with color paintings and drawings by Peterson. Price, \$17.95 before Christmas, \$22.95 thereafter.

This is another deluxe bird book, and one that is worthy both in material and in make-up of the authors and publisher. As would be expected, the text is authentic and the paintings lovely. The chapters treat of the biology of birds; the origin of birds and their distribution through the geologic periods since the first *Archaeopteryx* appeared; the present distribution of species throughout the world; the characteristics of the various ornithological families; evolution and avian relationships; bird societies; nesting and development of the young; migration; life history work; bird behavior; tools and methods of various types of bird study.

The book is an encyclopedia of ornithology, a serious study as well as a lovely picture book. Every discussion is well illustrated. A considerable part of the book, pages 145-241, presents the 199 families of extinct and living birds, with a drawing of a representative species for each family and a map in color of the distribution of the family. There is a two-page representation of the family tree of bird groups.

The end papers present a handsome painting of Flamingoes flying up from a resting flock. Diagrams and color plates chart the evolution of species. Other color plates show the altitudinal zones of avian distribution. One plate illustrates in color 41 representative eggs, from the tiny egg of the Calliope Hummingbird to the large dark Emu egg. A striking plate shows 32 colorful varieties of feathers, while others show the adaptations of bills and feet. There is a carefully selected bibliography of some 600 titles.

J. J. Murray

Birds over America, by Roger Tory Peterson, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1964. Revised edition, 342 pages. \$7.50

For those who have a copy of the earlier edition of this book it is sufficient to say that the changes are relatively minor, bringing up to date the statistics and the references to persons and to photographic equipment.

For those who do not have the first edition more needs to be said. First of all, the 105 photographs, as is to be expected from Peterson, are beautifully taken and are well selected to represent some 20 states and Canada. The text is in Peterson's best style. The themes of the chapters are striking. One is the author's well known essay on "The Lure of the List." Some others are: "Billions of Birds;" "The Sky Is Their Highway;" "Wanderers of the Waves;" "Rain Shadows of the Mexican Border."

The book is a good mixture of accounts of trips to unusual places, scientific information, and pleasant writing. It will make a splendid Christmas present for any person, particularly a young person, who is developing an interest in birds.

J. J. Murray

The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

VOLUME 35

DECEMBER 1964

NUMBER 4



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, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

President: MRS. JAMES W. WILTSHIRE, 201 Woodland Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Vice-President: CHARLES W. HACKER, 218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton, Virginia.

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Published four times a year in March, June, September and December at Charlottesville, Virginia. Membership includes subscription to *The Raven*. Annual subscription price to non-members is \$3.00. Individual issues are priced at 75¢.

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The business and mailing address for *The Raven* is Box 57, Charlottesville, Virginia.

EVENING GROSBEAKS IN VIRGINIA, 1963-1964*

ARTHUR H. FAST

During the last twenty-four years, from the time a single bird of this species appeared in Alexandria in March, 1940 to the present time, the status of the eastern race of the Evening Grosbeak, *Hesperiphona vespertina vespertina* (Cooper) has undergone a spectacular change in Virginia. Over the years this bird has come to our state as a migrant and winter visitor in ever increasing numbers, though irregular as to years.** During the 1963-1964 season it invaded most regions of the state in greater numbers, and was more widespread, than ever before. At many feeding stations, it was the most numerous bird present for days or weeks (even months) on end.

In late December and the first half of January, Mrs. J. H. Mason (Fairfax County) had up to 500 "or more" in her yard. One week-end, she fed 100 lbs. of sunflower seed. We can sympathize with her remark: "Simply cannot afford to feed this large amount of birds"; she fed 1000 lbs. of sunflower seed for the season. Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson (Oakton) reports that by 15 December he had 75; early April, "I could count over a hundred any morning"; 18 April, 200; later decreasing; but by 2 and 3 May, neighborhood was "sprinkled with them", over 300. Mrs. Pfeiffer (Alexandria) had up to 90. In Strasburg, the George Smiths noted small flocks from Thanksgiving "until Christmas Eve. Suddenly the inundation". During the last days of December they banded 357; for the season 886. They operated 3 traps "when time permitted—on a quarter-acre, cat-stalked town lot". They speculated that with a full effort, "several thousand might have been banded". Dr. J. J. Murray reported that "at least 100 [were] floating around Lexington,—200 plus in Rockbridge County." Dr. Ruskin S. Freer (Lynchburg) wrote that by January he "requested correspondents to my weekly column to cease and desist on reports on the birds as everybody had them"; and in greater abundance than ever before. A. O. English (Roanoke) wrote that these birds were widely scattered in "smaller flocks than in the past" in the Roanoke, Pulaski and Galax areas. Dr. J. W. Murray (Blacksburg) says: "They were present practically every day from December 22 to April 5 in varying numbers at my home"; similarly, to early May up to 100 at Radford (Messersmith). Paul Sykes sent a list of 15 locations in Norfolk and south to the border, in which a total of 314 birds were reported; adding that the birds were widely scattered in the area where in the previous seasons "only an occasional single—or small group" were reported. In that area J. E. Ames Jr. wrote that these birds were "the first ever seen in this village" [Driver]; also first in Chesapeake, Miss Grimm. Walter Smith says of the Hampton area: They "were far more numerous than in any past invasion". To the same effect were letters from Dr. John H. Grey at Williamsburg and F. R. Scott at Richmond. For the first time, "We have seen them all over the Eastern Shore this winter"—Mrs. J. E. Guthrie (Cape Charles). In the 1963 Christmas Count,* Scott listed 14 counts for a total of 511 Evening Grosbeaks.

