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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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JOSEPH JAMES MURRAY  
(1890-1973)

ROBERT O. PAXTON

Joseph James Murray died in Lexington, Virginia, on 9 December 1973 at the age of 83. He was one of the founders of the Virginia Society of Ornithology and the editor of *The Raven* from its first issue in 1930 until his health began to fail in 1970. During that time he was the master of Virginia ornithology. He was also a warm friend to several generations of members of the VSO, who regarded him with a mixture of awe and affection.

The son of a Presbyterian minister, J. J. Murray was born in Summerville, South Carolina, in 1890. After graduating from Davidson College, he studied for the ministry at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. He came in 1924 to the Lexington Presbyterian Church where he served as minister until his retirement in 1958.

In Lexington, Dr. Murray became interested seriously in birds, encouraged by Mrs. Murray and by his two brothers-in-law, Dr. Alexander Sprunt, Jr., and Dr. Ellison Smyth of VPI. In 1929 he joined with Ruskin Freer of Lynchburg and the late M. G. Lewis to found the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

As editor of *The Raven*, Dr. Murray guided the VSO toward the systematic study of bird distribution in Virginia and the publication of an accurate state list. The major landmark of that work was Murray's *A Checklist of the Birds of Virginia* (Sweet Briar, 1952). The *Checklist* was the first complete and accurate account of the distribution in Virginia of all species and subspecies of birds known to occur in the state. Although a number of earlier observers had made local collections and drawn up local lists, the major previous published work, Harold H. Bailey's *The Birds of Virginia* (Lynchburg, 1913), had been devoted mainly to the breeding birds of Tidewater. Murray's *Checklist* was based in large part upon his own careful notes and specimens taken on camping trips from the Dismal Swamp to the Allegheny backbone, often with other VSO members such as Alexander Wetmore and the late John H. Grey. He modestly described that work as a beginning and summoned the society to document changes and fill gaps. But although there has been considerable enlargement of our knowledge of bird distribution since the *Checklist*, its standards of scrupulous documentation and wide field research made Dr. Murray the founder of avian distribution study in this state.

Although Dr. Murray became active in ornithology in the era of taxonomic splitting, when the distribution of newly described subspecies could be documented only by specimens, he was always far more than an old-time collector. A major interest was the altitudinal distribution of life zones in the mountains which he—a South Carolina lowlander by birth—loved so deeply. His essays on altitudinal distribution were among his most thoughtful works, and he was pleased when graduate students in biology told him that they had been assigned them for courses. He also published many notes on bird behavior, on ecological niches, on the history of ornithology in Virginia, and general nature writing of great charm.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A complete bibliography of Dr. Murray's principal ornithological publications appeared in *The Raven*, 41:29-33 (June 1970).

Dr. Murray's work received national recognition. His first article, a note on the expansion of the Black Vulture in the Virginia mountains, appeared in *Bird-Lore*, the predecessor of *Audubon*, in 1928. Over the following years a steady stream of notes and articles appeared in the major national journals: 72 titles in *The Auk* (1929-62), seven in *The Wilson Bulletin*, and five in *Bird-Lore* and its successor, *Audubon Magazine*. In 1934 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society and in 1936 became the Society's secretary. He served in both capacities until 1946, when he was succeeded as secretary by Roger Tory Peterson. Thereafter, along with the late Julian Potter, he served for nine years (1948-57) as regional editor for the Middle Atlantic Region of *Audubon Field Notes*, the predecessor of *American Birds*. Having joined the American Ornithologists' Union in 1928, he was made an Elective Member in 1936, a rare honor even then for an amateur. He directed a doctoral dissertation in ornithology for the University of Virginia and taught a summer course in ornithology at the University's field station at Mountain Lake.

VSO members who knew Dr. Murray primarily as a bird man need to be reminded that he was also a national leader in his profession of Presbyterian minister. Bird study was limited to the few free hours wrested from a busy calendar. Dr. Murray was a devoted pastor, a compelling preacher, and a major figure in the governance of his denomination. He filled admirably the different demands of all three aspects of his life's work.

As pastor to a large church, he advised and comforted a thousand parishioners all over Rockbridge County. As preacher to a college-town congregation, he was capable of drawing rapt attention from professors and from mountain people together. His immense erudition was always expressed simply and directly, without any trace of condescension or pedantry. Many a Washington and Lee student or VMI cadet first came across Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment* or Joseph Conrad, one of Dr. Murray's favorite authors, in a sermon in Lexington.

Dr. Murray also served in the administration of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. He was his denomination's delegate to the World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam in 1939, just as World War II was beginning, one of the ecumenical meetings that led to the formation of the World Council of Churches after the war. He was active in promoting the reunion of the several Presbyterian denominations of America. He served on the board of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond for over 30 years, five of them as its chairman. He was a member of the Board of Christian Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.) for 25 years and its chairman for five years. He served several times as moderator of the Synod of Virginia. He wrote *A Faith for Youth* and published a volume of story sermons for children. After his retirement from the Lexington church in 1958, he taught for two years at the Louisville, Kentucky, Presbyterian Seminary and held visiting pastorates in North Carolina, Texas, and Colorado.

