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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., 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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VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1969-70 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

As impossible as it may seem, almost every Christmas bird count season appears to set new records in at least some respects. This past season some 276 different observers reported 190 species on 25 Christmas counts in Virginia. The observer total was considerably above the previous record of 251 during the 1965-66 season, and the species count was one higher than the former record of 189 obtained during the 1967-68 and 1968-69 counts. Of especial interest too was the record of 1148 party-hours this year, some 6% above the previous record of 1085 for the 1966-67 counts. There is little question that the Christmas bird count is the most popular birdwatching activity in Virginia.

Three species are apparently new to Virginia counts this year—European Widgeon, King Eider, and Long-billed Curlew—and the cumulative total of all state Christmas counts now stands at 251 species. Although all the usual birds were recorded this year, some of the more irregular ones missing from the list include Green Heron, Rough-legged Hawk, Royal Tern, and Black Skimmer.

Although 25 different counts are printed here, two other Virginia counts were submitted to *Audubon Field Notes* but not to *The Raven*. There were Powhatan and Shenandoah National Park. Two other counts—Seneca, Md., and Washington, D. C.—overlapped into Virginia and were also submitted to *Audubon Field Notes*. Data from these counts are not included in this summary. A record six counts surpassed 100 species this year. These were Cape Charles, 166 species; Chincoteague, 133; Little Creek, 133; Back Bay, 130; Newport News, 104; and Fort Belvoir, 101. The Cape Charles total was 9 species over the previous state record set by Cape Charles in 1969, while the Fort Belvoir total was 14 above the previous high for that count. Fort Belvoir also had the most thorough coverage of any Virginia count, reporting 166 party-hours.

Poor weather seemed to have little effect on the determined counter. Although only two counts reported significant rain, ten—or 40%—of them (all from the upper Piedmont westward) reported some snow on the ground, with Charlottesville, Warren, and Waynesboro having from 12 to 16 inches. Birdwatching under these conditions can be quite an arduous undertaking.

The count tabulation given in Table 1 is more or less in order of distance inland from the coast. Counts 1-9 were all on the Coastal Plain, with 1-4 being on the coast proper and 5 and 6 being on the western edge of Chesapeake Bay. Counts 10-14 were on the Piedmont, and 15-25 were from the Blue Ridge westward. The count locations are given in Figure 1, and details on each one are given toward the end of this brief summary.

Pelagic birds were in moderate numbers, though the count of 216 Pied-billed Grebes at Little Creek was a good number, surpassed recently only by the 257 reported at Back Bay last year. Surprisingly, Horned Grebes were reported on four of the Valley counts, and the Eared Grebe at Chincoteague was the second Virginia count record, the first being at Back Bay in 1966. Two Double-crested Cormorants at Brooke were unusual so far inland. Heron numbers were quite good along the coast, and the 56 Common Egrets, 89 Black-crowned Night Herons, and 6 Glossy Ibis at Chincoteague were all records. The ibis were only the third record for a Virginia Christmas count.

Four inland counts reported Whistling Swans. A European Widgeon at Cape Charles and 4 King Eiders at Little Creek were both first records for a Virginia count. There were good counts of Oldsquaws along the coast, and on the Potomac River both Brooke and Fort Belvoir reported the species. A Common Eider was seen at Cape Charles, only the third record for a state count, and

Fort Belvoir reported all three scoters, including 48 Common Scoters. A Broad-winged Hawk carefully identified on the Newport News count is not a first Virginia count record, according to John H. Grey, Jr. (*Raven*, 25: 5-8, 1954), but it is certainly the first recent and probably the most credible one. Bald Eagles were found on seven counts, including the Bristol one, while Peregrine Falcons were seen at Cape Charles and Little Creek.

Cape Charles, as usual, took the shorebird honors, with the most outstanding record being a Long-billed Curlew, a first Virginia count record. Other outstanding totals on this count were 99 American Woodcock (a record number for a United States count this year), a Spotted Sandpiper, 69 Willets, and 43 Marbled Godwits. Elsewhere, 21 Least Sandpipers at Hopewell were quite significant so far inland. Single Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were reported at Cape Charles, and all nine Coastal Plain counts recorded the Great Black-backed Gulls, with outstanding inland totals of 280 at Brooke and 129 at Fort Belvoir. Back Bay reported a spectacular 5250 Bonaparte's Gulls, and its incredible total of 3050 Forster's Terns was an all-time record for any United States Christmas count.

Some 41 Red-headed Woodpeckers were found at Little Creek, the highest total for a Virginia count since 1962. A total of 28 Eastern Phoebees were found on 16 counts, a peculiar contrast to last year's 40 on nine counts. The 1968 total was helped by 19 at Back Bay versus only 4 this year. Rockingham County reported 285 Horned Larks, an excellent number for the Valley, as were Augusta County's 51 Fish Crows. Evidence of the good coverage at Fort Belvoir can be seen by its totals of 868 Carolina Chickadees and 310 Tufted Titmice. Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread for the second year in a row, a rather unusual occurrence. Some 338 were reported on 22 of the 25 counts, with Fort Belvoir totaling 109. For the last two years, the totals were 183 on 15 counts in 1968 and only 6 on four counts in 1967.

A Wood Thrush was found at Cape Charles, the fourth Virginia count record, while Swainson's Thrushes were reported at both Cape Charles and Newport News. Some 153 Eastern Bluebirds were recorded on 15 counts, or 13 per 100 party-hours. This is somewhat of a decrease in numbers from last year but an increase in the number of counts reporting the species. The only inland Pine Warbler was 1 at Fort Belvoir. Fifteen Baltimore Orioles were found at Newport News and 1 far inland at Roanoke.

The erratic northern finches staged another spectacular flight for the second successive year, the first time on record this has occurred. The Evening Grosbeak total was 1200 on 22 counts, whereas 2019 Pine Siskins were recorded on 18 counts, the best siskin flight on record. Although the number of grosbeaks was down somewhat from last year over the state as a whole, they were more common in extreme southeastern Virginia. The 677 Pine Siskins at Cape Charles constituted a state count record. The star of this finch flight, however, was the Red Crossbill, 272 of which were recorded on nine counts. This was also the best flight on record for this species. Some of the crossbill totals were incredible for this normally rare bird, such as the 122 reported from Chincoteague. A Common Redpoll was seen on the Charlottesville count.

House Finches appeared on the Fort Belvoir and Lynchburg counts, and a Dickcissel was seen at Newport News. A Chipping Sparrow at Warren and 2 on the Rockingham County count were unusual inland. Southeastern Virginia almost always comes up with a Lincoln's Sparrow or two, and this year 4 were recorded, 3 on the Little Creek count and 1 at Back Bay. Two Lapland Longspurs were seen at Newport News.

1. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 2 miles north of center of Chincoteague as in previous 15 years; open farmland 8%, insular pine woodland 8%, mainland woodland 9%, scrub pine and myrtle thickets 9%, fresh-water marshes and impoundments 8%, salt marshes 28%, sheltered bays 20%, dunes 4%, sand flats and beaches 6%).—Dec. 29; 6 a.m. to 5:40 p.m. Partly cloudy, becoming overcast by 3 p.m.; temp. 28° to 42°; wind N to W, 0-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, sheltered fresh water partially frozen. Fifteen observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 64 (47 on foot, 13 by car, 4 by motorboat); total party-miles, 197 (55 on foot, 122 by car, 20 by boat). Observers: Jackson M. Abbott, Henry T. Armistead, Robert Cherrix, Charles D. Cremeans, W. L. Del Grande, P. G. DuMont, P. A. DuMont, Jonathan Higman, Elwood M. Martin, E. T. McKnight, Peter Pyle, Robert L. Pyle, F. R. Scott (compiler), Jared W. Sparks, C. B. Swift, III. The Eared Grebe was seen by the DuMonts and is reported in more detail elsewhere in this issue. The Glossy Ibises, reported by Armistead and Sparks, had been present in the area all fall. The Red Crossbills were reported by three parties, with the mainland party of the Pyles and Swift reporting 106.

2. CAPE CHARLES (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 1.5 miles southeast of Capeville P. O. at south end of Dunton Cove; open bay 25%, salt marsh 20%, sheltered bay and mud flats 17%, open farmland 15%, open ocean and beach 10%, pine and mixed woodland 10%, towns 2%, fresh water 1%).—Dec. 28; 4:45 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Clear; temp. 28° to 40°; wind WNW, 10-35 m.p.h.; ground clear, fresh water partially frozen. Twenty-six observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 101 (75 on foot, 23 by car, 3 by boat); total party-miles, 272 (53 on foot, 209 by car, 10 by boat). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: *Cattle Egret*. Observers: Jackson M. Abbott, Henry T. Armistead (compiler), Michael M. Browne, Mitchell A. Byrd, Charles Cremeans, W. L. Del Grande, P. G. DuMont, Philip A. DuMont, Gilbert S. Grant, David D. Green, Jonathan Higman, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Kennedy, Edmund LeGrand, Harry E. LeGrand, Jr., Elwood M. Martin, Richard H. Peake, Jr., Peter Pyle, Robert L. Pyle, F. R. Scott, Jared W. Sparks, Ruth C. Strosnider, C. B. Swift, III, P. W. Sykes, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Ray P. Teele. The Yellow-crowned Night Heron was seen by Grant and Sparks and the Blue Goose, which was with a flock of Brant, by Abbott, Cremeans, and Del Grande. The Blue-winged Teal were found by Browne, Peake, and Sykes, who also saw the male European Widgeon with a flock of American Widgeon in good light with the rufous head clearly seen. The Teeles and Strosnider reported the Common Eider at close range under excellent conditions. The Long-billed Curlew was seen and also heard calling by Armistead, Grant, and Sparks, who submitted careful documentation of the record. P. G. DuMont found the Spotted Sandpiper and observed it at rest as well as in its characteristic flight. The Whimbrel, Willets, and Marbled Godwits were all seen by the boat party (Armistead, Grant, & Sparks) in the same area where they have been found in most of the recent years, and the large count of American Woodcock were reported by 6 of the 8 parties. Abbott and Cremeans found both the Glaucous and Iceland Gulls at Oyster, both of which were immatures. All the field marks of the Wood Thrush were noted by P. G. DuMont in excellent light, and the Swainson's Thrush was also well seen by the Pyles. The high count of Red Crossbills were reported by the two parties led by the DuMonts and Sykes.

3. LITTLE CREEK (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 3.8 miles NE of Kempsville in Virginia Beach, to include Cape Henry, Lynnhaven Inlet, Little Creek, eastern portion of Norfolk City, Stumpy Lake; farmland 8%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 16%, salt marsh, beach, rivers, bay, and ocean 21%, suburbs 45%).—Dec. 29; 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. 38° to 40°; wind NW to E, 0-6 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty-three observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 68 (60 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 302 (22 on foot, 280 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: *Common Eider*, *Rough-legged Hawk*, Baltimore Oriole. Observers: Robert L. Anderson, III, Mr. and Mrs.

TABLE 1. The 1969-70 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. Figures underlined 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 summaries.

	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Hopewell	8. Brooke	9. Fort Belvoir	10. Charlottesville	11. Warren	12. Darlington Heights	13. Sweet Briar	14. Lynchburg	15. Hockingham Co.	16. Augusta Co.	17. Waynesboro	18. Lexington	19. Peaks of Otter	20. Roanoke	21. Blacksburg	22. Glade Spring	23. Mt. Rogers-Whittop	24. Bristol	25. Nickelsville
Date	12/29	12/28	12/29	12/27	12/27	12/28	12/22	12/23	12/21	12/27	12/28	12/20	12/31	1/1	12/22	12/20	12/30	12/22	1/1	1/1	12/30	12/31	12/20	12/21	1/1
Common Loon	117	10	4	1	...	7	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red-throated Loon	28	5	18	19	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red-necked Grebe	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Horned Grebe	305	119	114	25	27	44	...	1	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	3	...
Eared Grebe	<u>1*</u>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pied-billed Grebe	66	58	216	57	26	7	3	2	...	...	...	1	...	1	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...
Gannet	...	...	42	48	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Double-crested Cormorant	7	9	2	2	1	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Blue Heron	125	65	62	25	6	28	30	16	18	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	9	...
Little Blue Heron	8	2	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Egret	<u>56</u>	14	53	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snowy Egret	3	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Louisiana Heron	16	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-crowned Night Heron	89	67	21	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	...	<u>1*</u>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Bittern	2	3	1	5	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glossy Ibis	<u>6*</u>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whistling Swan	142	93	...	10,000	...	14	2*	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Canada Goose	1165	988	8	11,250	2	20	9000	250	21	62	27	4*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Brant	11,700	4954	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose	6300	60	...	6000	...	...	30	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Goose	3	<u>1*</u>	...	2	...	...	205	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mallard	776	76	186	2225	51	12	709	110	129	14	140	...	...	3	36	13	21	13	...	15	66	40	...	51	...
Black Duck	6220	806	115	2350	23	...	800	115	766	...	19	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	3	34	...	21	...
Sailvill	430	128	4	1400	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pintail	2250	21	...	625	...	...	300	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Green-winged Teal	252	112	5	887	...	...	1	...	14	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Blue-winged Teal	...	<u>6*</u>	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
European Widgeon	...	<u>1*</u>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Widgeon	1037	516	...	78,850	1484	...	142	13	3	...	4	...	...	...	54	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...
Shoveler	790	58	8	28	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wood Duck	...	3	4	1	...	...	29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Redhead	...	...	...	1	59	...	...	250	18	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ring-necked Duck	15	6	61	5	70	...	4	2	9	31
Canvasback	1	2	27	13	635	25	...	50	7	5	1	...

Greater Scaup	13	8	8	1	3
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Date	12/29	12/28	12/29	12/27	12/27	12/28	12/22	12/23	12/21	12/27	12/28	12/20	12/31	1/1	12/22	12/20	12/30	12/22	1/1	1/1	12/30	12/31	12/20	12/21	1/1
Greater Yellowlegs	24	58	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Yellowlegs	29	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purple Sandpiper	...	4	52	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Least Sandpiper	2	9	...	...	...	3	21*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dunlin	3632	3954	5	...	106	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dowitcher sp.	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Semipalmated Sandpiper	382	247	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Western Sandpiper	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Marbled Godwit	...	43*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sanderling	332	171	206	136	146	53	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glaucous Gull	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Iceland Gull	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Black-backed Gull	355	283	736	119	37	22	21	280	129	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Herring Gull	1892	3762	21,100	1200	854	265	90	360	1652	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ring-billed Gull	793	1018	7900	4670	866	715	558	220	810	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Laughing Gull	...	...	1	6	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bonaparte's Gull	51	44	565	5250	1175	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Forster's Tern	...	...	37	3050*	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mourning Dove	75	372	410	158	206	156	23	90	752	75	81	107	107	113	215	15	11	15	...	250	198	27	...	263	10
Barn Owl	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Screech Owl	4	8	11	6	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	...
Great Horned Owl	1	7	2	4	...	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Barred Owl	...	1	3	14	...	...	1	...	8	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-eared Owl	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belted Kingfisher	32	17	23	7	14	16	5	7	11	2	3	3	1	4	...	...	2	6	1	9	4	1	...	4	1
Yellow-shafted Flicker	99	159	109	81	52	44	41	51	124	4	5	3	8	11	6	...	1	...	...	6	5	1	...	1	6
Pileated Woodpecker	2	...	9	...	3	...	...	8	20	6	6	4	4	9	3	1	2	10	4	22	6	2	...	4	...
Red-bellied Woodpecker	15	27	46	27	14	19	24	45	71	15	21	23	12	26	5	1	1	18	...	11	8	2	...	6	4
Red-headed Woodpecker	...	1	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	3	1	3	...	1	...
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	5	8	17	10	2	5	13	13	9	6	6	11	4	7	2	...	1	2	...	5	...	...	...	...	...
Hairy Woodpecker	2	6	10	7	2	3	1	5	25	2	3	2	2	5	4	1	1	1	...	5	4	...	10	2	2
Downy Woodpecker	20	30	25	22	10	8	13	57	150	15	23	20	10	38	20	7	10	17	...	39	43	8	5	20	1
Eastern Phoebe	...	2	3	4	2	...	2	...	2	1	...	1	1	2	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	1	...	2	1
Horned Lark	28	27	...	1	2	...	2	21	13	119	17	23	...	20	285	...	...	21	...	...	62	...	...	...	...
Tree Swallow	4	31	...	31	18	60	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Jay	19	52	195	42	37	31	51	230	331	58	64	37	31	201	14	5	66	28	1	111	108	18	2	63	6
Common Raven	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	4	...	...
Common Crow	985	44	187	426	78	220	133	400	197	167	227	65	130	252	4280	90	199	18	238	94	26	6	457	75	...
Fish Crow	305	6	28	5	18	23	32	7	24	15	...	...	...	...	7	51	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-capped Chickadee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	5	...	...	...	...	...	54	1	...	20	...	1*	22	...	...	...	...

Carolina Chickadee	44	154	131	111	38	25	44	180	868	47	86	77	45	200	53	32	29	60	...	258	59	10	11	65	12	
Chickadee sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...
Tufted Titmouse	3	14	47	20	27	11	15	27	310	38	33	27	27	216	21	8	33	47	...	...	91	19	3	38	16
White-breasted Nuthatch	...	3	14	3	2	1	7	7	57	11	6	4	10	38	9	2	14	8	2	45	27	5	3	6	2	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	20	4	7	2	5	2	15	109	17	20	17	2	21	2	...	3	2	1	23	4	...	46	5	...	
Brown-headed Nuthatch	11	60	31	25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Creeper	5	6	26	4	6	5	10	12	36	2	6	2	1	11	18	...	6	1	...	5	2	1	6	1	...	
House Wren	1	14	4	11	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Winter Wren	3	21	6	7	...	1	3	6	14	...	...	...	...	3	2	...	...	2	...	3	5	...	...	1	...
Carolina Wren	39	69	86	58	23	42	23	52	131	6	4	6	4	11	8	...	...	7	...	14	17	2	...	15	8
Long-billed Marsh Wren	5	4	4	2	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Marsh Wren	9	2	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mockingbird	25	131	137	95	85	67	31	120	267	106	121	67	68	98	22	10	48	75	1	140	83	12	...	51	4	
Catbird	7	23	49	17	1	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Thrasher	5	7	15	6	5	3	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Robin	258	2201	656	1376	6	275	9	27	166	...	3	2	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	8	2	2	...	3	...
Wood Thrush	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hermite Thrush	...	22	14	21	4	7	1	4	12	3	4	4	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	...
Swainson's Thrush	...	1*	...	...	2*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern Bluebird	...	13	8	34	...	12	...	23	7	16	9	2	...	2	2	3	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	10	9
Golden-crowned Kinglet	26	34	40	31	23	22	27	35	145	37	55	27	3	18	13	...	3	32	...	59	13	...	1	12	...	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	34	39	24	18	10	12	12	64	4	10	3	...	1	2	...	3	...	...	9	1	...	...	3	...
Water Pipit	12	477	3	122	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cedar Waxwing	...	9	225	...	48	150	48	60	75	...	...	6	...	1	5	...	2	...	...	11	...	12	...	117	...
Loggerhead Shrike	...	3	1	4	1	...	4	11	1	5	9	14	3	2	5	1	1	6	1	9	3	3	...	7	5	
Starling	1297	3366	6500	2771	1710	1081	1858	1130	3218	6305	1139	6000	250	250000	443	948	710	1315	220	3191	2600	1000	...	1316	77	
Orange-crowned Warbler	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Myrtle Warbler	1401	2666	485	1119	301	368	40	7	46	2	13	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Warbler	...	7	3	19	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Palm Warbler	20	81	5	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellowthroat	...	2	6	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-breasted Chat	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
House Sparrow	270	155	368	229	328	122	119	50	421	60	52	124	74	91	334	83	167	63	...	140	504	40	...	88	23	
Eastern Meadowlark	279	555	179	575	89	198	106	225	37	42	64	124	28	27	153	31	19	38	...	76	56	52	...	227	7	
Red-winged Blackbird	1066	1179	12,800	5115	277	489	359	1000	1086	94	78	375	6	62,500	15	17	1	3
Baltimore Oriole	...	...	...	...	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...
Rusty Blackbird	...	66	8	25	4	...	1	16	5	55	6	...	10	2500	...	...	...	...	...	...	24	...	...	...	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	283	193	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	567	706	1400	475	1072	80	...	40	22	107	25	375	16	100000	...	...	445	...	...	41	33	10	...	1	...
Brown-headed Cowbird	46	334	1900	735	965	51	...	750	87	26	...	750	100	85,000	...	15	70	...	...	10	300	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	71	351	188	152	94	144	109	260	482	130	183	138	116	251	89	23	36	144	9	203	242	24	...	101	120	
Dickcissel	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Evening Grosbeak	40	72	111*	27*	2	16	26	22	93	45	9	9	91	105	25	33	97	3	...	300	61	...	3	10	...	
Purple Finch	2	4	58	37	23	2	13	24	54	4	18	1	13	106	6	4	13	20	...	63	10	1	...	7	...	
House Finch	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Redpoll	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Siskin	92	677	572	102	143	28	79	55	188	13	2	26	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	8	...	3	4	15
American Goldfinch	237	379	728	245	125	133	94	220	594	68	27	227	15	42	20	3	...	36	...	127	15	45	2	164	21	
Red Crossbill	122*	40*	37*	2*	...	...	...	1*	60*	...	...	2*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	6	...	...
Rufous-sided Towhee	29	105	94	65	24	33	18	6	17	8	1	...	1	17	5	...	6	3	...	12	8	4	...	17	5	