Based on the reports received, the following numbers of Evening Grosbeaks were banded in Virginia during the 1963-1964 season:

*For reports on the Evening Grosbeaks in Virginia for prior years, see The Raven, 33, No. 4, 6-8; citations in "The VSO—1930-1964" by J. J. Murray, The Raven, 35, 23-28; and Bird-Banding, 33, 181-191.

**See report on Christmas Count, 1963 (Scott), The Raven, 35, 7 and 16.

*The Raven, 35, 7 and 16.

Bander	Number Banded		
	M	F	Total
Rev. and Mrs. Smith (Strasburg)	295	591	886*
Mrs. W. H. Babcock (Gordonsville)	187	252	
	(31 sex not given)		470
Scott (Richmond)	106	303	409
Fast (Arlington)**	79	267	346
Mrs. H. M. Church, Jr. (Ashburn)	50	157	207
Mrs. M. B. Peacock (Fairfax)	17	67	
	(1 no sex)		85
J. M. Abbott (Alexandria)	13	61	74
Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell (Newport News)	19	31	52
Charles Hacker (Hampton)	....	5	5
Total for Virginia	766	1734	2534***
Omitting the 32 birds not sexed	30%	69% of total	

*Most likely the highest number ever for a bander in Virginia for any one year.

**Assisted continuously by Mrs. David and/or Patricia Beach, and importantly by Morgan Gilbert.

***The highest previous total for birds banded in Virginia, for any one year was 1355 in the 1961-1962 season.

Of the 886 birds banded, the Smiths have a partial record of 168 repeats during the same season. Of the 409 banded by Scott, 23 or 5.6% repeated, 3 twice, and 2 three times for a total of 32 repeats. Of the 346 banded by Fast, 19 or 5.5% repeated, one three times for a total of 21 repeats. Two or more banders operating in areas near to each other frequently retrap birds banded by the others, during the same season. Two Evening Grosbeaks banded and re-trapped in Virginia during the instant season are of special interest: (1) On 26 December 1963, the Smiths banded a bird in Strasburg, which was re-trapped on 13 January 1964 by Babcock at Gordonsville; and (2) On 24 December 1963 another bird was banded in Strasburg, which was re-trapped on 17 January 1964 by Scott at Richmond. Prior to the instant season returns of Evening Grosbeaks to the place of banding in Virginia in succeeding years were almost non-existent. Prior to 1958, very few of these birds were banded in Virginia except at 6-year intervals. Thus the likelihood of obtaining returns was greatly reduced. Also many of the banders listed above have been banding Evening Grosbeaks for only a few years. During the instant season the returns situation has improved slightly. In February 1964 the Smiths re-trapped in Strasburg three birds banded by themselves in February and March 1962. Three other birds have returned to Virginia in later years: (1) On 12 May 1958 Fast banded a bird in Arlington, which was re-trapped nearly 6 years later, on 13 January 1964 by the Smiths at Strasburg. On 7 January 1962 Fast banded a bird in Arlington, which was re-trapped on 26 December 1963 by Abbott at Alexandria; and (3) on 9 March 1960 Peacock banded a bird in Fairfax, which was re-trapped on 26 December 1963 by the Smiths at Strasburg.

Table 1.