In his adopted town of Lexington, he was chairman of the board of the local library and active in other civic causes.

Only a man of enormous vitality could have done all of these things. He was still ramrod straight at 80, with the lean frame of a mountaineer. Well into his sixties he could tire a much younger man on a mountainside and could still climb to the nest cliff of a raven, his favorite bird. He went up with climb-



ing irons to band young Red-tailed Hawks and down on rope to a Peregrine Falcon nest, and he was an excellent shot with a small over-and-under folding shotgun given him by the elders of his church.

His mind and character were equally strong. In addition to college and seminary, he did postgraduate work at Glasgow, Scotland, and at Oxford. Washington and Lee awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Divinity in 1925. He was a voracious reader whose study overflowed with books.

Although he seemed an austere man whose presence dominated a gathering, Dr. Murray had a keen sense of humor and a simple, direct manner. He was utterly devoid of pomposity or snobbery. He appeared to be as delighted with the company of the illiterate but observant farmer upon whose farm the ravens nested as with his more learned friends. The human spirit counted more than the outward forms of piety for him. A firm teetotaler, he was once offered a drink while investigating a stuffed Baikal Teal in a bar near Norfolk. His reaction was to praise the man later for expressing generosity in the best way he knew.

A day in the field with Dr. Murray was a memorable event. It was always physically demanding, usually including at least one Blue Ridge or Allegheny summit if possible. Nothing escaped his notice, and the ever-present notebook and stub pencil came out of his pocket often. He took great care to record accurate notes, but that did not spoil his enormous zest in the field. His infectious enthusiasm drew at least two of his assistant ministers, Jan B. Owen and the late John H. Grey, into bird study.

Those who did not have the good fortune to go birding with Dr. Murray can savor the reminiscences of some of his colleagues in a *Festschrift* issue of *The Raven* (Vol. 41, No. 2, June 1970), published on the occasion of his retirement as editor. Or they can sense some of his qualities in the simple nature essays for children which he published as *Wild Wings* (Richmond, 1947). Like the best of writing for young people, these short pieces have lasting charm for adults. There are glimpses of finding birds after a snowstorm in Lexington, of taking a day off from the Amsterdam congress in 1939 to visit the great Dutch shorebird island of Texel with its crusty warden, of watching a Peregrine Falcon. These pieces have the vigor, the warmth, and the unforced learning of the man.

Dr. Murray was greatly beloved by all who knew him.

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## VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1973-74 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

Each year in this summary it becomes more difficult to find new superlatives to describe the increase in the interest and results of the Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The record 29 counts printed this year, versus the previous record of 26 in three different years, has forced a different format for the tabulation and makes one realize that there is an upper practical limit to the size of a table. All the other basic statistics of the count reached new pinnacles also. The species total this year was 220 as compared to 210 last year and the previous peak of 214 in 1971, and this becomes even more significant when it is remembered that two birds regularly recorded, the Blue Goose and the

Ipswich Sparrow, are no longer considered full species and are therefore not included in this year's total. Certainly of equal interest was that 454 different observers participated (versus 386 last year), some of them in as many as five counts, a remarkable achievement considering the gasoline problem during the count period. Coverage also expanded significantly, with 2020 party-hours reported, a whopping 26% over the previous peak of 1606 in 1972. Clearly the Christmas bird counts remain the most popular birding activity in Virginia.

A remarkable total of eight birds were new to Virginia counts this year—Wilson's Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, an *Empidonax* flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Black-billed Magpie, Veery, Golden-winged Warbler, and Blackburnian Warbler. Also added this year was the Rock Dove, previously not included because of the difficulty of distinguishing between wild birds and those raised by pigeon fanciers. Since the "acceptance" of this species was not announced by *American Birds* prior to the count, less than half of the count compilers included it. With these additions and the "loss" of three species to the A.O.U. Committee on Classification and Nomenclature (Blue Goose, Ipswich Sparrow, and Oregon Junco—see *Raven*, 44:55-56, 1973), the cumulative list of all species seen on Virginia Christmas counts now stands at 272.

For the first time this year, seven counts reported over 100 species, with Cape Charles, as usual, taking the honors with 180, equaling its record count of 1972. Record species totals were recorded by a number of counts, including Chincoteague (with 162 species), Little Creek (149), Hopewell (106), Charlottesville (82), Lynchburg (75), Waynesboro (70), and Blacksburg (84). Cape Charles, with 224 party-hours, set a new record for coverage for any state count, and this was also the first one to exceed 200 party-hours. Other counts with excellent coverage were Back Bay (170 party-hours), Chincoteague (134), Little Creek (104), Lynchburg (99), Hopewell (90), and Roanoke (90).

Three Virginia Christmas counts—Powhatan, Shenandoah National Park, and Wachapreague—were not submitted to *The Raven*, and four others in neighboring localities—Crisfield, Point Lookout, and Senaca, Md., and Washington, D.C.—overlapped into Virginia. All of these were submitted for publication in the April 1974 issue of *American Birds*. As usual, this summary is confined to the counts printed here.