	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Hoyswell	8. Brooke	9. Fort Belvoir	10. Charlottesville	11. Warren	12. Darlington Heights	13. Sweet Bri.	14. Lynchburg	15. Rockingham Co.	16. Augusta Co.	17. Waynesboro	18. Lexington	19. Peaks of Otter	20. Roanoke	21. Blacksburg	22. Glade Spring	23. Mt. Rogers-Whitetop	24. Bristol	25. Nickelville
Date	12/29	12/28	12/29	12/27	12/27	12/28	12/22	12/23	12/21	12/27	12/28	12/20	12/31	1/1	12/22	12/20	12/30	12/22	1/1	1/1	12/30	12/31	12/20	12/21	1/1
Ipswich Sparrow	1	1	2	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Savannah Sparrow	344	52	111	80	35	9	23	16	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1*	2
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	8	9	7	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	2	14	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	3	7	...	...	4*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...
Slate-colored Junco	117	215	599	186	152	217	343	730	2506	270	336	220	58	520	196	45	99	523	150	633	282	25	...	84	22
Tree Sparrow	2	13	1	3	...	...	...	80	125	31	3	...	...	2	33	1	2	8	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Chipping Sparrow	4	7	6	29	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Field Sparrow	43	96	145	145	64	26	40	120	187	43	51	21	2	54	1	4	3	44	...	37	47	1	...	37	29
White-crowned Sparrow	1	14	...	...	...	...	...	21	4	5	22	...	94	5	38	...	20	6	...	4	74	28	...	10	5
White-throated Sparrow	191	1712	735	456	196	103	272	320	859	75	27	29	56	244	26	1	23	37	...	177	59	3	...	32	11
Fox Sparrow	2	76	25	5	17	3	41	1	24	...	5	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	7
Lincoln's Sparrow	...	...	3*	1*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	157	311	116	93	9	1	7	15	39	4	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Song Sparrow	297	710	262	134	104	78	37	180	379	70	59	71	25	80	16	4	30	45	4	76	160	17	...	50	25
Lapland Longspur	...	...	...	...	2*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Bunting	...	14	...	...	200	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	133	166	133	130	104	92	80	93	101	58	67	51	45	60	70	38	45	50	15	66	62	41	17	61	37
Total Individuals	52,423	42,191	64,050	145,289	13,935	8377	16,580	11,454	24,183	8470	3214	9295	1391	502802	2830	5671	2160	2990	415	6715	5534	1519	115	3594	546
Total Party-hours	64	101	68	95	47	35	28	68	166	28	29	36	20	50	25	9	32	32	6	63	62	10	17	48	9
Number of Observers	15	26	23	24	18	11	8	15	39	7	5	14	9	25	5	8	11	11	2	26	18	2	6	12	2

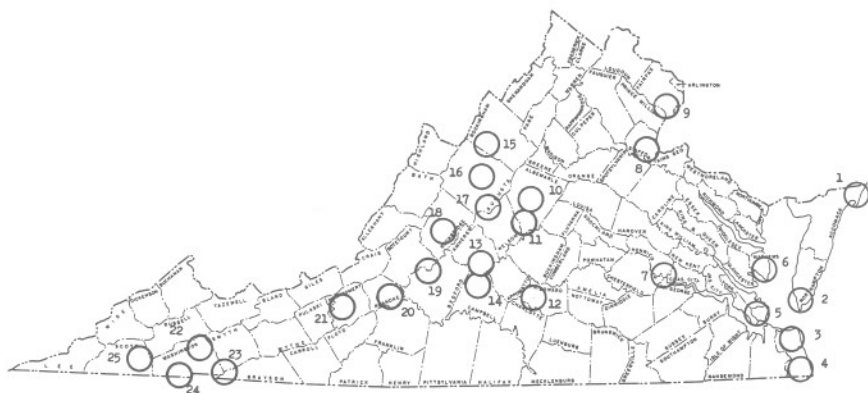


FIGURE 1. *Locations of the 1969-70 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The count numbers are the same as those used in the text and in Table 1.*

Hugh Bell, M. M. Browne, Mrs. Floy C. Burford, Gilbert S. Grant, Gisela A. Grimm, David L. Hughes, Mrs. Betty Lancaster, Edmund K. LeGrand, Harry E. LeGrand, Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell, Mrs. Emily V. Moore, Richard H. Peake, Jr., Thelma C. Reese, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, Genie Scott, Mrs. Dorothy Silsby, Steve Snyder, Elizabeth Stephens, Paul W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), Gary M. Williamson. The King Eiders, all first-year males, were seen at the southernmost island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel by H. E. LeGrand and Sykes. The Richardson-Rountrey party reported 32 of the Red-headed Woodpeckers at Stumpy Lake. The total of 41 was the highest count of this species for the Norfolk area. The Evening Grosbeak total of 111, observed by 6 of the 7 parties, was the highest count yet recorded for the Norfolk area. The Red Crossbills were observed by the two parties led by Richardson and Sykes. Grant and Peake observed 2 of the Lincoln's Sparrow, and the other was seen by the party led by Browne.

4. BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 1.5 miles east of Back Bay, to include all of refuge and much of mainland of Virginia Beach; farmland 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 20%, beach and dunes 5%, marshes and brackish bay 25%, ocean 20%).—Dec. 27; 4:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 31° to 44°; wind W, 13-43 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty-four observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 95 (78 on foot, 16 by car, 1 by boat); total party-miles, 457 (47 on foot, 402 by car, 8 by boat). Observers: Henry T. Armistead, J. E. Ames, Robert L. Anderson, III, M. M. Browne, Mrs. Floy C. Burford, Douglas Davis, Robert Gilmore, Gilbert S. Grant, David D. Green, Anna D. Grimm, Gisela A. Grimm, David L. Hughes, Edmund LeGrand, Harry E. LeGrand, Mrs. Emily V. Moore, Robert Pacific, Richard H. Peake, Jr., F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, Jared Sparks, Paul W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), Romie L. Waterfield, Debbie White, Mrs. Rebecca L. White (Cape Henry Bird Club and guests). The count of Forster's Terns was probably the largest number ever recorded in winter in Virginia. The Evening Grosbeaks were reported by 4 parties, and the Red Crossbills were seen by Armistead. H. E. LeGrand found the Lincoln's Sparrow.

5. NEWPORT NEWS (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, bounded by Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River, Grafton; woodland 30%, fields 30%, fresh-water ponds 10%, waterfront 30%).—Dec. 27; 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 32° to 45°; wind N, 5-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, ponds with light ice. Eighteen observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 47 (29 on foot, 18 by car); total party-miles, 307 (32 on foot, 275 by car). Observers: R. Beck, E. Bell, H. Bell, A.

Brown, S. Brown, M. Byrd, C. Hacker, S. Hacker, D. Mitchell, S. Mitchell, A. Rawls, M. Rawls, D. Silsby, D. Smith, L. Smith, W. P. Smith (compiler), D. West (Hampton Roads Bird Club). The Broad-winged Hawk, an immature (based on tail banding), was carefully observed in nearby flight by Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Smith, and the Swainson's Thrushes were noted in good light by Sydney Mitchell. The Dickcissel, which had been at a local feeding station for some time, was seen by E. Bell and Dorothy Mitchell. The Vesper Sparrows and Lapland Longspurs were reported by Beck and Byrd. The longspurs had been in the area with the Snow Buntings for over a month.

6. MATHEWS (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 0.5 mile E of Beaverlett P. O., to include Gwynn's Island, New Point Comfort, and portions of Mobjack and Chesapeake Bays; open farmland 20%, open bays and rivers 30%, beaches 5%, salt marshes 15%, pine woods 20%, mixed woods 10%).—Dec. 28; 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 27° to 48°; wind WNW to W, 10-30 m.p.h.; ground, ponds, and water edge frozen. Eleven observers in 3-5 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (19 on foot, 14 by car, 2 by boat); total party-miles, 238 (23 on foot, 210 by car, 5 by boat). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Brown-headed Nuthatch. Observers: Blair Farnholt, Brent Heath, Tom Hicks, Mrs. Arthur Jones, Peter Mehring, Mrs. Elinore Respass, Betty Roszell, David Roszell (compiler), David Stiffel, Marian Wallace, Tom Wieboldt.

7. HOPEWELL (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center in Curles Neck as in last 15 years, to include Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Harrison, Curles Neck, Harrison Lake, Hopewell, Dutch Gap; open farmland 25%, brushy fields 8%, marshes and river shore 18%, deciduous wooded swamp 12%, woodland 37%).—Dec. 22; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Heavily overcast, light rain until 1 p.m.; temp. 35° to 40°; wind N to NW, 5-25 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Eight observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 28 (19 on foot, 4 by car, 5 by motorboat); total party-miles, 137 (12 on foot, 95 by car, 30 by boat). Observers: Paul D. Daly, Lynn Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. David K. Roszell, Elizabeth V. Scott, F. R. Scott (compiler), Jennifer Shopland, T. Roger Stone. The swans were seen by Roszell and the Least Sandpipers by the Scotts, Mrs. Roszell, and Shopland.

8. BROOKE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center on road 3 miles ESE of Brooke, to include Potomac River from Widewater to Maryland Point Light-house and Virginia upland nearly to Fredericksburg; tidal water 18%, marsh 8%, deciduous woods swamp 2%, fields 16%, hedgerows 7%, mixed forest edge 20%, deciduous woods 19%, pine woods 8%, slash 2%).—Dec. 23; 5:35 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly cloudy; temp. 24° to 34°; wind E, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, new ice on sheltered bays. Fifteen observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 68 (60 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 122 (39 on foot, 83 by car). Observers: Erwin Asselstine, A. A. Baker, Henry Bell, III, L. D. Bonham, Luna Leopold, R. G. Luedke, E. T. McKnight (compiler), T. B. Nolan, D. W. Peterson, J. C. Reed, R. L. Smith, D. B. Stewart, A. M. White, D. R. Wiesnet, B. M. Wilder. The Red Crossbill was heard by Stewart, who is familiar with its call notes.

9. FORT BELVOIR (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center on Pohick Church; tidal water 30%, deciduous woods 20%, pine woods 5%, pasture 8%, fields 8%, town suburbs 28%, cattail marsh 1%).—Dec. 21; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear a.m., overcast p.m.; temp. 18° to 42°; no wind; ground bare, water partly frozen. Thirty-nine observers in 20 parties. Total party-hours, 166 (129 on foot, 37 by car); total party-miles, 516 (110 on foot, 406 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Pied-billed Grebe, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Rough-legged Hawk, House Wren, Chipping Sparrow. Observers: David F. Abbott, Frances E. Abbott, Jackson M. Abbott (compiler), Eleanor Beal, Ed J. Bierley, Charles Cremeans, Bill Del Grande, Tim Desmond, Paul G. DuMont, Philip A. DuMont, Dan Feaser, Joanna Frawley, Harriet Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Hale, Robert Harvey, Robert Hausen, Charlotte Hoover, Col. and Mrs. William A. Houston,

Dan Keeney, Gilbert King, Kathleen Klimkiewicz, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Klussman, George Lakata, Cris T. Lock, Michael Lock, Gale Monson, Jean Morse, Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Mudd, J. William Oberman, Lois Pieper, George Sigel, Mr. and Mrs. Ray P. Teele, George Weickhardt, Jo Wood. The Whistling Swan was seen by Cremeans and Del Grande and the Snow Goose by Keeney and others, whereas Abbott found the Oldsquaw, and the DuMonts recorded all the scoters. The Ruffed Grouse was seen by Monson at Burke Lake, and the Lesser Yellowlegs was observed by the DuMonts at Masons Neck. Cremeans found the Pine Warbler near Woodbridge, and the crossbills were reported by three different parties (J. M. Abbott, Cremeans, Del Grande, *et. al.*).

10. CHARLOTTESVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center near Ivy as in previous years).—Dec. 27; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 27° to 35°; wind W, 5-20 m.p.h.; 16-in. drifting snow, ponds frozen. Seven observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 28 (20 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 146 (24 on foot, 122 by car). Coverage was reduced by heavy snow. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Barn Owl. Observers: Paul Dulaney, Allen Hale, Constance Hale, Kenneth Lawless, Robert Merkel, Eilien Stephens, Charles Stevens (compiler). The Redpoll was new to the count and was seen and heard at close range by the Hales and Stevens.

11. WARREN (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center near Keene as in previous years).—Dec. 28; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 25° to 35°; wind W, 0-15 m.p.h.; 15-in. snow, ponds mostly frozen. Five observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 29 (16 on foot, 13 by car); total party-miles, 181 (15 on foot, 166 by car). Snow reduced coverage. Observers: Bruce Davenport, Kenneth Lawless, Charles Stevens (compiler), Fred Whiteside, Lina Whiteside. The Whistling Swans, new to the count, included a dusky juvenile and were seen by Stevens and the Whitesides.

12. DARLINGTON HEIGHTS (all points within a 10-mile diameter circle, center Darlington Heights Post Office; open fields 40%, hedgerows 10%, mixed woodland 10%, woodland edge 23%, pine woodland 15%, lakes 2%).—Dec. 20; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 21° to 37°; wind, 7-10 m.p.h. Fourteen observers in 5 parties (1 at feeder). Total party-hours, 36 (28 on foot, 6 by car, 2 at feeder); total party-miles, 122 (19 on foot, 103 by car). Observers: John Cacciapaglia, Vera Copple (compiler), Bill Dickenson, Dalton Driskill, Edith Driskill, Hall Driskill, Kenneth Driskill, Roger Hill, Cam Jordan, Robin Jordan, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore, Mattie Scruggs, Margaret Watson. The Red Crossbills were seen by Gene Moore and Margaret Watson.

13. SWEET BRIAR (all points within a 3-mile diameter circle, center Sweet Briar College; fields and pastures 20%, mixed deciduous woods 45%, creek bottoms 20%, buildings and barns 10%, lakes 5%).—Dec. 31; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 35° to 45°; wind variable, up to 15-20 m.p.h.; snow cover, lakes frozen. Nine observers in 3 parties (1 at feeder). Total party-hours, 20 (16 on foot, 1 by car, 3 at feeder); total party-miles, 15 (10 on foot, 5 by car). Observers: Carolyn Bates, Vicky Bates, Jeanette Boone, John Cacciapaglia, Ernest Edwards, Mabel Edwards, Kay Macdonald, Gertrude Prior (compiler), Harriet Rogers.

14. LYNCHBURG (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Lynchburg College, to include James River, College Lake, Timber Lake, Pine Hill Lake, Blackwater, Judith, and Opossum Creeks, Wooldridge, Capron, and Burnbrae Farms, Blue Ridge Farms subdivision, and Rivermont and Riverside Parks; mixed woods 40%, pine woods 3%, residential areas 10%, creeks and river bottoms 15%, fields and pastures 24%, lakes and ponds 8%).—Jan. 1; 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Heavily overcast, trace of rain in early a.m.; temp. 29° to 35°; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground partly covered with snow, lakes partly frozen. Twenty-five observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 50 (46 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 202 (27 on foot, 175 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Pine Siskin. Observers:

Frances Applegate, Mary Butterworth, John Cacciapaglia (compiler), Vera Copple, Edith Driskill, Roger Hill, Betty Hunter, Campton Jordan, Robina Jordan, Kenneth Lind, Paul McQuarry, Wilda Menagh, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore, Cary Murphy, Phyllis Murphy, Rory Murphy, Wyatt Murphy, Lee New, Gertrude Prior, Conrad Richardson, Rosalie Rosser, Mary Walker, Margaret Watson, Grace Wiltshire. The House Finch, which had been in the area for several days, was seen by Gene Moore's party.

15. ROCKINGHAM COUNTY (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at Ottobine, including Silver Lake in Dayton; lawn 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. 22; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy with some snow; temp. 26° to 31°; wind N. 0-10 m.p.h. and gusty; ground with some snow and ice, most waters frozen. Five observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 25 (7 on foot, 18 by car); total party-miles, 192 (17 on foot, 175 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Shoveler, Hooded Merganser, Turkey, Eastern Phoebe, Red Crossbill. Observers: Lawrence Carpenter, Max Carpenter (compiler), Harry Jopson, William L. Mengebier, Dick Peake.

16. AUGUSTA COUNTY (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Verona, to include Fort Defiance, Staunton, Frank's Mill, and Christians Creek; deciduous woods 25%, fields and pastures 45%, farmyards, orchards, and gardens 15%, towns 15%).—Dec. 20; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 23° to 41°; wind NW, 1-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, ponds frozen. Eight observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 9 (4 on foot, 5 by car); total party-miles, 65 (5 on foot, 60 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Carolina Wren. Observers: Helen Angier, Lynn Dennis, Mary Dennis, Kurt Kehr, Yu Lee Larner, John Mehner (compiler), Isabel Obenschain, James Sprunt.

17. WAYNESBORO (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Sherando; residential areas 30%, open fields 40%, wooded areas 10%, river bottoms 20%).—Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Rain and dense fog all day; temp. 34° to 40°; wind, calm; drifted snow up to 12 in. on ground, ponds frozen, river open. Eleven observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (14 on foot, 18 by car); total party-miles, 104 (15 on foot, 89 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Turkey Vulture, Horned Lark, Red-winged Blackbird, American Goldfinch. Observers: Monroe Couper, Mozelle Henkel, Teresa Livingston, Sally Ann Marcotte, Arlene Moren, Isabel Obenschain, Dorothy Owen, Jan Owen, Lynn Smith, Ruth Snyder (compiler), Adeline Worsley.

18. LEXINGTON (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Washington and Lee University as in previous years; deciduous woods 25%, coniferous woods 15%, brush and scrub 35%, fields and pasture 20%, ponds 5%).—Dec. 22; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Snow and sleet in a.m., cloudy in p.m.; temp. 33° to 40°; wind W, 0-15 m.p.h.; up to 0.5-in snow cover, still water frozen. Eleven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (18 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 123 (17 on foot, 106 by car). Observers: Mrs. Malcolm D. Campbell, Ben Clark, Dr. and Mrs. John P. Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. Royster Lyle, J. J. Murray, J. J. Murray, Jr., Robert O. Paxton (compiler), Cora Womeldorf, Joshua Womeldorf.

19. PEAKS OF OTTER (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at Peaks of Otter; deciduous woods 89%, open fields 10%, lake 1%).—Jan. 1; 7:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Freezing mist; temp. 25° to 28°; ground and lake frozen and partially snow-covered. Two observers together. Total party-hours, 6 (3 on foot, 3 by car). Observers: Garst Bishop, A. O. English (compiler). Count was discontinued early because of ice-covered roads.