The following 40 Evening Grosbeaks were banded outside Virginia, and retrapped and released in Virginia during the 1963-1964 season, as indicated:

Retrapped and released by the Smiths at Strasburg:

Band No.	Sex	Date banded	Place Banded	Date Retrapped
1. 58-196143	M	23 Dec. 1959	State College, Pa.	24 Dec. 1963 ¹
2. 56-155347	F	16 Mch. 1963	W. Hartford, Conn.	24 Dec. 1963
3. 58-141986	M	20 Mch. 1960	Bedford, Mass.	25 Dec. 1963
4. 59-141701	F	29 Dec. 1961	State College, Pa.	28 Dec. 1963 ²
5. 60-114795	F	11 Feb. 1962	State College, Pa.	28 Dec. 1963
6. 56-195809	F	26 Dec. 1961	Pleasantville, N. J.	30 Dec. 1963
7. 59-199862	F	25 Dec. 1963	Morgantown, W. Va.	6 Jan. 1964
8. 56-153593	F	17 May 1958	Hanover, N. Hamp.	6 Jan. 1964
9. 55-111499	M	28 Apr. 1956	Montoursville, Pa.	10 Jan. 1964
10. 57-177386	F	10 Jan. 1961	Wolfeboro, N. Hamp.	11 Jan. 1964
11. 59-116189	F	28 Dec. 1961	Pardeeville, Wisc.	13 Jan. 1964
12. 62-172876	F	30 Dec. 1963	State College, Pa.	14 Jan. 1964
13. 58-266193	F	29 Jan. 1962	Waukegan, Ill.	12 Feb. 1964
14. 63-100500	F	24 Dec. 1963	State College, Pa.	15 Feb. 1964
15. 63-100767	M	17 Jan. 1964	State College, Pa.	13 Feb. 1964

Retrapped and released by Mrs. Babcock at Gordonsville:

16. 62-170555	F	25 Feb. 1962	Mrs. Henry Koenig Sauk City, Wisc.	11 Feb. 1964
17. 52-187912	F	7 Mch. 1959	Bruce Westcott Leaside, Toronto, Ontario, Canada	9 Feb. 1964
18. 58-170207	F	3 Feb. 1960	Mrs. Richard Cole, Charlestown, Md.	13 Feb. 1964
19. 59-107470	F	13 Mch. 1960	Dorothy Bordner State College, Pa.	4 Feb. 1964
20. 52-194201	F	11 Feb. 1963	R. C. Mellish, Pointe Claire, Quebec Canada	11 Feb. 1964
21. 59-137708	M	16 May 1962	Virginia Perkins White River Valley, Vt.	13 Feb. 1964
22. 62-134246	F	24 Mch. 1963	Mrs. L. B. Romaine N. Middleboro, Mass.	1 Apr. 1964
23. 57-135368	M	20 Jan. 1964	Stuart Wilson Jr. Deposit, N. Y.	21 Apr. 1964

Retrapped and released by Scott at Richmond:

24. 62-140919	F	14 Dec. 1963	Mrs. Edna Donelson Titusville, N. J.	18 Jan. 1964
25. 62-150646	F	13 Apr. 1962	Mabelle Isham Battle Creek, Mich.	20 Mch. 1964
26. 582-53637	F	15 Jan. 1962	Russell Bengel, Williamsburg, Mich.	11 Apr. 1964
Replaced by 65-101142				
27. 56-197507	F	15 May 1958	Stuart Wilson Jr., Deposit, N. Y.	22 Apr. 1964

1. This bird was previously retrapped on 20 May 1960 in South Londonderry, Vt.

2. This bird was also retrapped in Strasburg on 14 Feb. 1962, followed by 2 repeats in March 1962.

Retrapped and released by Fast at Arlington:

Band No.	Sex	Date banded	Place Banded	Date Retrapped
28. 66-180642	M	17 Apr. 1964	Eloise Potter Zebulon, N. Car.	25 Apr. 1964
29. 55-140569	F	20 Dec. 1957	Lester Marland, Ware, Mass.	29 Apr. 1964
30. 61-110363	F	20 Oct. 1961	Mrs. R. Hebert New Hampton, N. H.	15 Apr. 1964
31. 62-196810	F	15 Dec. 1963	J. K. Long Shippensburg, Pa.	5 Mch. 1964
32. 552-87776	F	8 Jan. 1960	S. S. Wilson Jr. Deposit, N. Y.	3 Apr. 1964

Retrapped and released by Mrs. Church at Ashburn:

33. 62-146165	F	3 Jan. 1962	Maurice Broun, Kempton, Pa.	19 Feb. 1964
34. 64-131385	F	14 Dec. 1963	Anderson Martin, Cumberland, Md.	29 Dec. 1963

Retrapped and released by Abbott at Alexandria:

35. 63-194727	F	10 Dec. 1963	Swift Water, Pa.	7 Mch. 1964
36. 57-188180	M	21 Feb. 1959	Lester Marland, Ware, Mass.	28 Mch. 1964
37. 58-181499	F	14 Dec. 1963	Natchant Orni. Soc. Mansfield, Conn.	22 Feb. 1964
38. 59-141552	F	no information	Dorothy Bordner State College, Pa.	26 Dec. 1963 ³