The weather during the count period was reasonably satisfactory overall. Eight of the 29 counts reported intermittent light to moderate rain or snow, only one (Tazewell) had heavy rain, and four reported up to 4 inches of snow on the ground. Heavier snow cover was found at Rockingham County (3-6 inches), Blacksburg (3-8 inches), and Peaks of Otter (16-20 inches). For the fourth successive year December temperatures were above normal, and this following a mild fall undoubtedly contributed to the many record species totals.

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 directly on the coast and 5 and 6 being on the western edge of Chesapeake Bay. Counts 10-15 were on the Piedmont, and 16-29 were from the Blue Ridge westward. Details on each count are given at the end of this summary.

Common Loons were found on three counts west of the Blue Ridge, and the 515 Red-throated Loons and 218 Pied-billed Grebes at Back Bay were excellent. The 11 Pied-billed Grebes at Wise were very unusual for this area. Herons and egrets were in good but not unusual numbers along the coast. A Great Blue Heron at Wise and a remarkable count of 17 at Waynesboro were unusual, however, as was a Great Egret at Roanoke. Green Herons were

found at Cape Charles and Hopewell, and Yellow-crowned Night Herons were seen on three of the Coastal Plain counts.

The Mute Swans at Chincoteague were only the third record for a Virginia Christmas count, the others being at the same locality in 1958 and 1959. These birds were undoubtedly an overflow from the spreading resident population farther north on the Delmarva Peninsula. Whistling Swans were noted in several inland localities, including seven at Hopewell and one at Blacksburg, and three Snow Geese at Darlington Heights were unusual for the Piedmont. Due to coverage of some previously restricted areas, Blacksburg had some exceptional counts of waterfowl for a mountain area. Twelve waterfowl species were found, including 376 Mallards and 59 Ring-necked Ducks. Blue-winged Teal were found on three counts, all near the coast as expected, but the 49 at Newport News were an unusually high number. Although one or more Harlequin Ducks have wintered along the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel for seven consecutive years, the two recorded on the Little Creek count were only the second report for a Virginia Christmas count. Two Oldsquaws at Rockingham were unusual, almost certainly indicating late transients, and King Eiders were seen at Back Bay and Newport News and unidentified eiders at Chincoteague.

Blacksburg's 272 Black Vultures was a local record count, and the 90 at Glade Spring was also exceptional. Fort Belvoir's Goshawk was only the third count record of this species in many years, the others being ones at Brooke in 1959 and 1972. Blacksburg had an extraordinary count of seven Cooper's Hawks (versus only two Sharp-shins), and a Rough-legged Hawk at Augusta was the only inland report of this species. The adult Golden Eagle at Back Bay was only the fifth record for a Virginia Christmas count in 15 years, and three coastal counts reported single Peregrine Falcons. Turkeys were reported on eight different counts, including 13 at Tazewell, and Sora were found on three on the coastal counts, including a record 15 at Cape Charles. Cape Charles's two Black Rails were a fifth count record for the state.

Interesting shorebird counts were too numerous for a complete listing here. Record counts included, at Cape Charles, 869 American Oystercatchers, 1605 Black-bellied Plovers, 298 Ruddy Turnstones, and 19,290 Dunlins, whereas Chincoteague listed 2405 Sanderlings and 18 American Avocets, the last a fourth record for a state count. Exceptionally rare were Wilson's Plovers at Mathews and a Bar-tailed Godwit at Chincoteague, both firsts for a Virginia count; a Long-billed Curlew at Cape Charles, a second Virginia count record; and Pectoral Sandpipers on *four* of the coastal and bay counts. The last species had been recorded only twice before on a state count, at Back Bay in 1955 and Chincoteague in 1963. Other unusual shorebirds included 103 Killdeer in mountainous Wise and two Black-bellied Plover and two Lesser Yellowlegs inland at Hopewell.

Back Bay reported an unprecedented count of jaegers, with eight Pomarine, five Parasitic, and 12 unidentified, and Cape Charles also had two Pomarine Jaegers. Both species had been reported only once before on a Virginia Christmas count. Inland, a Herring Gull was found at Clifton Forge, and Ring-billed Gulls were seen on five of the western counts. Laughing Gulls were

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TABLE 1 (following 8 pages). The 1973-74 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The underlined figures 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.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]







recorded in seven Coastal Plain localities, with unusual peak counts of 123 at Back Bay and 50 at Hopewell. The Black-headed Gull, Little Gull, and Black-legged Kittiwake had each been recorded three times on state counts prior to this year; in 1973 the Black-headed Gull was found on *three* of the coastal counts while the other two were both recorded once (at Back Bay). The 1231 Forster's Terns at Back Bay were excellent though not a record, and 103 Royal Terns were counted at Little Creek. Common Terns were observed in three coastal localities, and single Caspian Terns were noted at Chincoteague and Little Creek, the first state count record in over 20 years.