20. ROANOKE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Wasena Bridge; mixed woods 56%, open fields 30%, suburbs 6%, streams and ponds 8%).—Jan. 1; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. 35° to 32°; wind E to W, 6 m.p.h.; 6-in. snow cover, most water open. Twenty-six observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 63 (29 on foot, 34 by car); total party-miles, 315 (19 on foot, 296 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Ring-necked Pheasant, Barn Owl, Red Crossbill. Observers: Charles Ames, Gary Davis, Nora Davis, Lucretia Golden, Hank Hankins, Nay Hankins, Norma Harper, Raymond Harper, Rushia Harris, Muriel Hegwood, Don Huffman, Debbie Ingram, Perry Kendig, Mrs. W. M. King, Jane Lucas, Carole Massart, Ernest Moore, Hazel Moore, Sally Nelson, Bill Opengari, Todd Stockstill, Julian Tinsley, Ruth Venn, Jerry Via (compiler), Mrs. Homer Waid, James White. The Black-capped Chickadee was reported by Kendig and the Baltimore Oriole by the Moores. No details were submitted for the House Wrens or Vesper Sparrows.

21. BLACKSBURG (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center near Linkous Store; pasture and plowed land 15%, towns and suburbs 10%, oak woodlots 3%, mixed pine and oak woods 50%, river and creek bottoms 22%).—Dec. 30; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Intermittent rain and fog all day; temp. 39° to 49°; no wind; 6 to 12 in. snow cover, creeks at flood stage. Eighteen observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 62 (33 on foot, 29 by car); total party-miles, 202 (36 on foot, 166 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Pintail, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Screech Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Thrasher. Observers: Billy Akers, Don Cochran, Glenn Dudder, Maynard Hale, Charles O. Handley, Dr. and Mrs. Charles O. Handley, Jr., Baldwin Lloyd, Henry Mosby, John Murray (compiler). Dick Pratt, Dr. and Mrs. Curtis Roane, Myron Shear, Mr. and Mrs. Ellison Smyth, Connie Stone, Jim Whelan.

22. GLADE SPRING (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center near western town limits as in previous years; open fields 25%, deciduous woods 25%, hedgerows 20%, creek and river bottoms 15%, mixed woods 10%, ponds 5%).—Dec. 31; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 33° to 37°; wind NW, 5-15 m.p.h.; ground bare, ponds partly frozen. Two observers together. Total party-hours, 10 (6 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 60 (6 on foot, 54 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Bobwhite. Observers: Paul S. Dulaney (compiler), Jane D. White.

23. MT. ROGERS-WHITETOP MT. (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at junction of Routes 600 and 603, to include peaks of both mountains; from the saddle up to Mt. Rogers at 5729 ft., along logging road via Elk Garden and to Whitetop via road; deciduous woods 50%, grassy fields 30%, spruce-fir forest 20%).—Dec. 20; 6:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Overcast, then clear; temp. 8° to 9°; wind SE, 10-15 m.p.h.; 2-4 in. snow cover, many streams frozen. Six observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 17 (all on foot); total party-miles, 12 (all on foot). Observers: Bill Bridgforth, J. Wallace Coffey (compiler), Anthony M. Decker, David McPeak, Pete Range, Brent Rowell.

24. BRISTOL (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at junction of Routes 647 and 654, to include Bristol, South Holston Lake and River; fields and farmland 40%, mixed deciduous forest 25%, lakes and rivers 15%, towns and residences 10%, miscellaneous 10%).—Dec. 21; 7:10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Rain and sleet; temp. 25° to 38°; wind NE, 2-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twelve observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 48 (30 on foot, 11 by car, 7 by boat); total party-miles, 283 (14 on foot, 211 by car, 58 by boat). Observers: Ann Cantwell, J. Wallace Coffey (compiler), Mrs. Ernest Dickey, Mr. and Mrs. Gerry Delantonas, David McPeak, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Ottenfeld, Brent Rowell, Enno vanGelder, Roger vanGelder, Johnny Wood. The Common Merganser was found at Avens Bridge, Va., on South Holston Lake by Coffey and Rowell. Delantonas identified the Savannah

Sparrow near Saddle Dam, Tenn., at South Holston Lake. Both species represent first records for the Bristol count.

25. NICKELSVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at Nickelsville, to include parts of Clinch River, Moccasin Creek, Clinch Mt.; woods 10%, residential areas 10%, fields and river bottoms 80%).—Jan. 1; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast, a little rain; temp. 30° to 32°; no wind; roads and fields muddy from recent flood. Two observers together. Total party-hours, 9 (2 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 24 (3 on foot, 21 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Golden-crowned Kinglet. Observers: Thomas Finucane (compiler), Eugene Scott.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

EARED GREBE AT CHINCOTEAGUE

PHILIP A. AND PAUL G. DUMONT

During the Chincoteague Christmas bird count on 29 December 1969, we found a well-marked Eared Grebe, *Podiceps caspicus* (Hablizl). When we spotted this lone bird, we were at the southeast end of Chincoteague Island, Virginia, at 11:15 a.m. during the course of a boat trip around that island.

We had been checking all grebes looking for the Red-necked (which we failed to find this year), when we sighted a small, gray-necked bird. It had a slender neck, a slightly crested head, a red eye, and lightest areas on a dusky cheek (as shown in Robbins, Bruun, and Zim's guide, *Birds of North America*, 1966). The bill appeared flat and thin, and at certain angles it appeared up-turned.

It was possible to stop the boat, check all our field guides, and then maneuver within 30 feet of the bird, watching under perfect light conditions for 10 minutes or more as it dove. Both of us are well acquainted with the Eared Grebe, having seen it in all plumages many times in the West.

4114 Fessenden Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20016

PROBABLE BOREAL OWL ON THE SKYLINE DRIVE

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

During the 1969-1970 winter an abnormal number of species of birds which usually winter far north of the District of Columbia region were observed here. For this reason, and because it involves a possible first record of the Boreal Owl, *Aegolius funereus* (Linnaeus), in Virginia and because I personally believe in the veracity of the observer, the following observation should be recorded.

About noon on Friday, 16 January 1970, Joseph Stephens, Jr., of the Northern Virginia Conservation Council (and who lives in Alexandria) was walking along the snow-covered Mary's Rock trail, about 1.5 miles north of Panorama near the Skyline Drive in Rappahannock County, Virginia. He stopped to pick a pine cone from a Virginia Pine by the trail, and as he reached out to pluck the cone, he suddenly saw a small, earless owl perched on the branch near the cone, well away from the tree trunk.

Mr. Stephens said he observed the owl at eye level (about 6 feet above the ground) at a distance of 2 to 3 feet for nearly 20 minutes, during which time the owl merely blinked at him and showed no signs of fright. The day was crystal clear, with bright sunlight, and the owl was exposed, although in shadow from the higher branches, and its coloring and markings were clearly seen. Mr. Stephens noted the white facial discs around each eye and the spotted crown and back.

Being a novice birdwatcher, Mr. Stephens wasn't certain at the time which species of owl he was looking at, but upon returning home and referring to several bird books, he was certain that he had seen a Boreal Owl. He described the bird convincingly to me, and the clincher was its size; he said it was taller than his outstretched hand (about 8 inches, which is maximum for a Saw-whet Owl) and estimated it to be at least 10 inches long, just right for a Boreal Owl.

8501 Doter Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22308

LARK BUNTING AT SEASHORE STATE PARK

THOMAS F. WIEBOLDT

On 24 October 1969 Robert S. Kennedy and I found a Lark Bunting, *Calamospiza melanocorys* Stejneger, at Seashore State Park in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Bob Kennedy spotted the bird initially among a flock of sparrows, chiefly Song and Field Sparrows, in some myrtle bushes behind the dunes on the shore side of the park. I looked at the bird briefly and noted the broad white wing patch in the area where one would normally see wing bars. The bird was in the brown autumn coloration. The white wing patches were particularly conspicuous as the bird flew. We pursued the bird and I again spotted it in some scrubby Live Oaks on the dunes, at which time I dismissed all doubt of the identification.

RFD, Box 148, North Garden, Virginia 22959

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW BANDED AT NEWPORT NEWS

DOROTHY L. MITCHELL

At 4:30 p.m. on 3 November 1969 a strange sparrow, together with a Chipping Sparrow, appeared in our Potter trap at our home in Newport News, Virginia. My husband arrived home at 5 p.m., and after checking through our reference books, we identified it as a Clay-colored Sparrow, *Spizella pallida* (Swainson).

Photographs taken of the bird clearly show the beige rump contrasted with the gray rump of the Chipping Sparrow. It was aged by the skulling technique and found to be an adult with a fully ossified skull. The bird was released after banding.

596 Harpersville Road, Newport News, Virginia 23601

BACK BAY FIELD TRIP

C. W. HACKER

The usual annual winter trip to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on 6 December 1969 was accompanied by the customary unusual aspects. The weather was clear and the lower than normal temperature was not uncomfortable since the wind was nearly calm. The dreaded, yet exciting, truck ride down the open beach has been replaced by a new one-lane access from the end of the public road to the refuge allowing everyone to drive to the headquarters grounds. Convenience has been gained at the expense of much of the camaraderie. At the refuge, we found that our good friend Don Ambrosen had retired and had been replaced by Robert Gilmore. The new manager is of the same type as Mr. Ambrosen and made every effort to make our trip worthwhile. A new concept in management will be the development of the refuge as a wildlife recreation area. With our growing population and the easy access to the refuge, it will be interesting to watch this development.

Bird-wise the trip was not outstanding. Very little was seen over the ocean or in the surf. The dunes were nearly bare, although the Ipswich Sparrow was sighted. The impoundments seem to carry fewer ducks each year. On Back Bay the Canada Geese and Whistling Swans were in great numbers, perhaps as great as ever. Unfortunately, the sightings were rather long. The Great Black-backed Gull continues to increase in numbers and is now numerous. The main Snow Goose flock was reported to be south of the refuge during our visit. Fortunately, several groups flew overhead in midmorning.

Land birds were again good. Outstanding were the flocks of Pine Siskins during most of the day. Some of us said hundreds and others thousands. A Prairie Warbler belied the wintery temperature.

With the easy access, the trip leader's almighty powers have been lost now that he can no longer dictate the arrival and departure times. With only a remnant of the group on hand at the final whistle, a call of the checklist noted 82 species for the day.

For some unknown reason the weather for the Sunday Craney Island trip is seldom favorable. The day started with a light drizzle and worsened. A fly-by of Snow Buntings was seen, the Purple Sandpipers fed unbothered at the road's edge, and several species of ducks were seen through rain-spattered car windows. Craney Island continues to be an unusual birding area when observed over a period of several days. A half-day trip, in poor weather, can be disappointing.

300 York Warwick Drive, Yorktown, Virginia 23490

CONSERVATION CORNER

ROBERT J. WATSON

For those of us who have been in the Virginia Society of Ornithology for 30 years or more, and have throughout that time been intensely concerned with problems of environmental quality, the sudden outpouring of interest in this general subject has been an astonishing (if heartening) phenomenon of the last few years. "Ecology," once an obscure specialty of the biological sciences, has

suddenly assumed the status of a subject of the utmost practical value to humanity; the word itself is on the tongues of innumerable people who had never heard of it two or three years ago.

This new awareness of what used to be called "conservation" is of course penetrating to legislative halls, though not with the speed that some of us would be inclined to favor. Examination of the record of the recent 1970 session of the Virginia General Assembly bears out this observation.

Among the actions taken by the legislators, members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology may be particularly interested in the passage of a law authorizing a system of "scenic rivers" in Virginia. This proposal originated in the report of a study group headed by Paul S. Dulaney of the University of Virginia, a former President of our Society. The new law declares it to be the policy of the Commonwealth to preserve selected waterways under this protective designation. The Commission of Outdoor Recreation was given responsibility for recommending the rivers to be included; final decision will of course lie with the Assembly.

Hopes for cutting back on the disastrous wholesale use of virulent pesticides were given a boost when the Assembly authorized the Board of Agriculture and Commerce to regulate the use of these substances. The Board may, after a public hearing, restrict or prohibit the use of those that pose "environmental hazards" or are "contrary to the public interest."

The Potomac Basin Compact, an agreement involving the Federal Government and the states lying along the Potomac River, was approved by the Assembly with some changes, making Virginia the first of the contracting parties to ratify it. The purpose of the compact is to promote coordinated regulation of the resources of the Potomac Valley in a manner that will, it is hoped, reflect sound long-range planning concepts (including esthetic and recreational values), in place of haphazard development dictated by the pressures of those who seek to misuse land and water resources in the interests of short-term profit.

Besides taking the above steps, the Assembly also enlarged the membership of the regulatory boards concerned with water and air pollution and strengthened their powers to some extent.

These measures admittedly seem little enough when measured against what some of us consider to be what is needed. In themselves, they accomplish nothing. The "scenic rivers" system is yet far from being a reality. Each proposal to classify a river under this heading must be the subject of separate legislative action; each will, we may be sure, draw opposition from speculators who seek to line the banks of every wooded gorge with jerrybuilt "vacation" shacks. Likewise, it remains to be seen how the Board of Agriculture and Commerce will use its new discretionary authority. If and when the Board takes its first timid steps to bring pesticide use into line with known biological facts, the members (and the general public) will inevitably be bombarded with assurances that DDT and similar substances are harmless when used "properly" and that, in any case, there are no substitutes available. The Potomac Basin Compact is similarly nothing but an enabling act; opposition to its application can be expected from local interests and, in fact, the entire agreement could be defeated by lack of ratification in other states (notably Maryland, where various officials have often made it clear that they regard the Potomac River as the private property of their state, to be exploited for maximum financial return).

Nevertheless these steps are to be welcomed. Besides testifying to a growing

interest in problems that once interested only "birdwatchers," they create opportunities where none existed before. How far these opportunities become a reality will in part depend on the ability of conservationists to make their voices heard.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

NATIONAL WILDLIFE WEEK SET

During informal ceremonies held in his office on 9 March 1970, Governor Linwood Holton signed a document which urged all Virginians to participate in National Wildlife Week, which was to be observed throughout the United States during the period of 15-21 March 1970. One of the things stressed in the paper signed by the Governor was the wide variety of wildlife which is part of the heritage of the people of Virginia and the fact that this wildlife is recognized as a measure of environmental quality.

The theme for the 1970 observance of Wildlife Week was to be, "Seen Any Wildlife Lately?" More than 2½ million members and supporters of the National Wildlife Federation, the Virginia Wildlife Federation, and other state organizations were to be asking that question during the week-long observance.

NEWS AND NOTES

FULVOUS TREE DUCK AT CHINCOTEAGUE. An adult Fulvous Tree Duck seen by Paul G. DuMont at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on 10 August 1969 seems to be the first state record for several years.

BROAD-WING FLIGHT AT WAYNESBORO. Mrs. John R. Henkel, Jr., and Mrs. Mark D. Snyder observed a massive flight of "well over 1000" Broad-winged Hawks passing over Waynesboro, Virginia, on 22 September 1969 between 9:45 a.m. and noon.

ROYAL AND SANDWICH TERNS FAIL TO NEST. For the first time in many years Royal Terns apparently failed to nest successfully in Virginia. According to the Buckleys, 12 nests with eggs were found at Fisherman Island on 27 May 1969 but were apparently washed out a few days later and did not return. Elsewhere, no colonies were found in the Smith Island area (Buckleys) or the Cedar Island area (M. A. Byrd). Up to 3 adult Sandwich Terns were present on Fisherman Island through June but also did not nest (P. A. Buckley *et al.*).

SUMMER RECORD OF EVENING GROSBEAK. A male Evening Grosbeak was carefully observed near California, Rockbridge County, Virginia, on 15 July 1969 by five observers including Mrs. Harold H. Bailey and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell.

BROWN CREEPER IN JUNE. C. E. Stevens heard a Brown Creeper singing in the Little Meadows area near Mountain Lake, Giles County, Virginia, on 29 June 1969 (altitude about 3100 feet). This was in the area where the first Virginia nest of this species was found in 1965 (see *Raven*, 36: 59-60, 1965).

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., 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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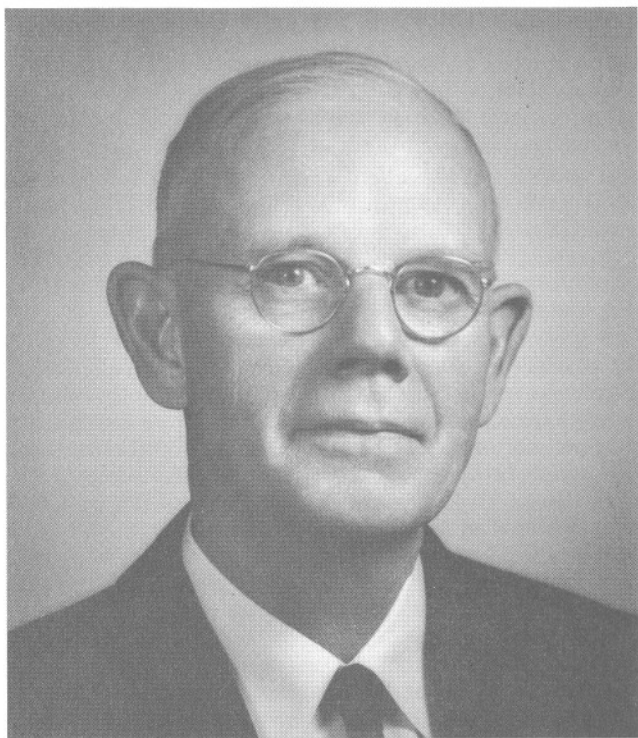
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DR. JOSEPH JAMES MURRAY
Editor of The Raven
1930-1969

IN APPRECIATION

In this issue of *The Raven* it is our purpose in some small way to honor Dr. J. J. Murray, Sr., of Lexington, Virginia.

Dr. Murray is one of the founders of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, the initiator of *The Raven*, and its editor for 40 years. It has been my privilege to know Dr. Murray since 1934. He continues to be one of those rare friends—always an inspiration and guide, and always a leader in his quiet and unassuming way, loved and respected by all who know him.

Dr. Murray has been a great minister, is an interesting companion, and above all a great man, in the finest sense. His work with youth has produced outstanding young citizens and ornithologists. Everyone whose life he has touched is a better person because of it.

To honor Dr. Murray is also to honor his family, particularly Mrs. Murray, who is, as always, his helper and inspiration, sharing his love of birds and of people, and graciously sharing him with ornithology for many years. Their children reflect the character of this outstanding man and wife.

JAMES W. EIKE
President, Virginia Society of Ornithology

FORTY YEARS AS EDITOR OF *THE RAVEN*

JOHN H. GREY, JR.

Joseph James Murray in serving as Editor of *The Raven* from 1930 to 1969 appears to have established a record for continuous service as editor of an ornithological journal. Other lengthy tenures include Joseph Grinnell of *The Condor* for 33 years from 1906 to 1939, and Frank M. Chapman established a 36-year record for *Bird Lore*, ancestor of *Audubon Magazine*, from 1899 to 1936. The American Ornithologists' Union had only two editors over a period of 52 years, J. A. Allen for 26 years and Witmer Stone for 25. With his 40 years Murray outdistances each of these.

The Virginia Society of Ornithology was organized 7 December 1929 by invitation of Ruskin Freer at a meeting held in the Lexington Presbyterian Church. Freer was elected the first president and Murray was chosen editor of the proposed journal. In the first issue of *The Raven* for January 1930 there is a list of 35 charter members. In the latest list of the current membership these charter members were still active: Mrs. C. L. Burgess, Robert Carroll, Bertha Daniel, Almon English, Ruskin Freer, Florence Hague, Charles Handley, Sr., Lena Henderson, Jim Murray, and Grace Wiltshire.

Murray has made a greater contribution to the VSO than many realize. The editor of a society's journal has great influence in the very fact that he emphasizes certain things and plays down other aspects of the work. His influence grows as he continues in office throughout many changes of administration. The very nature of the VSO as a group interested in careful study of bird life was set early in the life of the organization.