Retrapped and released by the Mitchells at Newport News:

39. 65-154469	F	27 Dec. 1963	V. E. Unger, Federalsburg, Md.	28 Jan. 1964
40. 59-123215	F	20 Oct. 1961	Ralph Carpenter, Wolfeboro, N. Hamp.	20 Feb. 1964

For the shortest elapsed time between banding and retrapping shown in Table 1, see Item 28. This bird traveled in 8 days about 250 air miles from near Raleigh, North Carolina to Arlington, Virginia; apparently bound for its breeding grounds. (Incidentally, this same North Carolina bander retrapped in April 1964 a bird banded by Fast in February 1962). In Items 7, 12, 15, and 34, less than a month elapsed between banding and retrapping. In Items 8, 9, 17, 27, 29, and 36, five years or more elapsed between banding and retrapping; the greatest elapsed time being Item 9—7 years, 9 months. Eight of these re-traps were banded in State College, Pennsylvania. Babcock, Scott and Fast each retrapped a bird banded in Deposit, New York. Items 11, 13, 16, 25 and 26 suggests the possibility that part of the population of these birds which wintered in the Michigan-Wisconsin-Illinois area in 1961-1962, came to Virginia for the instant season. It is worthy of note that more than 20 Evening Grosbeaks banded in Virginia in previous years (not included in Table 1), were recovered, during the instant season in North Carolina, Maryland, and in most of the states north and northeast of Virginia; one in the northern part of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia; two in Wisconsin.

With few exceptions, the females greatly predominated in 1963-1964, as in previous years. See the above list of bandings, showing only 30% of the 2534

3. This bird was also retrapped in Greenbelt, Md. on 26 April 1962.

birds banded were males. As stated in the Evening Grosbeak report of 1961-1962*, the females tend to penetrate more deeply into the wintering grounds than the males; and the males may leave the wintering grounds before the females. Between 15 April and 6 May Fast banded 124 birds, of which only 25 were males.

As in previous years, the Evening Grosbeak has been essentially a morning bird. Feeding has been active principally between half light in the morning and 1:00 P.M., with few birds after that hour. Miss Woodson (Richmond) states: "Their habits are as regular as clock timing". At the feeders their almost universal favorite is sunflower seed, which a large flock will consume in seemingly unlimited quantities. Away from the feeders, they have been observed feeding: in pine and hardwood, swamp maple trees (Mrs. Hoover, Mt. Vernon); on seeds of wild cherry, maple and crepe-myrtle (Woodson, Richmond); and seeds of poison ivy, myrtle, dogwood and elm (Steirly, Waverly). As spring migration approaches, feeding continues much later in the afternoon. Dr. Eppele* reports a substantial weight variation between the time of banding and later recapture in the same season. In "Weight Variations in Birds at a Feeder", Robert P. Yonick** reports on the weights of 88 Evening Grosbeaks in April 1964 at Schenectady, New York. He found that the weight loss during the night averages 7gs. Furthermore, he found that the weights of these birds reached their maximum between 7:00 and 9:00 A.M., decreased between 10:00 and 11:00 A.M., and "then sharply rose through noon and the early afternoon". It still remains mostly a mystery throughout the eastern states as to where these birds spend the remainder of their afternoons and nights. Dr. Gabrielson sheds a little light on this question. "In the afternoons, they were in the flood plane apparently feeding on buds in the larger trees". Also Mrs. Babcock says that between 3:00 P.M. and dusk, she saw them "quite a few times" singly, or in ones or twos in "woody bottom" lands, "always near one of the streams and always in [large] hardwood trees".

The extreme dates for the arrival and departure of the Evening Grosbeaks were 18 October (Fairfax-Pulley, Peacock), and 13 May (Fairfax-Mason). Some other early arrivals were: 8 November, Richmond; 12 November, Alexandria; 19 November, Norfolk and Virginia Beach; many arrivals were in December and January. Many departures were in April. Some other May departures were: 6, Madison Heights and Gordonsville; 7, Arlington, Roanoke, and Sweet Briar; 8, Warrenton and Radford; 9, Lynchburg; 10, Oakton; and 11, McLean.