The 30 Screech Owls at Lynchburg came close to being a state record for this species, and a Long-eared Owl was found at Cape Charles. Red-headed Woodpeckers continued their apparent long-term increase and were in the best numbers in many years, rivaled only by the 134 recorded on only nine counts in 1962. This was a fluke, however, since one count that year, Brooke, accounted for 116 of these. This year 124 were recorded on 18 counts, with a peak of 42 at Hopewell. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was also at peak populations and established a record of sorts by being reported on all 29 Christmas counts. The total recorded was 205. Danville's total of 33 Hairy Woodpeckers, not even marked as unusual, was astonishing, especially in view of their total of only 35 Downy Woodpeckers. Unusual flycatchers included a Western Kingbird at Chincoteague, a sixth state count record, an unidentified *Empidonax* at Back Bay, and an Eastern Wood Pewee at Lynchburg. The latter two are new to Virginia Christmas counts. The Eastern Phoebe continued its slow and irregular increase as a wintering bird, with a record 77 birds reported on 23 counts. This bird has recovered nicely since its low of only four birds on four counts in 1960. In terms of party-hours, which have increased almost three-fold since then, the figures are 38 birds per 1000 party-hours in 1973 versus five per 1000 party-hours in 1960.

A Black-billed Magpie at Roanoke was another first for a Virginia Christmas count, and the 74 Common Ravens recorded on 13 different counts was excellent. Three Black-capped Chickadees were reported at Danville, far out of their normal winter range and with insufficient details to support the record. The need for substantiating such extralimital records of this species has been pointed out previously (*Raven*, 42: 10, 1971). House Wrens were found inland at Charlottesville, Lexington, and Bristol, and Bewick's Wrens at Little Creek and Rockingham County were only the third and fourth state count records in 15 years. Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers continued their relatively high winter populations in the eastern part of the state, and the latter was found on seven counts west of the Blue Ridge. Back Bay reported a Swainson's Thrush, and a Veery, a first state count record, was seen at Little Creek. Eastern Bluebird numbers remained high, with 628 recorded on 27 counts, or 31 per 100 party-hours. Numbers have been creeping up irregularly year by year since the disastrous winters of 1960-61 and 1961-62 (see *Raven*, 34: 7 and 12, 1963) but are still not up to the levels of the late 1950's. Three counts reported the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cape Charles, Back Bay, and Brooke, the third successive year for this species.

Three coastal counts had the Solitary Vireo, a species recorded on only four previous state Christmas counts. Among the interesting warblers reported were a Black-and-white and a Black-throated Blue Warbler at Cape Charles, a Golden-winged Warbler at Danville, a Blackburnian at Chincoteague, and a

Northern Waterthrush at Cape Charles. The Golden-winged and Blackburnian Warblers were both new to a Virginia count, the Black-throated Blue was a third count record, and the waterthrush had been observed only once before on a state count. Also of interest were two Palm Warblers well inland at Waynesboro and a significant number of Yellow-rumped Warblers west of the Blue Ridge. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen at Little Creek, a fourth record for a state count, and Brewer's Blackbirds were found at Back Bay.

The northern finches were a mixed bag this year. Evening Grosbeaks were down somewhat from the record 1940 birds found last year. This year the count was 1598 noted on 26 counts. Pine Siskins, on the other hand, were much more numerous, with 982 on 21 counts versus only 192 in 1972. This was our best count of this species except for the spectacular 1968 and 1969 seasons. Other northern finches included a Common Redpoll at Back Bay, Red Crossbills on 11 counts, and White-winged Crossbills only at Cape Charles.

House Finches exhibited a tremendous increase this year, with 598 recorded on 16 counts, more than a threefold increase over the previous record of 185 last year. Three counts recorded over a hundred each, Chincoteague, Cape Charles, and Lynchburg. Record counts of 213 Sharp-tailed and 165 Seaside Sparrows were made at Cape Charles, and a number of sparrows unusual in winter in western Virginia were reported. Among these were Savannah Sparrows at Wise, Vesper Sparrows at Tazewell, Nickelsville, and Wise, and Chipping Sparrows at Charlottesville, Waynesboro, Bristol, and Wise.

1. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center 2 miles north of center of Chincoteague as described 1972).—Dec. 28; 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clear; temp. 32° to 54°F; wind NW, 2-8 m.p.h.; ground clear, water open. Twenty-seven observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 134 (114 on foot, 14 by car, 6 by boat); total party-miles, 293 (82 by foot, 191 by car, 20 by boat). Observers: D. F. Abbott, J. M. Abbott, Robert Ake, Henry Armistead, William Clark, Charles Cremeans, Paul DuMont, Philip DuMont, Harriet Gilbert, Anne Harper, David Hughes, Dave Lewis, Larry Lewis, Larry Malone, Roland Monette, Dwight Peake, Richard Peake, Peter Pyle, Robert Pyle, Chris Risley, Will Russell, F. R. Scott (compiler), Karl Stecher, Jr., Paul Sykes, Jr., Claudia Wilds, Grover Wilgus, Vee Willet. The Yellow-crowned Night Herons were both immatures, one seen by David Abbott and Harper and the other by the Pyles. The Mute Swans were identified by Ake, the Peakes, Sykes, and others; they have been noted in the area recently with increasing frequency. The female Blue-winged Teal was noted flying by Malone and Scott, the eiders were found by Jack Abbott, and the Sora was heard calling by Wilds. Clark and Stecher discovered the Pectoral Sandpiper and made sure it was not a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Robert Pyle, who found the Bar-tailed Godwit, has submitted a detailed account of the observation to *The Raven*. David Abbott found the American Avocets, and they were later observed by Ake, Sykes, Scott, and others. The Black-headed Gull and Caspian Tern were seen by David Abbott, whereas Jack Abbott and Risley first observed the Common Terns, a few of which were later seen by the DuMonts. The Western Kingbird was identified by Gilbert and the Blackburnian Warbler by Richard Peake. Four parties reported the record number of House Finches, including 75 by Gilbert and 24 by Armistead and Cremeans. Detailed written descriptions were submitted for all unusual observations.