The Raven placed great emphasis on accuracy of observation and reporting and insisted upon data to back up the reports. At times this was a ticklish matter and once cost the society a member. One of the early contributors mentioned he had found Swainson's Warbler nesting not far from Bristol. Murray rejected the report and placed the burden of proof on the reporter, commenting that we knew Swainson's only as a swamp-loving bird from places like the Dismal Swamp, and that south of us it was confined to swampy areas. That was the last contribution from this man who was an oologist and had nests to prove his find, but it was many years before more observations proved him correct. Murray consoled himself somewhat with the fact that the report had also been turned down by *The Auk*.

During the years of World War II travel was much restricted by shortage of gasoline and tires so that the VSO skipped some meetings, but even though paper was in short supply *The Raven* kept up the work of the society and appeared in at least six issues a year, with an index of each volume in the December issue.

Murray also made an attempt to publish every significant record of bird life in the state, and since *The Raven* was mimeographed for the first 32 volumes and therefore did not have quite the acceptance that printed data had, some observations had to appear first in *The Auk* in order to be quoted in a later issue of *The Raven*. Many trips were made to the library of the University of Virginia to comb back issues of older ornithological journals for data on Virginia birds. If these were particularly significant, they came out in *The Raven*, with proper credit; however, they were more likely to become part of his data sheets upon each species which formed the basis for his 1952 *Check-list of the Birds of Virginia*. In 1970 I copied these notes for the Biology Department of the College of William and Mary and found 1533 pages of notes on more than 450 forms of bird life that had been seen in Virginia.

The Raven was sent free to each college library in Virginia in the hopes they would stimulate interest in the study of birds and be kept in the libraries for reference. This generous effort did not meet with complete success even in some of the best libraries. In 1970 I gave my set to the William and Mary Library which did not have a file at all, though they had an extensive collection of Virginia.

From the vantage point of our current knowledge of bird life in Virginia we may be tempted to feel a bit superior to the early efforts of the VSO, till we remember some of the gaps in their knowledge and their steady efforts to close those gaps, a job that is far from finished today. The two books on the birds of the state were out of print and hard to find, and identification was not as easy as now, for Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* appeared only in 1934.

Murray felt that *The Raven* could be most useful in the field of the distribution of birds throughout Virginia: what birds were here, in what quantities, and when they were to be found. Many people were encouraged to compile local lists covering at least five years observations to allow for variations that might not be evident the first year. Not all these lists were printed in *The Raven*, but as they appeared they were reviewed and readers were told how such lists could be had. After the publication of the 1952 *Check-list*, *The Raven* did not publish nearly as many local lists, but before that time there were many lists printed for various parts of Virginia.

It may be too much to claim that *The Raven* prompted all of the life-history studies of birds done within the state, but it helped to publish some of these and aided and abetted others. Among these were studies of the Brown Thrasher by Edna Becker, the Brown-headed Nuthatch by Floy Burford, the Yellow-crowned Night Heron by Connie Darden, the Carolina Junco by Ralph Hostetter, the Turkey by Henry Mosby and C. O. Handley, Sr., and the Cattle Egret by Jacob M. Valentine.

This search to define the bird life of the state led Murray into the whole question of subspecies, something we tend to minimize now when so many identifications are made by sight rather than by specimens. Murray obtained a collecting permit, and the men of Lexington Presbyterian Church made him a present of a special gun for collecting, a small .410 shotgun with a lower barrel for .22 calibre bullets and a stock that folded back alongside the barrel for carrying in the field. The gun caused a lot of amusement later on when sawed-off shotguns became quite popular in earlier riots. Further sales of the gun model were forbidden, and to keep the gun Murray had to report on its presence annually; he was also not allowed to sell it or even give it away.

Of the first 32 volumes of *The Raven* which were mimeographed, the last eight were published and mailed by Miss Gertrude Prior of Sweet Briar with the able assistance of Misses Mildred and Helen Edgemon. They must have been thankful when Bill Lewis of The Michie Company in Charlottesville began the printing with Volume 33 in March 1962.

With the emphasis upon distribution, both geographical and altitudinal, *The Raven* has not contained much of other phases of the study of birds; there has been relatively little about banding or the more technical studies that fascinate so many these days. Some areas of the state got little attention partly because no one in the area could be persuaded to make the kind of studies that were needed.

Murray's attempt to make us conscious of the richness of our bird life included an acknowledgment of our debt to students in the past who had added

to our knowledge. From time to time there appeared in *The Raven* brief sketches of these ornithologists, even to John W. Daniel, whose chief claim to ornithological fame was that he first noted the Black Vulture in our state.

Throughout his years as editor Murray was pastor of the Lexington Presbyterian Church with a thousand members and did most of his bird work on Mondays, the traditional day off for ministers. He also served a good stint as Secretary of the National Audubon Society, contributed to *Virginia Wildlife* with his "Birds of the Month" sketch, was a regional editor of *Audubon Field Notes* from 1948 to 1957, and managed to write a book, *Wild Wings*, in 1947.

Preaching was his real job and bird study his hobby, and I once heard him comment to a game warden who recognized him for his "Bird of the Month" that he had been preaching the Gospel for half a century and seemed to be better known as a bird man.

P. O. Box 666, Bedford, Virginia 24523

J. J. MURRAY AND THE VSO

RUSKIN S. FREER

Behind every organization there is an outstanding individual. Not only to Virginia bird students, but to ornithologists over the nation, Dr. J. J. Murray represents the Virginia Society of Ornithology. At our organizational meeting at Lynchburg College on 7 December 1929 he set high standards for the new group. The earliest issues of our publication, *The Raven*, reflected the breadth and depth of those standards in his editorial notes and other contributions.

Dr. Murray and the late M. G. Lewis were fellow birders in Lexington and readers of my nature column, "The Rambler," in the *Lynchburg News*, through which we became acquainted. In the autumn of 1929, by correspondence, we collaborated in plans for organizing the bird students of the state. Dr. Murray was appointed editor of *The Raven* at the organizational meeting.

Dr. Murray's serious interest in birds began in 1927, with a gift from Mrs. Murray of a pair of binoculars. Without a doubt he was aided and abetted by Alexander Sprunt, Jr., and influenced by Dr. Ellison Smyth of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Murray, Sprunt, and Smyth married sisters of the Vardell family, according to an interesting story told by Dr. Maurice Brooks in his book, *The Appalachians*.

The high standards referred to above, as set by Dr. Murray for the organization and the bulletin, were exemplified in a remark he made in the organizational meeting which I have often recalled, to the effect that notes for *The Raven* were not to be concerned merely with "backyard birds." As editor he immediately acted in conformity with that goal. He stressed the importance of accuracy and cautioned that "the great mistake we amateurs are likely to make is to allow ourselves to be betrayed by our eagerness to make large local lists." He stressed the importance of keeping written notes and compiling records and gave specific suggestions on methods of record keeping.

Dr. Murray very early made contacts with other ornithologists, professional and amateur, and as program chairman for a number of years, brought some of them to the VSO annual meetings. Dr. William C. Rives, Dr. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., Dr. Maurice Brooks, Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, Herbert K. Job,

and—particularly—Dr. Alexander Wetmore, then Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, with whom Murray made intensive studies of several regions in the state, were some of these.

Dr. Murray personally set high standards for careful research in his papers for *The Raven* in those early days. The careful, scholarly approach which characterized his own field work was most impressive and was recognized by his being asked to supervise the work of a doctoral candidate at the University of Virginia and to teach several summers at the Mountain Lake Biological Station of the University.

One of Murray's earliest interests was the effects of altitude on bird distribution, especially the warblers, and in June 1930 he, M. G. Lewis, and I left Lexington one morning at 4 o'clock to climb Thunderhill, a summit in the Blue Ridge over 4000 feet in elevation, in the southeastern corner of Rockbridge County. This might be considered the first foray of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

Again, in July 1933, each arising at 3 o'clock in the morning, we met on Route 60 at Oronoco, cooked breakfast, and hiked the long trail up to the top of Mt. Pleasant in Amherst County. It was on this trip, alongside Cole Mountain, that we found the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker by hearing its characteristic type of hammering.

I hope a personal note will be permitted. The stencils for the early mimeographed *Ravens* were cut by my assistant in the Registrar's Office at Lynchburg College, Miss Dorothy L. Scoggan. We were married by Dr. Murray on 23 June 1934 on Apple Orchard Mountain. As we were on the way to the selected site for the wedding, Dr. Murray and I became engrossed in searching for a junco nest, delaying the wedding for an hour, much to the irritation of the bride, who forgave but did not forget, and who was later a companion on many bird trips.

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THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF J. J. MURRAY TO VIRGINIA ORNITHOLOGY

ALEXANDER WETMORE

In the ornithological interests of Dr. James Murray an early theme was the obvious need for a modern list of the birds found in his adopted state of Virginia. And when the Virginia Society of Ornithology was founded in 1929, with Dr. Murray appointed editor of its magazine, this became a major activity. To appreciate this, and to understand it fully, it is necessary only to scan the pages of the early volumes of *The Raven*.

Under the heading, "Editorial Notes," in the first number, issued in January 1930, the editor wrote that the primary aims of the new society were, first, to assist the membership through its journal as a means of communication in their common interest in birds and, second, to assemble data to serve as a "foundation for the preparation of a revised catalogue of the birds of Virginia." The success of the first of these directives has been self-evident and requires no further comment.

As regards the second, in the next issue of the magazine, in February, the editor stressed further the compilation of data on Virginia's birds as a major activity. A year later, when through the interest of several members, data had become available from 10 areas in various parts of the state, he assembled a combined list of 279 species of birds as a supplement to *The Raven* for February 1931.

Dr. Murray's personal studies were marked always by the careful attention that ensured accuracy in detail. He was active physically in the out of doors and keen of eye and ear in finding birds. His identifications were made with care, so that there was no question regarding his reports of any that were unusual. While he did not assemble a private collection of birds, he took and prepared specimens when these were needed to verify occurrence. Pertinent records were listed in his data sheets with, as noted, checks from specimens for any on which there might be uncertainty. This same requirement for accuracy governed his assessment of the work of others.

The Birds of Virginia by Harold H. Bailey, published in 1913, has been definitely useful but covers only those kinds known to nest within the state, omitting the many others that are found as migrants and casual visitors. The latest published list of all of the species recorded was *A Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias* by Dr. William H. Rives, a valuable contribution but out of date, as it had been published in October 1890. While Rives's list covered both Virginia and West Virginia, Murray noted that in the main it concerned the state mentioned first, as only two of the species included were known for West Virginia alone. While its information was helpful, many additional data had become available in the more than 40 years elapsed since its publication. Further, it was not easily accessible since the edition printed was small and no longer available.

Steadily, through his own observations and his encouragement of others, Dr. Murray promoted studies in areas still poorly known. In this it was my own good fortune to accompany him on several of these early field trips. On two occasions, fall and spring, we visited Whitetop Mountain and on another, Mount Rogers, in the higher elevations in the state. Another trip took us for a week in June to the highlands near the West Virginia line. Others were to the enclosed valley of Burke's Garden, and several days of special search for fall migrants at the Murrays' country cottage near Lexington.

In other studies, the Editor, in *The Raven* for March 1933, presented in detail "A Brief History of Virginia Ornithology," beginning with the early days of the 17th century. This summary, in addition to accounts of the early workers, included also such publications as those of the birds of the Washington, D. C., area which contained important data from adjacent Virginia. Other pages were devoted to recent publications in ornithological journals which gave data on Cobb's Island, the Dismal Swamp, and other localities.

In January 1934, Dr. Ruskin Freer, as President of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, announced that Dr. Murray had begun the assembly of manuscript for a comprehensive list of the birds of the state. In this connection Freer recorded that Murray's observations on occurrences and other data on Virginia birds in *The Auk*, the magazine of the American Ornithologists' Union, from 1929 to 1933, had included 28 notes for a total of approximately 13 printed pages.

In *The Raven* for April-May 1934, Murray presented corrected data for Virginia on several species of birds as listed in the current fourth edition of the

A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds*, published in 1931. And in July he presented notes adding six additional species, bringing the total for the state list to 359 forms.

In 1936 he summarized the activities of five early ornithologists who had lived for a period in Virginia, starting with Mark Catesby whose observations of several years began in 1712, followed by Percy Evans Freke, active from 1872 to 1879. Others included Harry Balch Bailey (father of Harold H. Bailey), William Palmer, long on the staff of the U. S. National Museum in Washington, and Wirt Robinson. Also in this volume there is a brief summary of Murray's first list of the birds of Rockbridge County, published in *The Oologist* for March 1936.

The Raven for June 1937 was devoted largely to a study of the breeding birds of Cobb's Island. In the following number he outlined our findings in our June visit to Mount Rogers. The final issue for that year covered extensions in range of the Black Vulture. Thus he added steadily to current data. But then the period of the Second World War blocked usual procedures in publication, so that the new state list was not finally assembled and issued until 1952. This, a book of 113 pages, included records for 398 forms, with 14 others listed as hypothetical through sight records or other reports not fully verified.

The period was one of change in thought and method of presentation regarding usage, especially in common names, and for subspecies. It was not until publication in 1957 of the fifth edition of the official *Check-list of North American Birds* by the American Ornithologists' Union that these matters were clarified. Murray then, through corrections and additions in *The Raven*, could bring usage in the Virginia list in line. His *Birds of Rockbridge County, Virginia*, published by the VSO in December 1957, followed this modern form of presentation.

From this partial summary he stands as the scholarly leader in advances in our knowledge of the avifauna of Virginia, one to whom we have been indebted for guidance in his summaries and outlines in this field. His 40 years as editor mark an outstanding contribution from which we all have profited.

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THE ORNITHOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS OF J. J. MURRAY, SR. THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

COMPILED BY ROBERT O. PAXTON

This list is selective. All books and sections of books are included, as are all articles and notes (except some obituary notices) published in out-of-state ornithological journals. From *The Raven*, only leading articles have been included. Space prohibits listing the shorter notes and book reviews which Dr. Murray contributed to virtually every issue during his 40 years as editor.

Dr. Murray's regular columns on birds are also omitted here. The most important of these have been the "Middle Atlantic Coast Region" report, jointly with the late Julian Potter, four times a year in *Audubon Field Notes* (1948-57); a long series of popular life histories of Virginia birds in *Virginia Wildlife*; and

an occasional column, "Nature's Diary," over some 30 years in the *Rockbridge County News*.

The compiler wishes to thank the library staffs of Columbia University, the American Museum of Natural History, and the National Audubon Society for help in preparing this bibliography.

1928. The range of the Black Vulture. *Bird-lore*, 30:116.
1929. A dead Clapper Rail found at Lexington in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 46:106-107.
- The possibility of tularemia in the Ruffed Grouse. *Auk*, 46:110-111.
- Northern Raven (*Corvus corax principalis*) in Rockbridge County, Virginia. *Auk*, 46:240-241.
- Migrating ducks in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 46:379-380.
- The Black Vulture breeding in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 46:385.
- An albino Savannah Sparrow. *Auk*, 46:391-392.
1930. Bonaparte's Gull found at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 47:72.
- The Black Vulture in southwestern Virginia. *Auk*, 47:81.
- Late nesting of the Cedar Waxwing in North Carolina. *Auk*, 47:88.
- Long-eared Owl at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 47:252-253.
- Winter occurrence of Yellow Palm Warbler in western Virginia. *Auk*, 47:260-261.
- Ducks in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 47:553-554.
- Nesting of the Upland Plover near Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 47:562.
- Notes from eastern North Carolina. *Auk*, 47:575-576.
- (with Alexander Sprunt, Jr.) Mass occurrence of the Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus*) in the North Carolina mountains. *Auk*, 47:556.
- (with Alexander Sprunt, Jr.) The Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea caerulea*) in the mountains of North Carolina. *Auk*, 47:563-564.
- (with Alexander Sprunt, Jr.) A breeding record for the Winter Wren in the mountains of North Carolina. *Auk*, 47:570-571.
- A Robin's nesting. *Bird-lore*, 32:428.
1931. The voice of the Blue-winged Teal and of the Shoveler. *Auk*, 48:110-111.
- The Black Vulture in the Tennessee mountains. *Auk*, 48:117.
- A late fall occurrence of the Northern Water-Thrush. *Auk*, 48:129.
- Nashville Warbler at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 48:276.
- Pectoral Sandpiper at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 48:418.
1932. Late nesting of the House Wren at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 49:90.
- Notes from western North Carolina. *Auk*, 49:103-104.
- Wilson's Warbler in western Virginia. *Auk*, 49:226.
- Color of the iris of the Boat-tailed Grackle in Virginia. *Auk*, 49:227.
- The winter status of the Carolina Junco. *Auk*, 49:359.
- The Lark Bunting, an addition to the Virginia avifauna. *Auk*, 49:359-360.
- American Egret in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 49:458.
- Northern Phalarope in the Dismal Swamp, Virginia. *Auk*, 49:474-475.
- Wayne's Warbler, an addition to the Virginia avifauna. *Auk*, 49:487-488.
- A trip to the Dismal Swamp. *Raven*, 3(6):1-3.
- An experiment with nesting Purple Grackles. *Wilson Bulletin*, 44:182.
1933. Northern Yellow-throat at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 50:118-119.
- Additions to the Virginia avifauna since 1890. *Auk*, 50:190-200.
- American Egret in western Virginia. *Auk*, 50:206.
- Notes from western North Carolina. *Auk*, 50:232.
- Teals resting on plowed ground. *Auk*, 50:354.
- Winter notes from Back Bay, Virginia, and North Carolina. *Auk*, 50:368.
- A late-nesting colony of Cliff Swallows at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 50:439.
- Notes from the Virginia mountains. *Auk*, 50:447.

- (with Ruskin S. Freer) Yellow-bellied Sapsucker breeding in the Virginia Blue Ridge. *Auk*, 50:437-438.
- A brief history of Virginia ornithology. *Raven*, 4(3):2-4.
- A Duck Hawk's nest. *Raven*, 4(6):2-3.
- (unsigned) A list of Virginia types. *Raven*, 4(7):5.
- An albino Canada Goose. *Bird-lore*, 35:207.
- 1934. Mourning Warbler and Lincoln's Sparrow in western Virginia. *Auk*, 51:90.
- Breeding of the Prairie Horned Lark at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 51:380.
- The Fish Crow in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 51:381.
- A colony of Little Blue Herons in Norfolk County, Virginia. *Auk*, 51:510-511.
- *Troglodytes aëdon baldwini*—an addition to the breeding birds of Virginia. *Auk*, 51:525.
- Some Virginia corrections to the 1931 AOU Check-list. *Raven*, 5(4-5):1-2.
- Further additions to the Virginia avifauna. *Raven*, 5(7):1-2.
- The incubation period of the Eastern Sparrow Hawk. *Raven*, 5(7):2.
- The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher moving its nest. *Wilson Bulletin*, 46:128.
- 1935. Short-billed Marsh Wren in the Valley of Virginia. *Auk*, 52:456.
- Breeding of Swainson's Warbler in Robeson County, North Carolina. *Auk*, 52:459.
- (with Ruskin S. Freer) Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird—commensals? *Auk*, 52:187-188.
- Aerial maneuvers of a flock of Starlings. *Bird-lore*, 37:205.
- Birds seen at sea. *Oologist*, 52:3-6.
- Notes on some summer birds of Wise County, Virginia. *Raven*, 6(6):4-5.
- Autumn days on White-top. *Raven*, 6(9-10):1-3.
- A Towhee's madness. *Redstart*, 3:13.
- Water birds of a Virginia mountain county. *Wilson Bulletin*, 47:59-67.
- 1936. Laughing Gull in the North Carolina mountains. *Auk*, 53:81.
- European Teal at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk* 53:208.
- Disposal of egg shells by the Upland Plover. *Auk*, 53:211.
- (with Alexander Sprunt, Jr.) The Rough-legged Hawk in the North Carolina mountains. *Auk*, 53:77.
- (with Alexander Wetmore) The Mississippi Song Sparrow in Virginia. *Auk*, 53:93.
- The land birds of Rockbridge County, Virginia. *Oologist*, 53:26-35.
- Some Virginia ornithologists.
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 2. Percy Evans Freke, 1844-1931. *Raven*, 7(5-6):5.
 3. Harry Balch Bailey. *Raven*, 7(7-8):2-3.
 4. William Palmer, 1856-1921. *Raven*, 7(9-10):3-4.
 5. Wirt Robinson, 1864-1929. *Raven*, 7(11-12):8-10.
- Some unusual Virginia records. *Raven*, 7(11-12):11-12.
- Virginia bird notes from John W. Daniel, Jr. *Raven*, 7(2-3):5-6.
- June birds of White-top. *Raven*, 7(5-6):3-4.
- 1937. (with Alexander Wetmore) Southern Winter Wren in Virginia. *Auk*, 54:540-541.
- Notes from eastern North Carolina. *Chat*, 1:7-8.
- Prairie Horned Lark breeding at Blowing Rock. *Chat* 1:63.
- Field Notes, Blowing Rock. *Chat*, 1:67-68.
- Further notes on the land birds of Rockbridge County, Virginia. *Oologist*, 54:17-18.
- June birds of Virginia's highest mountain. *Raven*, 8:44-47.
- Further notes on the water birds of Rockbridge County, Virginia. *Wilson Bulletin*, 49:48.