Thanks to the contributors: J. M. Abbott, J. E. Ames Jr., Mrs. W. Babcock, Mrs. D. Beach, Mrs. R. Burchfield, M. Carpenter, M. B. Cater, Mrs. R. E. Christian, Mrs. H. Church, Mrs. L. Cochran, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Eike, Col. and Mrs. Ely, A. O. English, A. Fast, R. S. Freer, I. N. Gabrielson, J. Grey, Mrs. G. Grimm, Mrs. K. Graves, Mrs. D. Guthrie, C. Hacker, Mrs. A. Hood, Mrs. C. Hoover, Mrs. W. Houston, J. R. Kemper, E. Klussman, M. Lakeman, Mrs. J. H. Mason, D. H. Messersmith, J. F. Mehner, Mrs. D. Mitchell, Mrs. E. C. Moore, J. J. Murray, J. W. Murray, M. Nelson, Mrs. E. Peacock, Mrs. J. Pfeiffer, G. Prior, Mrs. M. Pulley, F. R. Scott, Mrs. D. Smiley, Mr. and Mrs. G. Smith, Mrs. M. Smith, W. Smith, C. Steirly, P. Sykes, J. Turnbull, Miss E. Woodson.

About 15 years ago the Evening Grosbeak established a new breeding area

*The Raven, No. 4, 6-8; see also Evening Grosbeak Invasion of 1961-1962, by A. C. Eppele, Passenger Pigeon (Wisc.) 24, 110 and 119.

*Passenger Pigeon (Wisc.), 24, 123.

**EBBA News, 27, 184 and 185.

in the northeast.* In recent years this bird has had a series of irruptions. In some winters it has increased to a flood in the states along the eastern seaboard, as far south as Virginia and beyond; during the instant season our state had such a flood of many thousands. Its summer breeding range is being extended slowly southward**. It seems well within the realm of the possible that within a comparatively few years we may observe Evening Grosbeaks in Virginia during the summer season, most likely in the higher elevations.

BREEDING OF THE TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER IN VIRGINIA

JOHN WALLACE COFFEY

On 26 June 1964 Roger Stone and the writer, both of Bristol, Tennessee, discovered the first known nest of the Traill's Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) in the state of Virginia. The location of the nesting area can best be described as a long marshy pond located just south of highway US 11 in the western edge of Abingdon, Virginia. An old weathered sign standing near the pond bears the name "Stone Mill Marsh Bird Refuge."

First it was believed that this nesting might represent the first known breeding record for this species in the state. It was later learned and verified that the first breeding record belongs to Dr. Henry M. Stevenson and Dr. James T. Tanner. On 14 July 1946, they successfully collected a juvenile of this species at what appears to be the same location at Abingdon. Dr. Alexander Wetmore informed the writer (conversation: 27 July 1964, Washington, D. C.), that he had studied the specimen in 1959 and determined it to be a juvenile Traill's Flycatcher, barely out of the nest and that he was satisfied it was raised at the place it had been collected. Dr. Wetmore went on to say that he was also satisfied that Stevenson had a breeding record.

Stevenson informed the writer (letter: September 17, 1964) that, "Judging from what you write, I suspect that our breeding sites for the Traill's Flycatcher are one and the same." Previously he had explained (letter: April 15, 1964): "... see *The Auk* (64:320-321) for the breeding record of Traill's Flycatcher at Abingdon. I should add that, contrary to the statement in that note, we *did* collect a specimen. It was first identified as a young Wood Pewee, but Dr. Wetmore later reversed his own earlier identification. I've never published the correction."

Perhaps this information will help clarify any misunderstanding and add to the obvious lack of published information concerning the breeding status of the Traill's Flycatcher in Virginia. The find of an active nest at Abingdon on 26 June can certainly be of direct value in helping to determine the present status and in lending additional support to Stevenson's breeding record.

The discovery of the flycatcher's nest was first made possible by the observation of two *Empidonax* flycatchers very near the edge of a marshy pond bordered by alder thickets and many low shrubs. Only moments after the two flycatchers were spotted, both birds were seen to fly to and from a nearby nest catching insects and apparently feeding nestlings. After carefully

*The Raven, 33, No. 4, 6-9; Bird-Banding, 31, 150-156; 34, 1-22, and 22-30; and 35, 216. In the summer of 1962, Parks of Connecticut drove over nearly impassable roads to the Quebec breeding area, and banded 500 birds; area sprayed with DDT; summer of 1963, he banded only 5 birds.

**Bird-Banding, 25, 87 and 89; 35, 212. One stayed in Towson, Maryland to June 2, 1964. Maryland Birdlife, 20, 89.

checking the adult birds for the various obvious field marks of the genus *Empidonax*, we investigated the nest and found three very young nestlings which were probably not more than two or three days of age. At this date, nest construction by Traill's Flycatchers in the Johnson County area of Tennessee (not many miles away) was in the final stages and some possibly had eggs. We had hoped to find the same conditions at Abingdon but possibly due to the difference in elevation, this nest was well advanced.