2. CAPE CHARLES (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center 1.5 miles SE of Capeville P. O. at Dunton Cove, area as described 1972; open farmland 33%, pine and mixed woodland 29%, salt marsh 15%, sheltered bay and mudflats 10%, open ocean and beach 5%, open bay 5%, towns 2%, fresh water 1%).—Dec. 29; 5:30

a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly clear; temp. 40° to 60°F.; wind SE to SW, 10-20 m.p.h.; ground clear, water open. Wild food crop good. Fifty-seven observers in 10-25 parties. Total party-hours, 224 (196 on foot, 18 by car, 10 by boat); total party-miles, 611 (228 by foot, 338 by car, 45 by boat). Seen in area count week but not seen count day: Harlequin Duck, Razorbill. Observers: David Abbott, Jackson Abbott, Robert Ake, Robert Anderson, Henry Armistead (compiler), Paul Baker, Mitchell Byrd, William Clark, Charles Cremeans, Herbert Cutler, Betty Cutler, Doug Davis, Paul DuMont, Philip DuMont, Harriet Gilbert, Gilbert Grant, David Green, Charles Hacker, Jose Hernandez, David Hughes, Betty Lancaster, Harry LeGrand, David Lewis, Larry Lewis, Dorothy Mitchell, Sydney Mitchell, Roland Monette, Dwight Peake, Richard Peake, John Probst, Peter Pyle, Robert Pyle, Chris Risley, Grace Russell, William Russell, Bruce Schweitzer, Fred Scott, Dorothy Silsby, Zelda Silverman, D. D. Smith, W. P. Smith, Ruth Strosnider, David Stacy, Pat Stacy, Paul Sykes, Marion Teele, Ray Teele, John Terborgh, Gus Van Vliet, Charles Vaughn, Jerry Via, David West, Claudia Wilds, Vee Willet, Bill Williams, Gary Williamson, Townley Wolfe. The Black Rails were flushed from a marsh by the Teeles, Strosnider, and West, and the Long-billed Curlew was seen on two occasions both at rest and in flight with Marbled Godwits by the Pyles, Terborgh, Grace Russell, and Van Vliet. Hughes found the Pectoral Sandpipers in a field with Black-bellied Plovers and Dunlin, the two adult light-phase Pomarine Jaegers were identified by Armistead, David Abbott, and Willet, and David Abbott noted the adult Black-headed Gull flying in a flock of Bonaparte's Gulls. William Russell flushed the Long-eared Owl from a dense stand of pines, the Bewick's Wren was seen by Ake, and Vaughn and Risley observed the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Paul DuMont found the Solitary Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, and the male Black-throated Blue Warbler, and the Northern Waterthrush was both seen and heard calling by William Russell. The Dickcissel, with a flock of House Sparrows, was noted by William Russell, Wolfe, and Green, while Ake discovered the White-winged Crossbills, the fourth year in a row for this species. Detailed written descriptions were submitted for all unusual observations.

3. LITTLE CREEK (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center 3.8 miles NE of Kempsville in Virginia Beach, area as described 1972; salt marsh, beach, rivers, bay, and ocean 30%, deciduous woodland 25%, pine woodland 20%, farmland 20%, suburbs 5%).—Dec. 27; 5 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy in a.m., becoming mostly cloudy with intermittent light rain in p.m.; temp. 59° to 71°F.; wind SW, 0-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop excellent. Twenty-one observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 104 (79 on foot, 25 by car); total party-miles, 436 (54 by foot, 382 by car). Observers: Robert Ake, Robert Anderson, Carvel Blair, Floy Burford, Connie Darden, Gisela Grimm, David Hughes, Helen and Ronald Irving, Karla and Robert Lawler, Emily Moore, Dwight Peake, Richard Peake, Jr., W. F. Rountrey, Eugenia Scott, Dorothy Silsby, Betsy Stephens, Paul Sykes, Jr. (compiler), Gary Williamson, Townley Wolfe (Cape Henry Audubon Society). The two male Harlequin Ducks were observed by Sykes and Wolfe and the American Oystercatchers by Sykes. Three different parties reported the Common Terns, and in each case the black head marking was noted as extending completely around the back of the head. Anderson found the Caspian Tern, comparing it carefully with nearby Royals. The Veery, apparently a first winter record for Virginia, was studied at length by Dwight Peake and characteristic dorsal color and breast spots noted. Hughes and Williamson found the Solitary Vireo in a mixed flock of other small birds, while the Yellow-headed Blackbird and Lincoln's Sparrow were noted by Richard Peake. Detailed written descriptions were received for all the above observations.

4. BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center 1.5 miles E of Back Bay, area as described 1972; farmland 10%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 25%, beach and dunes 20%, marshes and brackish

bay 10%, ocean 25%).—Dec. 30; 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly cloudy with cold front passing through area about 8 a.m.; temp. 43° to 58°F.; wind NW to NE, 5-22 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop excellent. Thirty-three observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 170 (141 on foot, 25 by car, 4 by boat); total party-miles, 614 (110 by foot, 489 by car, 15 by boat). Observers: Robert Ake, Jorn Ake, Robert Anderson, Harry Armistead, Dan Benfield, Floy Burford, John and Thelma Dalmas, Douglas Davis, Keith Fielder, Gilbert Grant, Gisela Grimm, David Hughes, Helen and Ronald Irving, Karla and Palmer Lawler, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Paul McQuarry, Emily Moore, Dwight Peake, Richard Peake, Jr., F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, Grace Russell, William Russell, Paul Sykes, Jr. (compiler), John Terborgh, Robert Tripician, Rommie Waterfield, Claudia Wilds, Gary Williamson, Townley Wolfe (Cape Henry Audubon Society). The King Eiders were seen by Sykes and the adult Golden Eagle by Armistead, Hughes, and Tripician, while Armistead and William Russell observed the Pectoral Sandpipers on two occasions and heard their call notes. The jaegers were carefully observed at length by Hughes, William Russell, Sykes, and Tripician. The ones identified specifically were at close range, some directly overhead. Wilds identified the Black-headed Gull and Sykes the adult Little Gull and the Black-legged Kittiwake. The Common Terns, associating with Forster's Terns, were carefully noted by two different parties. Fielder, McQuarry, and Wolfe found the *Empidonax*, a greenish-backed bird with considerable yellow on the breast. It was first thought to be a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher but had a call note reminiscent of the Western Flycatcher. The Peakes observed the Swainson's Thrush, and the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was noted by Fielder, McQuarry, and Wolfe. Burford and Moore found the Solitary Vireo, the Peakes discovered the Brewer's Blackbirds and the adult male Common Redpoll, and the Lapland Longspur was seen by Sykes. Detailed written descriptions were submitted for all unusual species above.

5. NEWPORT NEWS (all points within a 15-mile diameter, bounded by Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River, Grafton, as described 1972).—Dec. 22; 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 28° to 42°F.; wind NW, 5-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Seventeen observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 48 (31 on foot, 17 by car); total party-miles, 236 (37 by foot, 199 by car). Seen in count area count week but not seen count day: Ruddy Turnstone, Evening Grosbeak. Observers: M. Byrd, C. Hacker, S. Hacker, B. Heimerl, G. Heimerl, G. Keefe, B. Lancaster, G. Lindskold, D. Lundt, D. Mitchell, S. Mitchell, A. Rawls, J. Shopland, D. Silsby, D. Smith, W. P. Smith (compiler), S. Sturm. The American Bittern was seen by W. P. Smith and the Brant by Keefe and Silsby. The unusually high count of Blue-winged Teal was reported by Byrd, as was the King Eider.

6. MATHEWS (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center 0.5 mile E of Beaverlett P. O., as described 1972).—Dec. 30; 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Overcast in a.m., clearing in late morning; temp. 48° to 44°F.; wind NW, 10-30 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Thirty-two observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 95 (66 on foot, 29 by car); total party-miles, 341 (72 by foot, 269 by car). Observers: Jay Andrews, Peggy Gill, Jim Grieves, Betty Hodges, Clare Jones, Elizabeth and Fred Maxwell, Jean and Richard Menuet, Maynard Nichols, Margaret O'Bryan, Daniel, Elizabeth and Richard Peacock, Mary Pulley (compiler), Eleanor Respass, Betty and David Roszell, Chris and Jack Sheridan, Nancy and William Slate, Jerrie and Warren Smith, Mary and Tobey Stout, Joy Tenney, Barry, Gerry, Lorna and Marvin Wass, Henrietta Weidenfeld. Seen in area count week but not on count day: Sharp-shinned Hawk, Royal Tern. One Yellow-crowned Night Heron, an adult, was seen by the Roszells and the other by William Slate and Richard Menuet, and the pheasant, a female found by Pulley and the Peacocks, could have been either a Ring-necked or a Japanese Green Pheasant, as both have been released in the area. The Roszells reported the Wilson's Plovers and the Pectoral Sandpipers. The heavy black bill of the former was noted, and the Pectorals were noted in direct comparison with Dunlin and Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers. The House Wren was observed by Daniel

and Richard Peacock and Pulley. A Yellow Warbler was removed from this count by the editor because of a lack of suitable details of the observation.