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— Raven's nest in Rockbridge County, Virginia. *Auk*, 55:537.
— Southern Brown Creeper and Southern Winter Wren at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 55:537.
— (with Alexander Sprunt, Jr.) Early date for the White-crowned Pigeon in the Florida Keys. *Auk*, 55:531.
— A biblical Carolina Junco. *Chat*, 2:51.
— (with John H. Grey, Jr.) Late nesting date for the Least Tern. *Chat*, 2:64.
— The history of a Blue Jay's nest. *Raven*, 9:1-2.
— A list of Virginia birds. *Raven*, 9:85-93.
— Summer birds of Middle Mountain, Virginia. *Raven*, 9:59-65.
— Some specimens from Middle Mountain. *Raven*, 9:99-100.
1939. Some characteristics of the Canadian Zone in the southern mountains. *Raven*, 10:1-5.
— In Memoriam: William Cabell Rives. *Raven*, 10(2):5-8.
— Notes from Middle Mountain. *Raven*, 10(6-7):9-10.
1940. An odd nest of the Carolina Wren. *Auk*, 57:114.
— Purple Gallinule and King Rail at Lexington, Virginia. *Auk*, 57:566.
— A new breeding subspecies for North Carolina. *Chat*, 4:90.
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— Audubon Society work in Virginia. *Raven*, 11:57-60.
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— Wings toward the south. *Raven*, 14:42-51.
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—— A Yellow-shafted Flicker's odd accident. *Wilson Bulletin*, 63:202 fig.
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—— Notes from Highland County, Virginia. *Raven*, 25:134-135.
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1961. Some Evening Grosbeak banding records from Virginia. *Raven*, 32:179-183.
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—— Barn Swallows in the mouth of a cave. *Auk*, 79:117.
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—— Fourth revision of the Virginia 1952 'Check-list.' *Raven*, 34:27.
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ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER AT CHINCOTEAGUE

SI STEPINOFF

An Ash-throated Flycatcher, *Myiarchus cinerascens* (Lawrence), was seen by two observers on 13 December 1969 at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia. The bird was found on the service road that runs along pool "B" and about 20 yards from the southern end of the nature trail parking lot. It was on a low bush inches off the ground. When flushed, it always flew low and strongly, but always landed a short distance away and always in low vegetation.

A 25-minute study brought out the following facts. The bill was all black, finely pointed, and did not appear to be massive at the chin. The tail was longish and brightly russet. Two white wing bars were obvious as was the white edging along the secondaries. The head was slightly bushy and the eyes all black with no suggestion of eye-ring or eye-line. The chin, throat, and part of the upper belly ranged from pure white to off-white, not gray. The lower belly had a delicate yellow tint reaching back to the vent. The legs were dark. The back and head had a warm pale brown color that varied slightly according to light and angle, but always looked brown.

Visibility was excellent (it was approximately 2 p.m. on a partly cloudy day), and in those 25 minutes and perhaps 10 different roosts (all low) we had ample time to observe every aspect of the bird. It never once called; it never fed. The bird seemed "tame" (weary?) and permitted close approaches. As to size, experience would dictate that it was not quite as bulky as a Crested Flycatcher but definitely bigger than an Eastern Phoebe.

Both my wife and I have seen the Ash-throated Flycatcher in the West, and although we knew at once what it was we were looking at, we took no chances, examining the bird closely and referring (we confess) to our field guide also. The next morning—in a downpour—the bird was still there—still in a low bush.

This appears to be the second sight record of this species for Virginia, the first being one seen near Princess Anne, Virginia Beach, on 26 December 1957 (*Raven*, 29: 29-30, 1958).

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THE 1970 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON

The 1970 meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology was held on May 8, 9, and 10 at the Natural Bridge Hotel, Natural Bridge, Virginia. The Lynchburg and Roanoke Valley Bird Clubs served as joint hosts. Before the meeting began, those attending had an opportunity to admire a number of exhibits prepared by various VSO chapters, under the direction of the committee on local arrangements.

President James W. Eike opened the first session on Friday evening, May 8, at 8 p.m. He introduced Mr. Charles C. Ames, president of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club, who extended a welcome. Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Lewis then entertained

the group with a program of excellent slides of hummingbirds made during the course of several trips to Arizona.

Saturday morning, May 9, was devoted to several field trips in the vicinity, principally to the Peaks of Otter area. These trips, which reported a total of 104 species, were also part of the May Regional Census of the Audubon Naturalist Society. The main session of the annual meeting followed at 2 p.m. that afternoon. The first speaker was Dr. Richard H. Peake, of Wise, who discussed the effect of strip mining on bird life. Areas that have been reclaimed after such mining, in accord with a recently enacted state law, show a considerable variety of bird life, according to the speaker. He appraised the law on this subject as inherently good but in need of extension.

"Birds of the Dismal Swamp," by Dr. J. J. Murray, Sr., of Lexington, was based on the speaker's long experience in this fascinating region. Notable among the birds found there are the Swainson's and Wayne's Black-throated Green Warblers. Unfortunately, there are various destructive threats to the Swamp, and action to preserve it is needed.

Mr. A. M. Decker, of the United States Forest Service, described the newly established Mount Rogers National Recreational Area and the plans for its further development. Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell, of Newport News, displayed slides of a number of unusual birds discovered through her intensive banding operations.

The "Lynchburg Fledglings," a talented group of junior members of the Lynchburg Bird Club, were introduced by Miss Gene Moore and entertained the audience with original musical compositions on the subject of environmental pollution. Miss Moore described the unusual apprenticeship system for training young bird students that has been devised by the Lynchburg Club.

Following an intermission, Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, of William and Mary College, who is making an intensive study of heron nesting colonies on the Eastern Shore, presented a statistical analysis of the species composition of these colonies, with indications of the changes that have taken place in recent years. Dr. Ernest P. Edwards, of Sweet Briar, summarized the results of his research into the distribution of the White-crowned Sparrow in Virginia.

The President then announced a new feature of the meeting: a "share-in," a brief period during which members of the audience would be invited to speak up on matters of interest to them. There followed an interesting exchange of remarks which brought out information on several subjects: the declining numbers of the Bewick's Wren in Virginia, the appearance of Whistling Swans at various inland locations, and the surprising recent abundance of Pine Siskins.

The banquet, for which 125 persons had registered, was held in the Colonial Dining Room of the hotel. Members then adjourned to the auditorium for the annual business meeting. Dr. Mitchell Byrd announced that the manager of the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Mr. Robert Gilmore, was under criticism for announcing restrictions on vehicular traffic within the refuge, which has proved quite destructive. He urged individuals to write letters to Mr. Gilmore expressing their support of this action. Subsequently, a motion was formally approved that the Society go on record as approving the restrictions and that Mr. Gilmore be so informed.

Dr. Ruskin S. Freer described plans for the 1970 Foray to be held at the Peaks of Otter. Mr. Robert Holt, of Tazewell, reported that the National Park Service has apparently decided to proceed with the construction of a long-discussed second highway through the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

The President announced that a new group, the Clinch Valley Bird Club, had been established in Tazewell and had applied for admission as a Chapter of the VSO. He introduced Mrs. Sarah Cromer, president of the new organization. A motion for approval of the affiliation of the Clinch Valley Bird Club was unanimously approved.

Mr. Maynard Nichols, chairman of a committee appointed by Mr. Eike to judge the exhibits, announced that first prize had been awarded to the Hampton Roads Bird Club and second prize to the Lynchburg Bird Club.

Mr. Ben B. Warfield, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, submitted resolutions tendering thanks to all those responsible for the success of the meeting.

The President recognized Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, who delivered a short eulogy to Dr. J. J. Murray, Sr., describing his many contributions to the Society and to the field of ornithology. Dr. Freer then presented Dr. Murray with a certificate of appreciation, prepared by direction of the Board of Directors, expressing the thanks of the Society. Members of the audience indicated their sentiments by spontaneously rising for a round of prolonged applause for the distinguished honoree, who responded graciously.

Mr. William J. Massart presented the report of the Nominating Committee (in the absence of the chairman of the Committee, Dr. John F. Mehner). The following candidates were proposed:

President: Mitchell A. Byrd, Williamsburg

Vice President: J. J. Murray, Jr., Charlottesville

Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington

Treasurer: Mrs. Margaret H. Watson, Darlington Heights

Editor: F. R. Scott, Richmond

Board of Directors, Class of 1973

Glenn Dudderar, Blacksburg

Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell, Newport News

Mrs. Myriam P. Moore, Lynchburg

Board of Directors, Class of 1972

Mrs. Moselle Henkel, Waynesboro

(replacing J. J. Murray, Jr.)

There followed a vigorous demonstration of support on behalf of one of the candidates by a group of VSO members who sought to make the Society's proceedings "relevant" to certain current developments on the national scene. Following the restoration of order, a motion was approved that the nominations be closed and the Secretary be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the above nominees.

Dr. D. H. Messersmith, of the University of Maryland, delivered the principal address on the subject of "Birding and Conservation Problems in Colombia." His recent tour to that country, as a trip leader for the Crowder Nature Tours, had given him a chance to observe its great diversity of habitats, which he illustrated generously with his own excellent slides. Colombia has an unusually rich avifauna, with no less than 1567 species of birds. Wildlife is now endangered by unplanned and unwise destruction of habitat to secure agricultural land to meet the needs of a fast-growing population. Fortunately, however, according to the speaker, efforts are now underway to establish a system of

sanctuaries, notably for the purpose of protecting the magnificent Andean Condor.

On Sunday morning, May 10, a field trip was made to the Rockbridge Alum Springs Biological Laboratory, near Goshen, Virginia, through the courtesy of Mrs. Harold H. Bailey. Dr. John P. Hubbard served as host and introduced the members and guests to the magnificent biological library and collections of bird skins and eggs acquired by Messrs. Harold H. Bailey and J. Eugene Law. The live birdlife of the laboratory grounds was also quite exciting, and a small flock of Red Crossbills made several appearances for the group.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

VSO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1969

CASH BALANCE 1 JANUARY 1969

General Fund	\$ 651.65	
Publication Fund	2,500.00	\$3,151.65

CASH RECEIPTS

Membership dues and subscriptions	\$1,636.50	
Sales of publications	16.75	
Sales of patch emblems	32.00	
Bank interest	122.08	\$1,807.33

CASH DISBURSEMENTS

<i>The Raven</i>	\$ 277.95	
Newsletter	282.82	
Treasurer	281.64	
Secretary	16.41	
Affiliations	275.25	\$1,134.07

CASH BALANCE 31 DECEMBER 1969

General Fund	\$ 773.91	
Publication Fund	2,501.00	
Endowment Fund	550.00	\$3,824.91

Total 1969 membership: 589, including 454 active, 82 sustaining, 29 junior, 12 life, and 12 chapters.

MARGARET H. WATSON, Treasurer

TWO-DAY PHEASANT SEASON PLANNED FOR VIRGINIA

In a surprise move during a recent meeting in Richmond, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries proposed a two-day pheasant season for the state this fall with a daily bag limit of one cock bird. Pheasant hunting would be allowed all over the state on November 16 and 17, the first two days of the deer season. Although 10 years of stocking pheasants throughout the state has been only moderately successful to date, game biologists feel that an

open season on male pheasants will not be detrimental to the program and may actually help the birds become established.

"First of all," said Game Division Chief Dick Cross, "pheasants are a polygamous species, with a ratio of one cock bird to each 7 hens or so being sufficient for satisfactory breeding. Therefore, an almost unlimited number of cock birds may be taken without any permanent effect on the population, much like the harvest of buck deer. Furthermore, a sex ratio of one-to-one during the breeding season has been found to lead to harassment of the hens during incubation and generally lowered production. Thus, a harvest of some cock birds may result in more and larger broods in the spring."

The proposed season is also calculated to provide valuable information on the distribution and abundance of pheasants in the state. All birds would have to be checked like turkeys at regular game checking stations, and this would pinpoint where they were killed plus give a count of those bagged. Pheasants have been stocked in three-fifths of Virginia's counties at numerous sites, and regular census techniques are not considered adequate to keep up with the birds' survival.

Sportsmen and game managers alike have expressed concern about the number of hens that may be shot accidentally, but experience in other states indicates that a relatively small number of hens are actually killed in such a season. The cock birds removed in the fall will make room for more hens to be carried through the winter, resulting in a greater number of nests in the spring.

FIFTEEN HUNDRED PHEASANTS RELEASED IN VIRGINIA

The Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries released 1551 pheasants in a variety of Virginia locations this spring as part of its continuing effort to establish these game birds in the state, reports Game Farm Manager Dennis Hart. The 15 counties and cities included in this year's stocking effort were Accomack, Augusta, Botetourt, Bath, Chesapeake, Cumberland, Franklin, Henry, King and Queen, New Kent, Richmond, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Sussex, and Virginia Beach. Only 373 cock birds were included with the 1178 hens used in the release, a ratio considered more than adequate for successful reproduction. This brings to 65 the list of Virginia counties and cities where pheasants, mostly Iranian Blackneck-Ringneck crosses, have been stocked.

A total of 1458 surplus cock pheasants not needed for stocking were sold to shooting preserves for release in the hope that some would survive if they escaped. Regular Chinese Ringnecks from northern states used on most preserves have almost no survival or breeding potential in Virginia. To further implement this plan, approximately 100 breeding birds were sold to game breeders in the state to assist them in getting into production with birds adapted to Virginia conditions.

Although the initial release of cock birds is intentionally low, the first year's production boosts the sex ratio to about 50-50. It is some of these surplus cock birds that hunters are expected to harvest during the experimental pheasant season set for November 16 and 17 of this year. In addition to giving the state's nimrods a taste of pheasant hunting, it will provide the first statewide inventory of Virginia's pheasant population.

TWO VSO MEMBERS RECEIVE CONSERVATION AWARDS

At an award banquet in Richmond on 7 March 1970 two VSO members were among the winners of the 1969 Virginia Conservation Awards, sponsored by the Virginia Wildlife Federation, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Sears Roebuck Conservation Foundation.

The VSO members were Dr. Marvin L. Wass, of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, who was named Water Conservationist of the Year, and Mr. Charles C. Steirly, who was named Forest Conservationist of the Year.

NEWS AND NOTES

RED-NECKED GREBE INLAND. Jackson M. Abbott found a Red-necked Grebe inland at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia, on 15 November 1969.

LATE-NESTING HERONS. During the VSO Eastern Shore trip on 23 August 1969 a visit was made to the heronry at Club Point, near Wachapreague, Virginia. Although at this date most birds had left the heronry, there were still a few small young of the Little Blue Heron and the Snowy Egret in several nests.

FLAMINGO AT CHINCOTEAGUE. After the appearance of an American Flamingo at Waynesboro, Virginia, in August 1969 (*Raven*, 40: 83, 1969), another—or perhaps the same bird—was seen at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia, on 9 November 1969 flying with a flock of Snow Geese (Gene Evans, Marcia Lakeman, and Marcia Nelson). Perhaps this was the same bird seen later by the Cape Henry Bird Club at Pea Island, North Carolina, on 15 November 1969 (*vide* Mrs. F. C. Burford).

LATE BROAD-WINGED HAWK. A very late Broad-winged Hawk was reported on Assateague Island, Virginia, on 24 November 1969 by Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr.

FALCON FLIGHT AT KIPTOPEKE. The peak flight of falcons was recorded at Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia, on 21 September 1969 by M. A. Byrd, R. S. Kennedy, F. R. Scott, and T. F. Wieboldt. The count consisted of 2 Peregrine Falcons, 30 Pigeon Hawks, and 487 Sparrow Hawks. Other hawks recorded during this flight were 9 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 2 Cooper's Hawks, 8 Red-tailed Hawks, 9 Red-shouldered Hawks, 4 Broad-winged Hawks, 9 Marsh Hawks, and 14 Ospreys.

EARLY PIGEON HAWK. A Pigeon Hawk seen on the Virginia portion of Knott's Island on 19 August 1969 was possibly the earliest fall record for the state (Mrs. F. C. Burford and Mr. and Mrs. Ben Coffey).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER AT CRANEY ISLAND. A Baird's Sandpiper was found at Craney Island, Hampton Roads, Virginia, on 8 September 1969 by Mrs. F. C. Burford and Gisela Grimm. This observation was confirmed later on 12 September by J. E. Ames, Jr., F. C. Richardson, and W. F. Rountrey.

GODWITS CONTINUE INCREASE. Both species of godwit seem to be continuing their increase in Virginia. Three Marbled Godwits were found on Fisherman Island on 11 June 1969 (P. A. and F. G. Buckley), perhaps some

of those reported nearby 10 days earlier (*Raven*, 40: 58, 1969). At Hog Island (Northampton County) 4 were seen on 19 July 1969 (M. A. Byrd), and 4 were also observed at Chincoteague Refuge on 15 August (Byrd) and 24 August 1969 (F. R. Scott *et al.*). At Craney Island, Virginia, Mrs. F. C. Burford and Gisela Grimm found 5 first on 8 September 1969 and 2 were still present here on 12 September (J. E. Ames, Jr., F. C. Richardson, and W. F. Rountrey). One Hudsonian Godwit was noted on Cedar Island on 23 August 1969 (Scott *et al.*), and at Chincoteague they were seen on 10 August (2—P. G. DuMont), 14 August (1—C. O. Handley, Jr.), 15 August (2—Byrd), and 10 November 1969 (1—Dr. and Mrs. Handley).

FALL AVOCET RECORDS. The American Avocet was recorded at both Chincoteague Refuge and Craney Island, Virginia, during the fall of 1969. At Chincoteague, 33 were seen on 11 November and 23 on 23 and 24 November (Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr.) and 24 on 30 November (P. G. DuMont). At Craney Island birds were present at least from 11 August to 15 September (Mrs. F. C. Burford and others), with a peak count of 35 on 12 September (J. E. Ames, Jr., F. C. Richardson, and W. F. Rountrey).

CASPIAN TERNS POSSIBLY NESTING. Further evidence that the Caspian Tern may nest in or near Virginia was obtained at Back Bay Refuge this year. On 25 May 1969 P. A. and F. G. Buckley found 3 adults and 1 immature here and were able to capture and band the immature. They also found 2 adults and 10 immatures here on 29 June.

SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN AT WAYNESBORO. A singing Short-billed Marsh Wren was discovered at Waynesboro, Virginia, on 11 August 1969 by Mrs. Mark D. Snyder. Following this, up to 2 birds were found here by several observers, including Mrs. John R. Henkel, Jr., and John F. Mehner. The last observation was by Mrs. Snyder on 27 August.

EARLY WARBLER TRANSIENTS. A cold front passing through the state on 10 August 1969 apparently triggered an early warbler flight. A female Blackburnian Warbler was seen at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on 11 August (J. M. Abbott), and at Williamsburg M. A. Byrd noted 12 American Redstarts in his yard on the 10th and 14 Redstarts and 5 Red-eyed Vireos on 11 August. Also probably an early migrant was an immature female Redstart banded by Mrs. Sydney Mitchell at Newport News on 8 August.