While investigating the nest, the writer heard the adult bird give the characteristic song of the Traill's. The two syllabled *fits-bew* could clearly be distinguished as the bird was perched about fifteen feet away. The singular note of *pip* or *pit* was constantly given. Soon, both birds flew about the nesting area catching insects and then perched quietly. No drastic concern or defense was offered to our presence at the nest. The writer has previously observed this species and learned the song from repeated experiences with the birds in Johnson County since June 1961.

This nest was found in a blackberry (genus *Rubus*) thicket, fifty to seventy-five feet from the pond's edge. It was placed about four feet above the ground in a fork formed by the crossing of two or three independent branches very near the top of the plant. It appeared to be well constructed and lined with fine grasses. The outer material gave a silvery appearance to the rough looking exterior and some of the fiber-type material used streamed downward from the bottom and sides of nest eight to twelve inches from the rim. The nest was not actually well hidden for it could easily be observed at a distance of twenty yards. It was, however, adequately protected from the sun and rain.

My last visit to the nest was on 4 July when I banded the three young birds which were then ready to leave the nest. Many color slides (35mm) were taken of the nestlings and the nest. On 11 July these slides plus additional slides of the habitat, nest location, etc. were viewed by Dr. J. J. Murray, at his home in Lexington, when the writer and Ken Dubke visited there.

On 27 July, at the request of Dr. Murray, the writer took the slides to the Smithsonian Institution where Dr. Wetmore observed them and discussed Dr. Stevenson's breeding record at Abingdon. Obviously, Dr. Wetmore could not certify the 1964 nesting record by viewing the slides alone.

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PIGEON HAWKS HUNTING AS A TEAM

PAUL W. SYKES, JR.

On 25 September 1963, my wife and I watched for a period of several minutes two hunting Pigeon Hawks (*Falco columbarius*, Linnaeus) at Stumpy Lake, Chesapeake, Virginia. The two falcons, both brown plumage birds, were hunting as a team. One of the falcons made a dive at a small flock of "peep" sandpipers that was feeding on the shore of the lake. The shorebirds took flight, and one of the sandpipers separated from the flock. The two falcons immediately concentrated their efforts on the lone bird. First one falcon, then the other, would chase the sandpiper. While one falcon was in pursuit, the other appeared to be on the sideline. Each falcon made several dives at the bird. The shorebird's flight was erratic as it tried to elude its pursuers. The sandpiper soon tired, at which time one of the falcons struck the small bird, knocking it into shallow water. The falcon quickly checked its dive, swooped down, and picked up the bird in its talons. The bird with the prey was then joined by the other falcon. Both birds flew off and were

lost from view behind the trees a short distance from the vantage point.

The literature makes some mention of birds hunting as a team. Bent, in his *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey*, gives an account of Ferruginous Hawks capturing Jack Rabbits and Prairie Dogs in this manner. Another account in Bent relates that three Golden Eagles, having stampeded a herd of Pronghorn Antelope, cut one animal out of the group, attacked, and killed it. Still another account describes two Golden Eagles attempting to force a Mountain Sheep lamb off of a cliff. In the *Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States*, Forbush relates an observation of a pair of Golden Eagles hunting Jack Rabbits in a like manner. The observations cited from Bent and Forbush involved mated birds or family groups; where as, the birds observed at Stumpy Lake were migrating.

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THE BLUEBIRD

Is the Bluebird, the symbol of happiness, truly a happy bird? There have been periods when the species has suffered serious setbacks. Dr. Frank M. Chapman stated that in February 1895 the South Atlantic states were visited by a blizzard which practically annihilated the Bluebirds wintering or resident in them, and the following spring the birds were absent from large areas where they had been common.

The possible loss of a beautiful bird, so intimately associated with man, was greatly deplored, but when not beset by other handicaps the Bluebirds became as abundant as ever. Less evident, but in the end of greater significance, is the Bluebird's struggle with the Starling, an expansive species. The conflict is not over food, for the species are of different feeding habits, but over nesting sites. The Bluebird cannot compete successfully with the Starling's nesting adaptability when a normal site is not available. We cannot imagine that the Bluebird will build in branches, vines, electric light hoods, or, in short, any place which will hold nesting materials. Let us, therefore, join forces with this gentle-voiced messenger of sky and earth by providing it with suitable homes in which these enemies, for whose presence we are responsible, will not be permitted to abide.