7. HOPEWELL (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Curles Neck, as described 1972).—Dec. 15; 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly cloudy in a.m., becoming overcast with intermittent moderate rain in p.m.; temp. 29° to 43°F.; wind variable, 0-8 m.p.h.; ground clear, water open. Nineteen observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 90 (65 on foot, 22 by car, 3 by boat); total party-miles, 326 (43 by foot, 268 by car, 15 by boat). Observers: R. L. Ake, B. J. Blatt, Dean Brick, Wavell Fogleman, Ian Garriques, Gilbert Grant, David Hughes, G. E. Inskeep, Harold Olson, Robert Olson, David and Elizabeth Roszell, F. R. Scott (compiler), Bonnie Sexton, David Sonneborn, J. S. Thornhill, S. L. Thornhill, Henrietta Weidenfeld, Gary Williamson. The Green Heron was seen by Sonneborn, Brick, and Garriques and the Great Egret by Elizabeth Roszell and Weidenfeld. Ake and party found 3 of the Whistling Swans, and Scott saw 4. The Black-bellied Plovers and Lesser Yellowlegs were also reported by Scott. The count of 50 Laughing Gulls, unprecedented here in winter, was made by the three parties led by Ake, Sonneborn, and Robert Olson. Larger numbers had been in the area earlier in the month. Sonneborn found the Brown-headed Nuthatches, the Common Yellowthroats were seen (one each) by Scott and the Thornhills, and Elizabeth Roszell and Weidenfeld observed the Chipping Sparrows.

8. BROOKE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center on road 3 miles ESE of Brooke, as described 1972; mixed forest edge 29%, deciduous woods 16%, tidal water 14%, marsh 11%, fields 11%, deciduous wooded swamp 8%, hedgerows 8%, pine woods 3%).—Dec. 28; 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clear; temp. 32° to 52°F.; wind W, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twelve observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 76 (69 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 116 (46 by foot, 70 by car). Observers: Henry Bell, III, L. D. Bonham, J. H. Eric, R. G. Luedke, E. T. McKnight (compiler), T. B. Nolan, J. C. Reed, E. M. Risley, R. L. Smith, D. B. Stewart, D. R. Wiesnet, D. R. Wones. The King and Virginia Rails were found by McKnight and the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher by Eric, Luedke and Wones observed the Vesper Sparrow.

9. FORT BELVOIR (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center on Pohick Church at intersection of U. S. Rt. 1 and Va. Rt. 611, N to Fort Hunt, W to Springfield and Burke Lake, S to Occoquan Creek and Freestone Point, E along Potomac River; woodland 25%, river 20%, old fields 20%, parks 20%, streamsides 10%, residential 5%).—Dec. 22; 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mostly clear; temp. 35° to 47°F.; wind SW, 0-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Twenty-six observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 89 (76 on foot, 13 by car); total party-miles, 199 (59 by foot, 140 by car). In count area count week but not seen count day: Canada Goose. Observers: David Abbott, Jackson Abbott (compiler), Larry Bethea, Paris Coleman, William Cromley, Ed Dillon, Paul and Philip DuMont, Alan and Connie Hale, Duane Kaiser, Dan Keeney, Malcolm Klein, Robert Lamberton, Will MacDowell, Peter and Robert Pyle, Ted Rivinus, Barbara Sam, George Sigel, Cheryl Smith, Ron Staley, Leonard Teuber, Bronson Tweedy, George Weickhardt, Josephine Wood. The Goshawk was observed by Keeney and Weickhardt. A detailed description of the observation has been submitted to *The Raven*.

10. CHARLOTTESVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center near Ivy, as described 1972).—Dec. 30; 5 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 31° to 50°F.; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Ten observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 74 (66 on foot, 6 by car, 2 by canoe); total party-miles, 241 (67 on foot, 171 by car, 3 by canoe). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Red-headed Woodpecker. Observers: Robert Barbee, Bruce and Pring Davenport, Kenneth Lawless, Nelson Lewis, Robert Merkel, Katherine Michie, Eileen

Stephens, Charles Stevens (compiler), Tom Wieboldt. The House Wren was seen by Merkel, the Pine Warbler by Stephens, and the Chipping Sparrow by Pring Davenport and Michie.

11. WARREN (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center near Keene, as described 1972).—Dec. 23; 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 26° to 52°F.; wind SW, 0-10 m.p.h.; 0.3 in. snow on ground, water partly open. Ten observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 58 (53 on foot, 5 by car); total party-miles, 182 (64 by foot, 118 by car). Observers: Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Barton, Jr.; Bruce Davenport, Kenneth Lawless, Robert Merkel, Eileen Stephens, Charles Stevens (compiler), Fred and Lina Whiteside, Tom Wieboldt. The Turkeys were seen by three different parties.