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., 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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LONG-BILLED CURLEW AT CAPE CHARLES

HENRY T. ARMISTEAD

On 28 December 1969, while participating in the fifth Cape Charles Christmas bird count, Gilbert S. Grant, Jared W. Sparks, our guide Linwood Horner, and the writer saw a Long-billed Curlew, *Numenius americanus* Bechstein, on the mud flats about 0.5 mile east of the south tip of Mockhorn Island. The tide was rising at the time (about 8:30 a.m.) and the bird was resting in company with 3 dowitchers (sp.) and 8 or so Willets. We approached the curlew in our boat to within about 100 feet, getting good views with both 7x binoculars and 25x+ telescopes. The lack of head striping, such as the Whimbrel has, huge prominent bill, and bright rufous wing coloration were easy to see. The bird called once as it flew after the outboard had been shut off. The writer has previously seen the species in Texas, Nevada, Utah, North Dakota, and California.

A few minutes later we discovered a Whimbrel nearby—a truly different looking bird. As we had approached this area before finding the Long-bill, a spectacular flock of large shorebirds was seen wheeling and circling high in the air. They swooped down, approaching our oncoming boat closely, then settled on the flats just before we found the big curlew. This flock was composed of 20 Willets and 43 Marbled Godwits!

This seems to be the first Long-billed Curlew seen in Virginia since 24 August 1962 when one was noted at Sandbridge by Richard H. Peake, Jr. (Murray, 1963). Another one was also seen in the Back Bay area on 30 April 1956 by Jack Perkins (Potter & Murray, 1956). Murray (1962) describes the species as "Formerly abundant in migration, it is now only of accidental occurrence." The only other definite record for the Delmarva Peninsula in the literature at hand is one seen at Rogue Island, Northampton County, Virginia, on 18 June 1941 by William Montagna and William A. Wimsatt. In commenting on this bird, Montagna and Wimsatt (1942) quote J. J. Murray as follows: "So far as I know there is not a Virginia record for this curlew in fifty years. Dr. William C. Rives, in his book (1890) made the following comment: 'Formerly abundant in migration on the coast; many also were found in winter. It is now almost exterminated at Cobb's Island.'" Montagna and Wimsatt (1942) go on to say, "Rogue Island is only a stone's throw west of Cobb Island and these curlews must have been abundant on it."

At present it is probably best to consider the Long-billed Curlew as accidental in the northeastern states. Bull (1964) states, "With the exception of three individuals reported seen after a hurricane on the coast of North Carolina on Aug. 14, 1963, I am unaware of any reliable reports anywhere north of South Carolina since 1939 . . ." Evidently he overlooked the 1941 Rogue Island and 1956 Back Bay records. In Massachusetts Griscom and Snyder (1955) write, "Recent sight records are not fully convincing." The most recent record they list is one collected at Chatham, Cape Cod, on 15 June 1938. A most unusual recent New England record is one reported from Biddeford Pool, Maine, on 7 May 1968 (Finch, 1968). In Pennsylvania Poole (1964) describes their status: "Apparently a rare transient up until the last decade of the nineteenth century. No reliable records since."

The situation is less clear in North Carolina, where these beautiful birds have occurred almost regularly in recent years, as may be seen from the records given in Table 1, which show that since 1963 there have been at least seven records in North Carolina from 15 June to 10 November: two in June, one in July, one in September, one in October, and two in November. They have been

TABLE 1. *Recent North Carolina sight records of Long-billed Curlews.*

Number	Date	Locality	Observers
"Small flock"	18 May 57	Southport	G. Bristow (Chamberlain, 1957)
2	18 May 59	Wrightsville Beach	Mr. and Mrs. R. Da Costa (Chamberlain, 1959)
1	15 June 63	Ocracoke Is.	J. E. Ames, Jr., <i>et al.</i> (Chamberlain, 1963)
1	4-5 Sept. 64	Oregon Inlet	C. W. Carlson, M. Lakeman, M. Nelson (Carlson, 1964)
1	17 July 65	Carolina Beach	F. B. Needham <i>et al.</i> (Needham, 1965)
1	8 Oct. 67	Oregon Inlet	J. O. Pullman (Parnell, 1968)
1 ^a	10 Nov. 68	Oregon Inlet	C. W. Carlson, K. T. Mullen, <i>et al.</i> (Parnell, 1969b)
1	2-3 Nov. 69	Fort Fisher	J. O. Pullman (Parnell, 1970)
1	18 June 70	Ocracoke Is.	H. T. Armistead, M. E. Armistead

^a Reported by Parnell (1969a) as 2 birds on both 10 and 11 November 1968.

recorded every year since then except 1966. In South Carolina they have evidently been increasing somewhat and are regular in winter. Sprunt and Chamberlain (1949) state: "From that year (1927) however, records began once more and have since multiplied until the Long-bill today is listed as an uncommon though regular winter visitor . . . From about 1879 until approximately 1930 the Long-billed Curlew was practically nonexistent along the South Carolina coast. While it has become more numerous, no evidence has been found of its breeding here in recent years." Up to 75 (in 1938), an incredible number, have been reported in the Bull's Island, South Carolina, area during the winter season according to the same writers.

With this number of records in recent years, it is evident that this striking species should be looked for more often in the southern Virginia-North Carolina-South Carolina area. There are a number of nineteenth century South Carolina breeding records listed by Sprunt and Chamberlain (1949), who question some of them. Perhaps these birds are of more frequent occurrence than is usually suspected. It may be that there are few observers at large in the proper areas for them, which are rather remote, so that they go unnoticed much of the time. Although they are quite easily distinguished from the Whimbrel, one should always exercise caution, since the bill length and body size are quite variable. In addition there seems to be a well-entrenched skepticism towards sight records of Long-bills, especially as expressed in state and regional bird books.

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BANDING RESULTS AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH DURING 1969

F. R. SCOTT

The Kiptopeke Beach banding station, operated by the Virginia Society of Ornithology every fall since 1963, had another successful season in 1969. As in previous years, the station was situated at the old Tourinns Motor Lodge and adjacent property overlooking Chesapeake Bay and the abandoned Kiptopeke Beach-Little Creek ferry terminal. This site is about 7 miles south of the town of Cape Charles and 3 miles north of Wise Point at the southern tip of the Cape Charles peninsula.

The station was in operation for just over 8 weeks from August 30 to October 26 with a maximum of 42 mist nets. A tabulation of some of the station statistics is given in Table 1. The principal banders were M. A. Byrd, Mrs. D. P. Curtis, C. W. Hacker, H. B. Hawkins, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F. R. Scott, and W. P. Smith. In addition, 78 other persons helped as banding assistants. As in the past, one licensed bander was generally in charge of the station for a week,

TABLE 1. *Comparative statistics of 3 years of banding at Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia. Reports on the 1967 and 1968 results were given by M. A. Byrd and W. P. Smith (RAVEN, 39: 60-69, 1968) and F. R. Scott (RAVEN, 40: 50-52, 1969).*

	1967	1968	1969
New birds trapped	8,590	12,336	10,576
Total species	95	100	104
Total net-hours	17,725	18,634	18,439
Trapping efficiency, new birds/1000 net-hr	484	662	574
Days of operation	50	51	58

although most of them spent considerably more time helping the other banders. Mrs. Mitchell, for example, was on hand for over three weeks.

Although the principal objective of any banding operation might be said to be the future recovery of as many of the banded birds as possible, the recovery rate of these types of small land birds is usually very small, only a small fraction of 1 percent of the birds banded. So, while recoveries of banded birds are considered of primary importance, the Kiptopeke Beach station results are also being used in other ways as a part of a long-range study of the distribution, abundance, and migration of birds on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The mist nets used for trapping provide a unique check on visual observations of small land birds, since human bias is—usually—totally eliminated. In addition, in cooperation with *Operation Recovery*, sponsored by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, weights and wing-chord measurements were taken of a majority of the birds banded.

Three birds banded elsewhere were trapped at Kiptopeke Beach during the fall. Banding data for two are unavailable at present, and details on these will be published later. The third was an adult Northern Waterthrush originally banded at Lincoln, Massachusetts, on 15 September 1969 by Mrs. D. B. Howard and I. C. T. Nisbet and retrapped at Kiptopeke Beach 8 days later on 23 September.

Table 1 clearly shows that trapping success was not as good as in 1968. The results of trapping birds along the coast are highly dependent on the weather, mainly the wind direction and velocity as well as the frequency and severity of frontal passages. Under good conditions (e.g., a NW wind following the passage of a strong cold front) the banding station often has more birds than it can handle, and some or all of the nets have to be furled for varying periods of time. This situation seemed to be intensified during 1969. The station had long periods of NE winds, which appeared to drive many of the southward moving birds inland away from the coast, and the good flights that did occur frequently hit on days when there were insufficient personnel to handle all the birds that would have been caught if the nets had not been closed early. A good example of this happened on September 19, our largest flight day, when 788 new birds were trapped in only 105 net-hours, whereas a normal banding day usually had over 400 net-hours if the nets were not closed early.

The most numerous birds trapped, in order of decreasing numbers, were Myrtle Warbler, American Redstart, Yellowthroat, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Catbird. Table 2 shows the numbers of each trapped as compared to those of the previous two years along with similar comparative figures for other selected species. Although the decline in total captures from 1968 was 14% (see Table 1), there were many species that actually increased. Note particularly

TABLE 2. *Three-year totals of new birds trapped at Kiptopeke Beach for selected species.*

<i>Species</i>	<i>1967</i>	<i>1968</i>	<i>1969</i>
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	34	78
House Wren	134	134	222
Catbird	412	480	369
Wood Thrush	28	46	14
Swainson's Thrush	397	794	126
Gray-cheeked Thrush	324	650	109
Veery	271	519	277
Red-eyed Vireo	187	409	325
Philadelphia Vireo	10	35	13
Tennessee Warbler	15	29	15
Parula Warbler	44	118	145
Magnolia Warbler	132	260	207
Black-throated Blue Warbler	250	369	652
Myrtle Warbler	1740	3325	1977
Blackpoll Warbler	64	82	108
Palm Warbler	149	187	310
Connecticut Warbler	41	37	29
Mourning Warbler	5	6	11
Yellowthroat	999	1116	743
American Redstart	1049	979	1764
Indigo Bunting	30	53	81

in Table 2 the increases in House Wrens, Black-throated Blue Warblers, and American Redstarts. The bird showing the greatest numerical decline from 1968 was the Myrtle Warbler. No particular significance can be placed on this, however, since the peak of this bird's migration probably does not come until after the station has closed for the year. The same can also be said for the other winter residents that are sometimes caught in good numbers in mid and late October, such as the Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, both kinglets, Slate-colored Junco, and White-throated and Swamp Sparrows.

The decline in the transient thrushes from 1968 was precipitous and almost alarming. The Swainson's Thrush, for example, in going from 794 in 1968 to 126 in 1969, declined some 84%. For many reasons it is probably not valid to try to use numbers of birds seen in migration to determine changes in the total populations of individual species. In the case of the thrushes, there is convincing evidence that weather conditions played an important role. A cold front passed through the Kiptopeke area on September 25 for the first time in a week. Prior experience here has indicated that under these circumstances the fall's best flight of Swainson's Thrushes could be expected the following morning. During the night, however, a low-pressure area moved up the coast, and winds shifted from NW to NE. As a result, the flight the next morning was quite minor, with no Swainson's Thrushes. West of Chesapeake Bay, however, M. A. Byrd at Williamsburg and the Sydney Mitchells at Newport News reported a heavy overhead thrush flight on the night of September 25. More convincing evidence of the effect of wind drift on migrating birds would be difficult to find.

No extralimital species were trapped, and the rarest birds banded were

probably the Golden-winged Warblers, one on September 11 (Hacker) and another on October 18 (Hawkins), the latter remarkably late. Both of these were seen and photographed by many observers, as were all of the other unusual birds. A Prothonotary Warbler on September 9 (Hacker) was unusual for this station, being only the third record in 7 years. There were a number of interesting peak totals of individual species. The 4 *Empidonax* flycatchers all peaked on September 10, with 7 Yellow-bellied, 3 Acadian, 20 Traill's, and 3 Least Flycatchers. The seasonal totals of 20 Yellow-bellied and 61 Traill's Flycatchers were records for this station. Other interesting daily totals included 29 Brown Creepers on October 16, 25 House Wrens on September 29, 11 Winter Wrens on October 24, and 55 Golden-crowned and 73 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, both also on October 24. Some peak warbler counts included 9 Nashvilles on September 29, 42 Magnolias on September 19, and 85 Black-throated Blues on October 15. Over a hundred American Redstarts were trapped on five different days, with 286 on September 10 and a staggering 401 on September 19. Assuming that only 5 percent of the redstarts passing through the station area are captured, we can estimate that some 8000 moved through the immediate trapping area that day.

An interesting observation also made in prior years was that some species of diurnally migrating birds do not reach their peak numbers on what would ordinarily be considered a flight day. There were several good examples of this during 1969. The best observed flight of Eastern Kingbirds occurred on September 2, when 540 were counted passing overhead (Byrd). This was an extremely poor banding day, with only 28 birds trapped. On September 21 the best falcon flight of the fall was recorded, although this was only a moderately good banding day, with 142 birds trapped in 348 net-hours. The hawk count, made principally by M. A. Byrd, R. S. Kennedy, and T. F. Wieboldt, totaled 2 Peregrine Falcons, 30 Pigeon Hawks, and 487 Sparrow Hawks, plus minor numbers of other species. The peak count of 1940 Blue Jays counted passing overhead occurred on October 9 (Scott) when only 161 birds were trapped. In general, however, visual observations of diurnally migrating birds confirmed the banding results. Thus the peak observed Baltimore Oriole flight, 70 birds on September 10 (Scott), happened on a major flight day for the banders. Not all observed peak counts were of migrating birds, however. Some species tended to concentrate in feeding flocks in the Cape Charles area prior to continuing their southward flights. Thus the peak count of Cattle Egrets occurred on a rainy September 20 when 249 were counted in the fields around Kiptopeke (Scott). Whether the Boat-tailed Grackle should be considered a nonmigratory permanent resident in the Kiptopeke area or not is open to conjecture. Nevertheless, we do know that this is the only area in Virginia where this species *regularly* and *in numbers* comes out of the salt marshes and feeds in large flocks in the agricultural fields. A total of only 15 was trapped at the banding station, but reasonably large flocks were regularly present nearby. The peak number was a flock of 490 counted on September 2 (Byrd).

Acknowledgments

The Kiptopeke banders are indebted to C. M. Cubbage, President of J. Howard Smith, Inc., for permission to make use of company property for part of the banding station and to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Addison, of Kiptopeke, for many courtesies extended during the station operation. Walter P. Smith edited all the banding field records and prepared a final tabulation of the 1969 results

as well as a tabulation of species totals for all 7 years of station operation. Lastly, the fine results produced by this station would not have been possible without the dedication of the many VSO members and friends who spent countless hours—in some cases a week or more—assisting the banders in removing birds from the nets and processing them through the various banding and measuring operations.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

DICKCISSEL AT SWEET BRIAR IN AUTUMN AND SPRING

ANN GATELEY AND ERNEST P. EDWARDS

On 23 November 1969 Gateley trapped and banded a Dickcissel, *Spiza americana* (Gmelin) along a multiflora rose hedge extending south from the hockey field at Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Virginia. The Dickcissel was found to be loosely associated with wintering flocks of the White-crowned Sparrow and Cardinal. There were extensive open fields, mostly plowed, east and west of the rose hedge.

On 26 November 1969 Edwards recaptured the bird in the same trap as before. It appeared upon close examination at that time to be a male young of the year, judging from the softness of the mouth corners and the presence of considerable yellow on the breast and much reddish-brown color on the wrist patch. The bird was seen again in the rose hedge on 27 November 1969 but not after that time.

Even more surprising was the brief appearance on 21 April 1970 of another Dickcissel, this one in the plumage of an adult male, and unbanded. This time it was perching among some ornamental trees and shrubs beside the Chapel at Sweet Briar College, again in the company of White-crowned Sparrows, many of which had moved from hedgerows and woodland edge to the campus proper.

The Dickcissel has been observed in Virginia quite frequently in autumn and winter, and there are even some recent records for early summer, but most reports in the last several decades have been along or close to the coast. Sweet Briar, however, is many miles inland, situated in the foothills on the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Sweet Briar, Virginia 24595

RED CROSSBILLS IN ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

JOHN P. HUBBARD

Published records of the Red Crossbill, *Loxia curvirostra* Linnaeus from Rockbridge County are few, as they are for most of Virginia. Murray (1957) lists only two records: 3 miles northwest of Lexington, April 1941, and Natural Bridge, May 1955. In recent years there have been two additional reports: Rockbridge Alum Springs, 18-23 July 1966 (Murray, 1966) and at several places in the eastern part of the county in April 1967 (Murray, 1967). In more than 40 years of field work in the county Dr. Murray has himself never seen the species there (personal communication).

Since coming to live at Rockbridge Alum Springs in January 1969, I have recorded Red Crossbills on 44 different dates and in 13 of 18 months of my residency. Thirty-three of the records are for the months of April through June, which agrees with the timing of the majority of the other records from the county. The number of records I had per month in 1969 are January (1), March (1), April (3), June (5), July (1), November (2), and December (1); in 1970 they are January (2), February (2), March (4), April (5), May (15), and June (2). The number of birds recorded per day of observation varied from 1 to 18+, with the average being about 4 per day observed.

One Red Crossbill has been banded and two obtained as specimens in the vicinity of Rockbridge Alum Springs. An adult male was found stunned under a window at Rockbridge Alum Springs, which was banded and released on 13 March 1970 after it had fully recovered (No. 107-131600). Judging from its size (wing 90 mm, tail 53 mm, culmen 16 mm), it may have represented the subspecies *minor*, the most frequently taken form in Virginia (Murray, 1952). An adult female of this race was taken at Rockbridge Alum Springs by the late Harold H. Bailey on 30 April 1952 (HHB 14150). It was a member of a flock found feeding on lime deposits on a brick wall at the Springs.

The second specimen is an adult male that I found freshly dead on route 780, just south of Goshen, on 28 December 1969 (JPH 1168). It was in an area of scrub pines, *Pinus virginianus*, in which other crossbills were seen and heard on the same day. This specimen is about the size of the Newfoundland race of the Red Crossbill (*pusilla*), with the wing 96.5 mm and the exposed culmen 18.8 mm, but it averages paler and the bill is less heavy in proportions. Allan R. Phillips has kindly identified the bird as the race *benti*, a Rocky Mountain form that only occurs as a wanderer elsewhere. This appears to be the first published record of *benti* from Virginia, where it appears to be strictly a vagrant.

None of my observations have been of obvious juvenal birds, so it remains to be seen whether Red Crossbills breed in these outlying ridges of the Allegheny Plateau. In June 1969 and in March 1970 males were singing in the area, however, and it is not out of the question that the species might occasionally breed in the vicinity. At any rate, from my observations Red Crossbills might be considered a regular visitant to extreme western Rockbridge County, although in the coming years one cannot predict what the status of this erratic species might be.

I wish to thank Roxie C. Laybourne for help in determining subspecific identification of the specimens, which have been deposited at the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of Natural History.

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Rockbridge Alum Springs Biological Laboratory
Goshen, Virginia 24439

VSO SKYLAND TRIP—1970

C. W. HACKER

About 25 members of the VSO met at Skyland on 19 June 1970 for the annual Skyline Drive outing. Among these were Capt. and Mrs. Pennoyer, from Norfolk, who had been absent for several years. Headquarters this year were at the Craig-in unit, a group of modern motel units comparable to thousands of accommodations found on all major highways. Hepburn Cottage had been razed, the site grassed over, and not even a marker left to commemorate all of the good times had there. Luray valley is rapidly filling with houses, even subdivision developments. Fortunately, all progress stops at the edge of the National Park lands.