Thus was born the home for Bluebirds, whereby the universal dimensions for nesting boxes were adopted. It is generally accepted that the floor of an artificial cavity should be 5 x 5 inches, the depth of the cavity 8 inches, entrance above the floor 6 inches, diameter of the entrance 1½ inches, and the height above the ground 5 to 10 feet. In this cavity, a nest of grasses is constructed in which four to six bluish-white eggs are deposited. The Bluebird seems to be at home in our gardens and orchards or about our dwellings. One wonders what it did for a home before the white man came.

Dr. J. J. Murray writes in *Virginia Wildlife*, April 1962, that for years the Bluebird has diminished in numbers. Possibly a number of factors enter into this decline. Scarcity in some seasons is due to hard freezes that kill numbers of Bluebirds by cutting off their winter food supply. Undoubtedly, one big factor, probably the chief, is the increase in the number of Starlings. The Starling, because of its more aggressive manners and because of its use of similar nesting places is a dangerous competitor of the Bluebird for nesting holes. Where the influx of the Starling has not been too pronounced, the decline of the Bluebird population has not been so serious.

Let us examine some factors that affect the Bluebird populations. As indicated in *Audubon Field Notes*, June 1962, the years 1961 and 1962 were marked by low numbers. For the past several years prior to 1961 and 1962 a scarcity existed. After dropping to a record low of only 30 per cent of normal

abundance in the winter a year ago, it seemed that Bluebird population levels could not possibly go lower. But they have, for during the past winter in the southeast Bluebirds were a meager 18 per cent of normal. The year 1957 marked the last time Bluebirds were abundant. The population on the Christmas counts have been low, culminating in an apparent all-time low this past winter. What caused this decline is a matter of speculation. The coldness of recent winters and the widespread improper use of insecticides have been suggested and both have had a certain detrimental effect upon the situation. The summer of 1957 marked the beginning of the most extensive program of insecticide dissemination ever attempted in the range of the Bluebird, the wholesale treating with heptachlor of rural areas in the Gulf states to attempt to eradicate the imported fire ant. This program has been continued every year since 1957 and although Bluebirds had not declined much the first winter they have been scarce thereafter. Both factors cause the reduction of Bluebird populations in a similar way, by killing the insects they eat. Low temperatures persist only in winter while secondary poisoning from chemicals extends through the spring, summer, and autumn food supply. Also the possibility exists that the insecticides may kill Bluebirds directly, if enough of the poison can accumulate from contaminated insects eaten by the birds.

As a long-time trend, a period of twenty-four years, east of the Mississippi at about 30 degrees latitude, when the number of days during the winter with freezing temperatures were relatively low the Bluebird populations the following winter were correspondingly high, and when winter was more severe the subsequent Bluebird populations were correspondingly smaller. Thus, a combination of severe weather conditions, competition by other cavity nesting species, and the improper use of pesticides have been responsible for a gradual decline of the Bluebird.

A few Bluebirds remain in the Washington area during the winter. In early spring the northward movement of birds which have wintered to the south increases the numbers. Their cheery notes can be heard in the spring as they return to their nesting territories. May they never disappear from our fields and hedgerows.

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ACTIONS OF THE VSO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met at the Peaks of Otter Lodge, in the Blue Ridge Parkway, on October 10, 1964, and took the following actions:

1. Approved the affiliation of a new local group, the "Piedmont Chapter," in Gordonsville, recently organized under the presidency of William W. Waterman.
2. Empowered the President to authorize each of the Society's committees to spend up to \$15 per year without prior approval of the Executive Committee.
3. Accepted the resignation of Miss Helen Goldstick as Treasurer, and expressed appreciation for her services.
4. Designated J. Steven Thornhill, of Lynchburg, to fill the remainder of Miss Goldstick's term of office.
5. Discussed possible sites for the 1965 annual meeting. Mountain Lake and Norfolk were mentioned as preferred choices. Final determination of place and date will be made later.

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AUDUBON FILMS IN VIRGINIA, 1965

DONALD H. MESSERSMITH

As in past years, the Audubon Wildlife Films are being presented to Virginia audiences by the National Audubon Society and various local groups. Tickets for these performances are available for a nominal fee at the door. One or two films have already been shown in these areas. The remaining films are below.

Bristol area. Sponsored by the Kingsport, Tennessee, Department of Recreation in the Kingsport Civic Auditorium on Memorial Blvd. at 7:30 P.M.

Friday, 8 January—"Around the Bay", George Regensburg

Friday, 19 March—"These Things Are Ours", Mary Jane Dockeray

Tuesday, 27 April—"New England Saga", John D. Bulger

Charlottesville. Sponsored by the University of Virginia Union in the Newcomb Hall Ballroom at 8:00 P.M.

Tuesday, 12 January—"Around the Bay", George Regensburg

Sunday, 21 February—"Village Beneath the Sea", Harry Pederson

Sunday, 4 April—"Inherit the Wild", D. J. Nelson

Monday, 10 May—"New England Saga", John B. Bulger

Norfolk. Sponsored by The Cape Henry Bird Club at Northside Junior High School at 8:15 P.M.

Thursday, 14 January—"Around the Bay", George Regensburg

Wednesday, 24 February—"Village Beneath the Sea", Harry Pederson

Friday, 2 April—"Inherit the Wild", D. J. Nelson

Roanoke. The remaining film will be presented at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School (probably at 8:00 P.M.) by the Roanoke Valley Bird Club.

Monday, 22 February—"Village Beneath the Sea", Harry Pederson

Williamsburg. Sponsored by the Clayton-Grimes Biology Club in the Ballroom, Campus Center, at 8:00 P.M.

Wednesday, 13 January—"Around the Bay", George Regensburg

Monday, 22 February—"Alberta Outdoors", Edgar T. Jones

Monday, 5 April—"Inherit the Wild", D. J. Nelson

Friday, 7 May—"New England Saga", John D. Bulger

Washington, D. C. The Audubon Naturalist Society is presenting a similar series at 5:15 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. at the Natural History Museum on 28 January, 24 February, 15 March, 14 April, 11 May. Further information may be obtained by calling their office.

NEWS AND NOTES

FREER TO PREPARE VIRGINIA AVIFAUNA NUMBER 2. When the Executive Committee was informed that Dr. Ruskin S. Freer was at work on a revised edition of his booklet, *The Birds of Lynchburg, Virginia, and Vicinity*, they voted to request him to let us publish this revision as a second *Virginia Avifauna*. He has agreed. This edition will probably be enlarged as well as brought up to date.

CEILOMETER CASUALTIES AT LYNCHBURG. The following bird casualties are reported by Mrs. James Wiltshire at the ceilometer light (22,000 foot beam) at the Lynchburg Airport on the night of 5 October 1964. There was a north wind all night, with low ceiling, following a cold front the previous afternoon. In the morning there were over 100 birds on the ground, of which the following 59 were identified, representing 22 species. Two of these, the Sora and the Connecticut Warbler, are new to the Lynchburg list. Species: Sora, 1; House Wren, 1; Catbird, 2; Wood Thrush, 2; Swainson's Thrush, 6; Gray-cheeked Thrush, 2; Red-eyed Vireo, 5; Black and White Warbler, 1; Tennessee Warbler, 3; Cape May Warbler, 3; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 4; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 1; Bay-breasted Warbler, 5; Ovenbird, 12; Connecticut Warbler, 1; Wilson's Warbler, 3; Bobolink, 1; Scarlet Tanager, 2; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1; Indigo Bunting, 1; Grasshopper Sparrow, 1; Lincoln's Sparrow, 1.

DUCK HAWK AT PETERSBURG. On 2 October 1964 W. B. McIlwaine, Jr., and Ben McIlwaine saw a Duck Hawk flying over their farm five miles west of Petersburg. All the field marks were noted, particularly the black mustache.

COMMON AND FORSTER'S TERNS IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA. Bill Akers (806 Berkley Street, Radford, Virginia) reports seeing two Common Terns at Jackson's Ferry on New River, Wythe County, on 22 August 1964. Jim Gearhart of Norfolk was with him. One was in winter plumage, showing the black patch on the nape. On 26 August at Claytor Lake State Park he saw a flock of 20 or more terns, some of which were identified as Common Terns in winter plumage. Shortly after, in the same park, he saw a Forster's Tern in winter plumage.

STRANGE BEHAVIOR OF TREE SWALLOWS. C. C. Steirly writes as follows: "Early on the morning of 22 September 1964 as I was driving along the Jamestown-Williamsburg Parkway not far from the James River I noticed thousands of Tree Swallows flying about over the road and the adjacent open country and marshlands. In one place there was a dense flock sitting on the road. These were very reluctant to fly up and for a moment I thought I might hit some of them. A bit farther down the road there was another flock in a similar attitude. I observed that there were a number of dead ones, obviously hit by a passing motor vehicle, so I stopped in order to check them for bands. At this point I noticed a rather strange behavior pattern. Some of the swallows were attempting copulation with the dead birds all of which were laying about on the road on their backs. There were twenty dead ones in the flock and each was being attended by a swallow. At first I thought that these were possible mated birds but then I noticed that others were hovering over the active live birds attempting to take their places very much as gulls drive each other off of suitable piles or pound net poles upon which they wish to perch. Time did not permit any further extensive observations of this activity and I can not find any reference to such behavior in the available literature."

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