Saturday's trip down White Oak canyon can be described as uneventful. The usual species were seen but with fewer numbers and fewer nests. Again the Blackburnian Warbler was heard singing an unfamiliar variation of its song. The return trail over the fire road was nearly devoid of birds. The low number of sightings resulted in our arrival at the Drive earlier than customary. One group decided to have a look at Big Meadows for the Vesper Sparrow and the blackberry sundae. Both were enjoyed. The other group returned to Skyland and took the trail out to Miller's Head. The 1.8-mile trail resulted in one Black Vulture and several towhees. Saturday night the group was entertained with a program of slides taken on a recent trip to Trinidad.

The Sunday morning trip to Hawksbill was aborted, after an hour, by a heavy thunderstorm. Later, a few made the trip to Stony Man on which the public outnumbered the birds.

Missed this year was the Least Flycatcher, Winter Wren, and Yellow-breasted Chat. The total species count was 48. As in the past few years, the number of individual birds was considerably under that of former years.

300 York Warwick Drive, Yorktown, Virginia 23490

VSO SUMMER TRIP—1970

C. W. HACKER

The summer Eastern Shore field trip of the VSO was held 8 and 9 August at Wachapreague. The 1902 hotel still provides us with the most satisfactory quarters, for our purposes, on all of Eastern Shore. Outwardly there has been little change to the structure, but on the inside only the stairway remains unchanged. Fortunately, the encircling third-floor porch remains, providing an area for fellowship, a view of the ever changing marsh, and the salt breeze.

Again this year the field trip on Saturday morning departed from the dock of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) aboard an oystering barge large enough to accommodate all participants. For some obscure reason a barge of this type, only on Eastern Shore, is known as a monitor. This particular one, except for the oak keel, had been constructed entirely from lumber salvaged from a shipwreck. Due to unusual circumstances, the tripmaster was outfitted on the towing boat with a lawn chair and a lame foot.

Because of an exceptionally successful nesting season, the stop at Club House Point was not spectacular. Only a few nestlings remained with a few hundred feeding herons. The many hundreds of herons and Glossy Ibi which earlier

had utilized the heronery had dispersed to other islands of the area. This was in marked contrast to the situation a few years ago. At that time, a season plagued with many severe storms, a VSO summer field trip found several nests with eggs the last week in August.

The lunch time stop at Dawson Shoals proved to be the usual highlight. Among the great number of shorebirds were two flocks of migratory Knots which, it was agreed, were the outstanding sight of the day. The writer was confined to the boat and had to depend on others for an estimate of the number of Knots seen. The count varied all the way from 300 to 1000! It may be that the more wide-eyed birders estimated the higher numbers. Skimmers and terns, resident nesting species, were abundant in all age categories, egg, nestling, fledgling, and breeding adults. A total of 29 skimmer nests were found still with eggs. A sad note must be added that on Monday following our trip a storm tide covered the island with water, undoubtedly washing away the nests and many of the smaller nestlings.

Following a lunch afloat the boats proceeded to the back side of Cedar Island at the wash-through. Here the VIMS personnel ferried the group ashore for an afternoon of birding, shell collecting or wading. Some members walked a small circle, while others birded down to the lower end of the island, where the landing boats picked them up. Several species were represented in good numbers. The species most in favor was the Black-bellied Plover, numerous and in a variety of plumages. The boat ride back to the hotel was a welcome respite from the flies, mosquitoes, and sand, and Laughing Gulls deftly caught pieces of bread thrown to them. The check list for the day showed 61 species.

On Sunday morning most of the group drove to Assateague Island for a look at the fresh-water impoundments. On the way in, 11 Upland Plovers put in their hoped-for appearance at the Wallops Station airfield. Along the causeway most cars stopped too often for looks at the shorebirds and excellent views of Clapper Rails. At the refuge previously made arrangements for access to the back roads went astray and the group broke up into small parties for visits to the various areas of the island. In general, birding was not as satisfactory as prior years. Even so, 64 species were recorded for the day. Black terns were present in some numbers and 11 Stilt Sandpipers and 2 Pectoral Sandpipers were great finds even for those familiar with the migrating shorebirds. Brown-headed Nuthatches at the refuge headquarters were easily seen. With no official closing, the Eastern Shore trip ended as members reluctantly broke away from the group and departed for home ports around noon.

Once again the VSO summer trip enjoyed fine weather and good conditions. An all-day rain was missed by only one day. The hotel provided good accommodations and meals, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science was of invaluable assistance in getting us around the marshes. Mr. Castagna and his assistant are to be commended. The tripmaster is indebted to our able president, Mitchell Byrd, who made all arrangements and followed up on all the details.

300 York Warwick Drive, Yorktown, Virginia 23490

NEWS OF THE LOCAL CHAPTERS

Lynchburg Bird Club

The Lynchburg Bird Club has a project that is most dear to it's heart. This is the Lynchburg section of the Lynchburg-Roanoke Bluebird Highway. Wyatt Murphy, chairman of this project, said the success is beyond all expectation,

and plans are being made to extend the highway another 12 miles. This past year 44 boxes were put up by the club with astounding success. On May 20 a survey was made by Phyllis and Wyatt Murphy and a total of 48 adult bluebirds were counted. The most reported in this area in previous surveys were 6 to 8 adults. In checking the boxes 19 were found occupied by either 5 eggs or 5 fledglings. On June 23 another survey was made by Mrs. Myriam Moore, the Murphys, and their sons, Rory and Cary. This survey turned out to be even more exciting, and 22 boxes were found occupied, with 19 showing second nestings. Myriam Moore said she got so excited that she forgot to count all the adult bluebirds!—WYATT R. MURPHY.

Spring Creek Bird Club

The Spring Creek Bird Club was organized in 1967 and now has 20 members. We have engaged in Christmas bird counts and the Thanksgiving bird count each year, and for the past two years we have had a spring bird count. Meetings are held once a month, and excellent programs have been presented, including films from the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and speakers from the Lynchburg and Hampton Roads bird clubs. The present officers of the club are Mr. W. L. Dickenson, President; Miss Ruth Harris, Vice President; Miss Ida Harvey, Secretary; Mrs. Vera Copple, Treasurer; Mrs. Margaret H. Watson, Program Chairman; and Mrs. Edith Driskill, Reporter.

At the club meeting held on 25 May 1970 Mrs. Myriam P. Moore of Lynchburg was cited for her outstanding contributions to the club and was unanimously elected to honorary life membership.—IDA HARVEY.

NEWS AND NOTES

BROWN PELICAN ON EASTERN SHORE. According to Henry T. Armistead, a Brown Pelican was seen at Townsend, Northampton County, Virginia, near Cape Charles, on 12 November 1969 by Linwood Horner.

WINTER CATTLE EGRETS. Three Cattle Egrets were seen at Oyster, Virginia, on 1 January 1970 by M. M. Browne, G. S. Grant, and P. W. Sykes, Jr., although none had been found here a few days earlier during the Cape Charles Christmas bird count. Another Cattle Egret, perhaps an injured one, spent the month of December 1969 (at least to the 19th), in a field near Urbanna, according to Mrs. Charles Wheeley.

WHISTLING SWANS NEAR HOPEWELL. Whistling Swans were noted four times near Hopewell, Virginia, during the past winter. Paul D. Daly saw 6 at Presquile Refuge on 5 December 1969, 2 were seen at Hopewell on 22 December (Daly and D. K. Roszell), 2 were found at Presquile on 15 January 1970 (Daly), and 5 were at nearby Harrison Lake, Charles City County, on 8 March 1970 (F. R. Scott). There were relatively few previous records of this bird from this area.

PEAK WATERFOWL COUNTS AT PRESQUILE. Paul D. Daly, manager of Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, near Hopewell, Virginia, reported peak duck numbers on 5 December 1969. These included 9500 Mallards, 3200 Black Ducks, 2000 Wood Ducks, 850 Pintails, and 100 Common Mergansers. The goose population here peaked on 18 December 1969 with 11,500 Canada Geese, 30 Snow Geese, and 225 Blue Geese.

BLUE GEESE INLAND. Mr. and Mrs. Frederick S. Whiteside reported that a flock of 9 Blue Geese spent the period of 8-20 February 1970 near Scottsville, Albemarle County, Virginia.

EUROPEAN WIDGEON INFLUX. There were four separate reports of male European Widgeon in Virginia during the winter and spring of 1969-70. One was found near Cape Charles during the Christmas bird count on 28 December 1969 (M. M. Browne, R. H. Peake, Jr., and P. W. Sykes, Jr.), one was examined carefully at Roaches Run, in Arlington, on 11 January 1970 (Mr. and Mrs. Edward Buckler and M. Kathleen Klimkiewicz), one was present near Yorktown on 25-28 February (M. A. Byrd and Bill Williams), and another was seen in Norfolk on 13-15 May 1970 (D. L. Hughes).

LATE SHOREBIRD RECORDS. At Chincoteague Refuge, Virginia, Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr., found 25 White-rumped Sandpipers and 1 Stilt Sandpiper on 10 November 1969 and a Black-necked Stilt on 24 November 1969.

HIGH PHALAROPE NUMBERS. Some of the best phalarope numbers ever recorded in Virginia were noted during the 1969 fall migration. At Craney Island 5 Wilson's Phalaropes were first found on 28 August 1969 (Mrs. F. C. Burford, F. C. Richardson, *et al.*), and numbers remained until 15 September (Mrs. Burford) with a peak of 9 on 12 September (Richardson *et al.*). Eight Wilson's Phalaropes were also reported at Assateague Island, Virginia, on 14 September 1969 (P. G. DuMont).

Northern Phalaropes were also reported at Craney Island by many observers. The first report was 3 on 8 September 1969 (Mrs. Burford *et al.*), and 6 were last seen there on 23 September (M. A. Byrd and G. W. Hall).

PARASITIC JAEGER AT CHINCOTEAGUE. A Parasitic Jaeger was reported at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on 9 November 1969 (Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr.).

LITTLE GULL ON CHESAPEAKE BAY. P. G. DuMont observed 2 Little Gulls along the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel on 7 March 1970. One was in winter adult plumage, and the other was an immature.

LATE BARN OWL NEST. A Barn Owl nest at Fisherman Island, Virginia, contained 4 eggs on 27 September 1969 (Mrs. Ruth Beck, M. A. Byrd, C. W. Hacker, R. S. Kennedy, *et al.*).

LONG-EARED OWL AT ALEXANDRIA. On 1 January 1970 C. W. Carlson found a Long-eared Owl roosting in a cedar at Alexandria Marina, just downstream from National Airport, Alexandria, Virginia. After photographing the bird, he flushed it, and it was joined by a Short-eared Owl, which had also been roosting in the same tree.

SAW-WHET OWL AT ARLINGTON. According to Mrs. Roxie Laybourne at the U. S. National Museum, Mrs. Evelyn Staples found a dead Saw-whet Owl on 2 March 1970 under a tree in one of the Pentagon parking lots in Arlington, Virginia.

NIGHTHAWK MIGRATION. James W. Eike reported a good migration of Eastern Nighthawks during the early fall at Clifton, Fairfax County, Vir-

ginia. Peak counts were 209 on 24 August, 151 on 1 September, and about 150 on 3 September 1969.

WESTERN KINGBIRD INLAND. A Western Kingbird was seen near Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia, on 21 September 1969 by John V. Dennis. There are few inland records of this species in the state, most being from along the coast.

BANK SWALLOWS IN JULY. Gilbert S. Grant and Carl Johnson found Bank Swallows at Kerr Reservoir near Clarksville, Virginia, in early July 1969, 2 being seen at the Longwood Public Use Area on 9 July and 45 at Bluestone Landing on 10 July. These were probably early fall transients, since there are no known breeding colonies in this area.

BOREAL CHICKADEE IN VIRGINIA. According to Chandler S. Robbins, a Boreal Chickadee was trapped and banded at Warrenton, Virginia, on 2 November 1969 by Jim Shiflett. This seems to be the second record for the state.

CONFUSING WINTER ORIOLE. A bird fulfilling all the field marks of a female Bullock's Oriole—including a white belly—appeared at a feeding station near Fairfax, Virginia, in late December 1969. Gale Monson saw the bird on 12 February 1970, and on 14 February it was trapped and turned over to J. M. Abbott for treatment of a frozen foot. Several weeks later the bird died and was given to the U. S. National Museum. A critical review of the specimen, particularly by Mrs. Roxie Laybourne, revealed that it was, in fact, a Baltimore Oriole. This strongly suggests that sight records of female or immature Bullock's Orioles in the East are all suspect.

INDIGO BUNTINGS IN EARLY SPRING. Karl Weber saw and photographed a male Indigo Bunting that remained near Fairfax, Virginia, from 7 March to at least 29 March 1970. It was changing into breeding plumage. Another male was seen at Stumpy Lake, Norfolk, on 17 April 1970 by Mrs. F. C. Burford, Mrs. C. W. Darden, and Miss Eugenia Scott.

LARK SPARROWS AT CRANEY ISLAND. Two Lark Sparrows were found at Craney Island, Virginia, on 28 August and 3 were last seen here on 8 November 1969 (Mrs. F. C. Burford *et al.*). These birds were seen by many observers between these extreme dates.

HIGH COUNT OF TREE SPARROWS. On 19 January 1970 Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr., found three flocks of Tree Sparrows on Assateague Island, Virginia, totalling 75 birds. This is by far the largest count for Virginia's Eastern Shore.

LONGSPURS AT HAMPTON. M. A. Byrd and T. F. Wieboldt found 3 Lapland Longspurs in a flock of 220 Snow Buntings at Grandview, Hampton, Virginia, on 15 November 1969.

INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

THE RAVEN, as the official publication of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, performs two main functions. First, it publishes original contributions and review articles in ornithology, not published elsewhere, mostly relating to the birdlife of Virginia. Second, it serves as the proceedings of the Society and, as such, publishes news of the Society's activities. THE RAVEN may also rarely reprint an article published elsewhere if it appears to be of particular interest to VSO members. Although most bird papers published in THE RAVEN concern the distribution, abundance, and migration of birds in Virginia, other aspects of ornithology are also covered, such as life-history and behavioral notes, especially when these are based on observations in Virginia, and historical and bibliographic reviews. In addition to these, this magazine is also anxious to receive news items of interest to VSO members, such as the activities of VSO chapters and the various public and private organizations engaged in biological and conservation work in Virginia.

All contributions should be sent to the Editor. They should be typed—double-spaced (*everything*, including tables and literature cited)—on 8½-by-11-inch good quality paper on one side only with wide margins all around. Publications for review should also be sent to the Editor. Although THE RAVEN will try to remain flexible in its style requirements, it will be appreciated if contributors will adhere as closely as possible to the style used in current issues. Reference to a good style book is always helpful. Most useful is probably the *Style Manual for Biological Journals*, Second Edition, available from the American Institute of Biological Sciences, 3900 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20016. Authors contemplating submitting long papers or those with extensive tabulations or figures should contact the Editor in advance.

Under most circumstances vernacular and technical names of birds should adhere to those in the Fifth Edition of the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds*. For bird measurements and weights, metric units are now the accepted standard. All figures and tables should be on separate pages and not included in the narrative text, and figures must be in a form suitable for photographic reproduction. Any extensive changes in figures must be charged to the author. Orders for reprints must be made before copy goes to press.

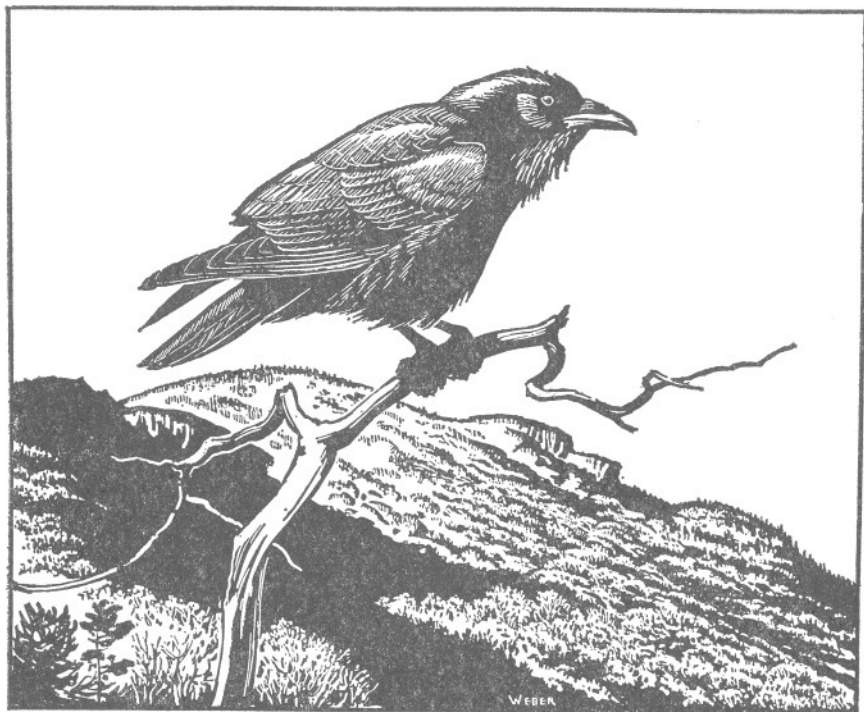
The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., 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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BIRDS AND WATER

CHARLES E. NIMMO, JR.

Early in 1969 I came across several interesting paragraphs in Glover Allen's book, *Birds and Their Attributes*, which gave me a brand-new perspective on bird watching. His comments, which incidently were first published in 1925, dealt with the drinking habits of birds. It suddenly occurred to me that for over 35 years I had been observing birds flying, singing, feeding, and nesting, and I had scarcely paid any attention to their use of water.

Dr. Allen pointed out that most birds drink by lowering their head, sipping the water, and then tilting back their head to let the water trickle down the throat. I suppose most of us have observed this at one time or another. He then mentioned, however, that pigeons drink in a completely different manner. They thrust their bills into the water and suck it up just as a man would drink through a straw. I learned later from another source that sandgrouse are the only other species that drink in this unique fashion. Since pigeons are rarely seen in my neighborhood, I have not had the opportunity to witness personally this different type of drinking technique.

Several intriguing questions were also raised by Dr. Allen. How much water do different species require? How often do they drink? How do they manage in areas where water is scarce? In this connection, he mentioned that in the far north he had seen Pine Siskins eating snow in the winter and once watched a flock of Cedar Waxwings catching snowflakes as they were falling. Other observers have reported occasions when birds drank drops of dew. In conclusion, Dr. Allen felt that there was still a great deal more to be learned about the water requirements of birds. At that point, I decided to find out all I could about this fascinating aspect of bird life by reading and observing.

A review of several dozen books dealing with various phases of ornithology revealed many enlightening facts about the importance of water in the life of birds. Joseph J. Hickey, in *A Guide to Bird Watching*, gave a good, concise description of the numerous ways in which birds use water. He mentioned, for example, that water furnishes food for many species; a place of safety in some instances as when a diving duck submerges to escape a hawk; a resting place at night for sea birds; and a nesting environment for those species who lay their eggs on a mass of floating vegetation. He pointed out that many families of birds are grouped together under the general heading of water birds because of their great dependency on this precious, life-giving fluid.

Marine birds have made an unusual biological adaptation which permits them to live without fresh water to drink. These birds have a pair of very well developed glands located just above the eyes. These nasal glands remove excessive salt from a bird's system and release it in a concentrated solution through the nostrils. For this reason, birds living near the sea can safely drink salt water. In his book, *Biology of Birds*, Wesley Lanyon told how experiments have shown that marine birds raised in salt water have considerably larger nasal glands than birds of the same species raised in fresh water.

Apart from their basic dietary requirements, birds need water for another reason. A bird functions very much like a high-powered engine especially when in flight. It is therefore essential to eliminate excessive body heat. In other words, birds need water as a coolant. Lacking the sweat glands of mammals, they depend upon the evaporation of water from the inner surface of their air sacs to keep cool.

Bathing is another interesting activity of birds. It is said that all water and sea birds bathe in water as do a number of land birds. The latter may be quite

ingenious at times in finding water for this purpose. They may flutter about in rain-soaked leaves, use falling rain as their own personal shower, let water from a lawn sprinkler spray on them, hop into a convenient rain puddle, or hopefully utilize the man-made baths that bird watchers place in their yards.

Different species have their own individual style of bathing. Some prefer to bathe quickly with constant motion much like a six-year old boy on Saturday night. Others seem to enjoy the experience thoroughly as they sit in the water for minutes at a time and intermittently splash violently. In other cases, the bird may move in and out of the water several times but never stay in for any great length of time. Regardless of individual style, most of them follow a similar bathing pattern. Once in the water, they usually squat down, partially open their wings, and then splash water on their bodies. Often a bird will duck its head and let the water roll down its back. According to observers, pigeons sometimes display a unique bathing technique. During rain storms, they may lay on one side and lift their wing so the falling water will dampen their body. Then they will roll over and repeat the same maneuver on the other side.

There are times when a minimal stimulus may trigger off bathing movements in a bird. For example, Starlings, jays, and magpies have been seen going through the motions of bathing immediately after their bills touched water.

Frequently when birds find themselves in a situation of stress or conflict, they may exhibit displacement or substitute activities. In *Bird Display and Behaviour*, Edward A. Armstrong mentioned that on one occasion after he had frightened a Black-headed Gull on her nest, she began to bathe nervously a short distance away. Other observers have reported watching cormorants, ducks, and grebes bathing during moments of stress.

Having learned much about the importance of water in the lives of birds, I then decided to make some personal observations. In early May of 1969, I purchased a bird bath from a nearby pottery shop and placed it at the back edge of my woods about 7 feet from a feeder. Most bird-watching guides recommended that bird baths be located near bushes since a bird with wet feathers is more vulnerable from sudden attack. They also stressed that some sunlight is desirable too so the birds can dry their feathers.

Since I did not have much time available for sustained bird watching, I had to wait a considerable period of time before I actually saw the first visitor come to the bird bath. On the first day of June, a towhee stopped by to take a bath. I did not observe any more activity until early July, when a Blue Jay and later a Robin were seen bathing. During August, I recorded three observations. A Carolina Wren drank some water, and a Blue Jay and a Tufted Titmouse bathed on separate days. September was a disappointing month because I did not see a single bird use the water.

Up to that time, I had not put any food in the feeder because a variety of natural food was readily available during the summer months. Therefore, the few birds who had used the bird bath had sought it out specifically for the water and had not been attracted to the area for food. It should also be pointed out that other birds probably used the bird bath when I was not there to see them.

One thing I had quickly learned was that birds generally did not linger long at the water. After a few sips of water or a quick bath they departed within a matter of seconds or at most a couple of minutes. The amount of time land birds spend in watering themselves is extremely brief in comparison with the time they spend doing other essential things. On several occasions I watched steadily for 2 or 3 hours and never saw any activity at the bird bath.

There were other times, however, when a great deal happened in a few minutes. In other words, I found out that you have to be very patient *and* lucky.

In October, I placed a mixture of bird seed in the feeder, and this immediately attracted a number of birds to my back yard. Contrary to my expectations, this seemed to have had very little effect on their usage of water. I only saw the bird bath used three times during the next 3 months. A Hermit Thrush took a bath and a Carolina Chickadee and a Blue Jay quenched their thirst.

Jays seemed to be the most frequent visitors to the water. The persistence of one Blue Jay was clearly demonstrated on a bitterly cold January morning. I glanced out of the window and watched in fascination as a jay perched on the rim of the bird bath began to hammer away at the frozen water. He used his bill as an ice pick and looked every bit like a big, blue woodpecker in action. He jabbed at the ice 20 or 30 times and finally chipped off enough to get a few swallows of water. Another jay flew up and sat on the rim for a short time and watched this performance and then flew away. Apparently he decided that a drink of water was not worth all that effort.

The turning point of my "water watching" project was on January 19. On that day the bowl of the bird bath cracked and broke in half. After some thought, I decided to convert the metal top from a discarded garbage can into a water pan. I put it on the ground about five feet from the feeder, filled it with water and sat back to watch a while. In less than an hour, a male and female Cardinal and a White-throated Sparrow discovered this new source of water and drank. I found this very interesting because I had never seen either of these two species use the bird bath. Later that day, a chickadee and a male Purple Finch also used the water pan. It appeared that the birds preferred their water at ground level which, I suppose, should be no great surprise since this is where they usually find it in the natural state. I had seen, for example, juncos, jays, and grackles often drinking from a shallow, drainage ditch on one side of my lot. On other occasions, I had watched House Sparrows and Starlings drinking and bathing in mud puddles.

The newly placed water pan attracted a number of different birds. Some of their behavior was interesting and amusing. A lone Starling frequently came to the feeder to eat. He was a real glutton and sprayed seeds in all directions as he gorged himself. His drinking habits were no better. Several times after one of his eating orgies, he flew to the water pan and drank greedily. He was not satisfied to perch on the rim but waded into the middle of the water where he could indulge more freely. Occasionally, I observed grackles doing the same thing. Once I saw a very hungry grackle walk from the woods, head straight for the feeder and not bother to detour when he came to the water pan. Without any hesitation, he continued on through the water and proceeded directly to the food.

When a small flock of grackles are feeding, an observer can frequently detect the social hierarchy which they have established. I had an opportunity to witness this on a few occasions when they were drinking. I recall one very large grackle who refused to let two of his comrades drink while he quenched his thirst. When they approached the water pan, he stood still, tilted his head back and pointed his beak skyward. Then he puffed out his feathers and held out his wings slightly to exaggerate his size further. At the same time, he uttered a low, harsh "clack, clack" sound. This display was sufficient to cause the other two birds to retreat. Later, after the dominant bird flew away, one of the other two returned for a quick drink.

Some years ago I watched another grackle use water in an unusual way. He was feeding on some bread that someone had thrown on the ground. Since it was evidently hard and dry, he picked up each piece separately, flew to a nearby, ornamental fountain, dipped the bread into the water, and then ate it. I saw him repeat this maneuver several times. I have often wondered where and how he learned to "dunk" stale bread to make it more palatable.

I mentioned earlier that some birds make bathing motions after their beak touches water. I saw a Mourning Dove exhibit this strange behavior once at the water pan. After a lengthy period of eating, he ambled over to the water and took a half dozen sips. Immediately, he fluffed out his feathers and made some slight bathing movements. He then stepped over into the water, stood there a few seconds, and continued to go through the motions of bathing, but he did not squat down nor did he even dampen his feathers. He stopped just as quickly as he started and walked out of the water.

In an effort to make some determination of individual water requirements, I recorded the number of sips of water that each bird drank. Although my method was not very scientific, I did conclude that birds consume water in amounts roughly proportionate to their size and weight. Generally, for example, the smaller birds such as the sparrow, chickadee, and Purple Finch drank less each time than did the larger birds such as the Blue Jay, Mockingbird, and grackle. The champion drinker that I saw was a grackle that took 14 consecutive sips.

During this period of a year, I counted 45 different species in my immediate area. Of that number the following 20 were seen drinking: House Sparrow, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Hermit Thrush, Carolina Chickadee, Blue Jay, Cardinal, Purple Finch, Starling, Common Grackle, White-throated Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Robin, White-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Warbler, Tufted Titmouse, Rufous-sided Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, Mourning Dove, and Evening Grosbeak. I only observed five bathing: Rufous-sided Towhee, Blue Jay, Robin, Mockingbird, and Tufted Titmouse.

To increase your bird watching enjoyment, I would strongly urge you to furnish a year round supply of water for the birds in your neighborhood.

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ALBINO SWALLOW IN BATH COUNTY

JOHN M. IRVINE, JR.

At 6:00 in the evening of 15 August 1970 I was driving westward with my family on State Route 39 in Bath County. One valley west of Warm Springs we passed a field in the river bottom, and my attention was caught by something white flying over it. My first impression was of a white pigeon, my second, a white butterfly; the disparity between these two was enough to make me stop and investigate. Flying back and forth over the field in company with half a dozen Barn Swallows was an albino swallow. From time to time the others made diving passes at the white bird, but whether in hostility or play I could not tell. We watched it through binoculars for perhaps 5 minutes, and during that time it never perched, though on several occasions it came within 10 feet overhead as if to investigate us. Species identification was not possible. The tail was forked, but the outer tail feathers were not elongated. There appeared to be a faint cinnamon wash around the mouth, as if the bird had been carrying brown mud in its bill; later it occurred to me I might have seen a juvenile bird which had not yet lost all the color of its soft mouth parts. But the bird did not act like a juvenile. It moved too fast for me to get anything but an impression of its mouth; the one time it hung overhead for a moment, tern-like, I was examining its tail feathers (and marveling at its beauty).

In more than 30 years of observing birds I have seen an albino Robin, an almost completely albino Red-tailed Hawk, and a partially albino White-throated Sparrow, but I had never previously seen or heard of an albino swallow.

23 CAMPBELL AVENUE, WOODCLIFF LAKE, N. J. 07675

NORTHERN FINCHES AGAIN INVADE VIRGINIA

F. R. SCOTT

For an unprecedented second year in a row, winter finches again invaded the state in a major flight during the winter of 1969-1970. Some of this flight has been documented in the Christmas bird counts, the pages of *Audubon Field Notes*, and elsewhere, and these are summarized here along with some

previously unpublished records. This material is based mainly on notes sent in to me as editor of *THE RAVEN* or as regional editor of *Audubon Field Notes*.

Evening Grosbeaks appeared in mid November, the first ones being seen near Manassas on 9 November 1969 (Joseph Kemper, *vide* J. W. Eike). They spread rapidly over the state by the end of the month and were abundant in most areas for the rest of the winter. At Richmond, maximum numbers seemed to occur in late March and April (F. R. Scott). In general, the birds left abruptly in early May, the last at Hampton being seen on 13 May 1970 (W. P. Smith). However, there were three unusually late reports. Near Fort Hunt, Fairfax County, a female remained from 3 May to 28 May (J. M. Abbott), another female was seen at Williamsburg on 29 May (M. A. Byrd), and a pair appeared at Norfolk on 2 June 1970 (Mrs. F. C. Burford).

Two Pine Grosbeak reports were received. At Darlington Heights, Prince Edward County, 3 were seen by Mmes. Vera Copple, Edith Driskill, and Margaret H. Watson on 6 April, and 1 was found in the Big Meadows-Skyland area of Shenandoah National Park on 9 May 1970 by Ruth Strosnider, Mr. and Mrs. Ray P. Teale, Leonard Teuber, and Josephine Walker.

There were four separate reports of Common Redpolls in the state during the winter, an extraordinary number for this rare bird. Kenneth Lawless saw 1 near Charlottesville on 24 December 1969, and another was seen there on 27 December (Allen Hale, Constance Hale, and C. E. Stevens—Christmas bird count). At Lake Accotink, near Springfield, Fairfax County, Gale Monson reported a flock of 5 on 4 January 1970, and Mrs. K. P. Lapeyre saw 1 at Hopewell on 8 January 1970.

The Pine Siskin flight was the greatest on record, although as evidenced by the Christmas bird counts (*RAVEN*, 41: 3-16, 1970), most of the wintering birds were east of the Blue Ridge. The first bird was reported at Kiptopeke Beach on 16 October 1969 (Scott) and the last at Richmond on 16 May 1970 (Scott). Between these dates the species was abundant in most areas of central and eastern Virginia, coming regularly and in numbers to feeding stations and banding traps. A spectacular concentration of 10,000 was found by Brooke Meanley on 21 January 1970 in Dismal Swamp near the North Carolina line. Most of these seemed to be feeding on the seeds of the Atlantic white cedar (*Atlantic Naturalist*, 25: 40, 1970.)

It was the Red Crossbill, however, that provided most interest, primarily in eastern Virginia. The only specific fall record reported for Virginia east of the Blue Ridge was a flock of about 5 birds near Montross, Westmoreland County, on 23 November 1969 (G. M. Meade). In general the bird was quite local in eastern Virginia. There were a number of records in northern Virginia beginning on 21 December at Fort Belvoir (Abbott), with a peak of 100 near Manassas about 1 February 1970 (Kemper). Curiously, although the Fort Belvoir Christmas count reported 60 on 21 December, none were seen on the nearby Washington, D. C., count on 27 December 1969. The last report in this area was 3 at Aquia Creek, Stafford County, on 30 May 1970 (E. T. McKnight). The Charlottesville area reported a few Red Crossbills, including some as far east as southeastern Louisa County on 27 February 1970 (Stevens), and 2 were found at Darlington Heights on the Christmas count, 20 December, by Gene Moore and Mrs. Margaret H. Watson.

At Richmond the Red Crossbill was seen between 11 December 1969 and 20 February 1970 and again between 16 May and 9 June 1970, with a peak of 20 (Scott), and at nearby Hopewell up to 15 were reported between 13 December and 6 February (Lapeyre). On the Northern Neck, near Lewisetta,

up to 15 were noted between 17 January and 1 February 1970 (Scott). It is unfortunate that the large numbers reported on the Eastern Shore Christmas counts (122 at Chincoteague on 29 December—R. L. Pyle and others) were not followed up later. The only other Red Crossbill report from this area was 25 on Chincoteague Refuge on 19 January (Dr. and Mrs. C. O. Handley, Jr.). In the Norfolk area some were reported on the Little Creek and Back Bay Christmas counts with a spectacular 37 on the former count 29 December (P. W. Sykes and others).

In Virginia west of the Blue Ridge there was a scattering of Red Crossbill reports. These did not fit any particular pattern since, as indicated by Hubbard in Rockbridge County (RAVEN, 41: 49-50, 1970), this bird in recent years has occurred at all times of the year.

There seemed to have been three Virginia reports of White-winged Crossbills during the 1969-1970 winter. Mrs. Warren Wiggins picked up a dead female on 3 February at Hollin Hills, near Potomac, Fairfax County, and the specimen was examined by Mrs. Roxie Collie Laybourne at the U. S. National Museum. One bird was reported at Rockbridge Alum Springs, Rockbridge County, on 21 February (Monson), and 5 were seen near Clifton, Fairfax County on 15 March 1970 (J. W. Eike).

115 KENNONDALE LANE, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23226

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LOCAL CHAPTERS OF THE VSO

This list of local chapters, compiled by Myriam P. Moore, Chairman of the Local Chapters Committee, was up to date as of November 1970. The number in parentheses after the chapter name is the approximate total number of members of that chapter.

1. Augusta Bird Club (45), Staunton-Waynesboro
2. Cape Henry Bird Club (158), Norfolk
3. Charlottesville-Albemarle Bird Club (80), Charlottesville
4. Clinch Valley Bird Club (20), Tazewell
5. Hampton Roads Bird Club (65), Newport News
6. Lynchburg Bird Club (200), Lynchburg
7. New River Valley Bird Club (5), Blacksburg-Radford
8. Northern Virginia Chapter (125), Arlington-Fairfax
9. Richmond Natural History Society (80), Richmond

10. Roanoke Valley Bird Club (110), Roanoke-Salem
11. Rockbridge Bird Club (20), Lexington
12. Spring Creek Bird Club (25), Darlington Heights

ALEXANDER WETMORE HONORED AT DINNER

At a dinner held at Cornell University on 17 October 1970 the fourth annual Arthur A. Allen Medal was presented to Dr. Alexander Wetmore for his outstanding contributions to ornithology. This award was established in 1966 and is in the form of a medal. It honors the memory of Arthur A. Allen, ornithologist and teacher at Cornell for nearly half a century.

Dr. Wetmore is probably best known for his outstanding work in modern taxonomy, but he is also engaged in pioneering studies of the body temperature of birds and bird migration. With around 700 publications to his credit, it is a rare book on birds that does not reference some of his writings. With his first publication, a Christmas bird count in 1901, his work has spanned an extraordinary number of years. Even now, he is working on a third volume on his series on Panama birds.

In Virginia Dr. Wetmore is most appreciated for his work on Virginia birds and his unflagging support of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, on whose Executive Committee he has served several terms.

GAME COMMISSION ACTS TO PROTECT PEREGRINE

The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has decided to discontinue issuing falconry permits for catching and holding the rare and endangered Peregrine Falcon or Duck Hawk. This speedy bird, reported to be capable of dives up to 200 miles per hour, has been found throughout Virginia but is nowhere common. Its migrations carry it along the state's Eastern Shore in the fall where falconers trap the birds using live pigeons and nets.

Although highly prized by falconers, the Peregrine's rapid decline in numbers during recent years is attributed to pesticide poisoning rather than to the trapping efforts of the hawk enthusiasts. It was placed on the rare and endangered species list of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1968, and the Commission felt that since populations had reached such a low ebb, further inroads by falconers could hasten the extinction of the species. Persons already holding Peregrines will be allowed to retain them since they might not survive if released after being conditioned to captivity. The Commission will continue to issue permits authorizing the use of other species of hawks and owls for falconry.

NEWS AND NOTES

PHELPS NAMED TO NATIONAL POST. Chester F. Phelps, Executive Director of the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, was elected President of the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners at that group's recent sixtieth annual meeting in New York City. The group is composed of directors from all 50 states plus Canadian provinces and a few foreign countries. Phelps has served in various offices in the organization since he was first elected to the Executive Board in 1965. He is the first Virginian to serve as President of the Association.

EIDERS AGAIN ON CHESAPEAKE BAY. Some King Eiders apparently wintered again about the southernmost island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel and were seen by many observers. First observed (1 bird) on 29 November 1969 (Mrs. F. C. Burford & Mrs. C. W. Darden), a few remained until mid spring, the last reports being 5 on 26 April (E. T. McKnight) and 5 on 1 May 1970 (R. L. Ake). McKnight indicated that of his 5 birds, 2 were females, 1 an immature male, and 2 were males in nearly adult plumage.

WOODCOCK NEST FOUND. Robert B. Eggleston observed an American Woodcock nest at Penn Laird, Rockingham County, Virginia, between 26 April and 19 May 1970. Two of the 4 eggs hatched successfully, one never hatched, and the last one hatched but the chick died before it could free itself from the egg. The nest site was in an abandoned field at an elevation of 1300 feet.

UNUSUAL SPRING SHOREBIRDS. There were several reports of spring shorebirds of unusual interest. Paul D. Daly reported 2 Upland Plovers at Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, near Hopewell, Virginia, on 21 April 1970, and 3 Marbled Godwits were seen on Cedar Island, Accomack County, on 24 May 1970 (M. A. Byrd & R. S. Kennedy). There were 2 American Avocets at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on 9 May (Ted Eliot & Bob Hahn), and a Red Phalarope was seen near Parramore Island, Accomack County, on 17 April 1970 (Byrd, Kennedy, & Joe Torres). At Craney Island, Chesapeake (on Hampton Roads) R. L. Ake found a Wilson's Phalarope on 14 May and a Northern Phalarope on 30 May 1970, both females in breeding plumage.

EARLY DOVE NEST. Jackson M. Abbott found a female Mourning Dove incubating 2 eggs on a nest at Fort Hunt, Fairfax County, Virginia, on 25 March 1970.

BLUE JAY MIGRATION. The spring Blue Jay migration was particularly evident in eastern Fairfax County during the spring of 1970. Jackson M. Abbott reported a steady, daily northward migration along the Potomac River here in the mornings and late afternoons with a peak of over 4000 over Dyke marsh between 7 and 11 a.m. on 25 April 1970. The flight was still strong here on 9 May but was down to a count of 300. On the latter day, however, over 1000 were reported flying northward over Woodbridge, Prince William County (W. L. Del Grande).

RED CROSSBILLS IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY. John Derby, of the U. S. Forest Service, reported to Robert B. Eggleston that he saw Red Crossbills with fledgling young on 1 July 1968 at the crest of Shenandoah Mountain where U. S. Route 33 crosses into West Virginia. This seems to be in the same area where other Red Crossbills were reported during the summer of 1968 by C. E. Stevens (*Raven*, 39: 43-46, 1968). Eggleston also reported a small flock and pairs of Red Crossbills at Penn Laird, Rockingham County, between early January and late April 1970.

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