12. DARLINGTON HEIGHTS (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Darlington Heights Post Office).—Dec. 29; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 35° to 55°F.; wind 0-5 m.p.h.; ground wet, water open. Nineteen observers in 5 parties (including one at feeder). Total party-hours, 40 (33 on foot, 5 by car, 2 at feeder); total party-miles, 123 (25 by foot, 98 by car). Observers: Ruth Carson, Vera Copple (compiler), John and Thelma Dalmas, Bill Rickenson, Edith and Hall Driskill, Myrtle and Tom Drumheller, Margaret Dudley, Keith Fielder, Paul McQuarry, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore, Phyllis and Wyatt Murphy, Mattie Scruggs, Charles Sydnor, Margaret Watson. The Snow Geese were observed by Dickenson, Tom Drumheller, and Wyatt Murphy.

13. SWEET BRIAR (all points within a 3-mile diameter, center Sweet Briar College; fields and pastures 20%, mixed woods 30%, creek bottoms 30%, around buildings and barns 15%, lakes 5%).—Dec. 22; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear to overcast; temp. 18° to 35°F.; light wind; ground bare, water open. Ten observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 18 (on foot), total party-miles, 15 (on foot). Observers: Vicky Bates, Mary Blackwell, Jeanette Boone, Ernest and Mabel Edwards, Keith Fielder, Kay Macdonald, Paul McQuarry, Myriam Moore, Gertrude Prior (compiler).

14. LYNCHBURG (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Lynchburg College as described 1972).—Dec. 15; 3 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast with intermittent light rain changing to freezing rain in p.m.; temp. 29° to 36°F.; wind NW, 2-8 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop fair. Forty-two observers in 11 parties including 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 99 (79 on foot, 18 by car, 2 at feeders); total party-miles, 410 (65 by foot, 345 by car). Seen in area count week but not on count day: American Coot, Herring Gull. Observers: Laura Anthony, Frances Applegate, Michael Boatwright, Jeanette Boone, John Cacciapaglia, J. L. Carter, Ray Chandler, Sandra Chandler, Mary Coffey, John Crane, John and Thelma Dalmas, Virginia Delaney, Audree Dodd, Edith Driskill, Myrtle and Thomas Drumheller, Keith Fielder, R. S. Freer, Jo Hanenkrat, Roger Hill, Robina Jordan, Mary Lerner, Kay Macdonald, Kathy Markham, Paul McQuarry, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore (compiler), Phyllis and Wyatt Murphy, Gertrude Prior, Daniel Puckette, Joan Ricketts, Rosalie Rosser, Bobby Schamerhorn, H. J. Seyffert, Charles Sydnor, M. B. Tillotson, Margaret Watson, James Williams, Michael Wills, Grace Wiltshire (Lynchburg Bird Club and guests). The Eastern Wood Pewee was carefully observed and heard calling by Carter, the Murphys, Hill, and Thomas Drumheller.

15. DANVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Ballou Park, as described 1972; woodland 40%, fields and pastures 35%, residential and parkland 15%, streams and ponds 10%).—Dec. 23; 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clear; temp. 26° to 45°F.; wind variable, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water partly open. Wild food crop good. Nineteen observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 56 (37 on foot, 19 by car); total party-miles, 178 (48 by foot, 130 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler X Mallard hybrid, Spotted Sandpiper. Observers: Richard Bliss, Richard Bliss, Jr., Patricia and Russell Brachman, McLin Choate, Mary Conner, Fenton Day, Edward Fisher, Donna House-



holder, Mark Lassiter, Max Lassiter, Marsie Nufer, Frances Peirce, Spofford Whitaker, Mary, Nultie, Penultima and Plumer Wiseman (compilers), Gordon Woody. No details were submitted on the Black-capped Chickadees. The Golden-winged Warbler was carefully observed and all major field marks noted by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fisher.

16. BIG FLAT MOUNTAIN (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center on Pasture Fence Mountain and mostly in southern Shenandoah National Park, as described 1972).—Dec. 28; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 30° to 40°F.; wind SE, 0-10 m.p.h.; 0-3 inches snow, water partly open. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 19 (all on foot); total party-miles, 28 (all on foot). Observers: Robert Merkel, Charles Stevens (compiler). The Bewick's Wren was seen by Stevens.

17. ROCKINGHAM COUNTY (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center at Ottobine, as described 1972; open farmland and farm woodlots 55%, mixed Appalachian conifers and hardwoods in mountains 35%, lawn and shade trees in town 5%, cottonwood-sycamore riverbottoms 5%; elevation, 1160-3200 feet).—Dec. 22; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; temp. 8° to 25°F.; wind N, 1-3 m.p.h.; 3-6 inches of snow, waters partly open. Eleven observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 22 (8 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 179 (13 by foot, 166 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Common Raven. Observers: John and Lawrence Carpenter, Max Carpenter (compiler), Robert Eggleston, Hollen Helbert, Lowrey and Wallace Holthaus, Peter and Raymond Rapp, Michael Smith, Richard Smith. The Oldsquaws were seen by all the observers, whereas the Common Grackles and Swamp Sparrow were found by Eggleston and Lawrence Carpenter.

18. AUGUSTA COUNTY (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center intersection of county routes 780 and 781, as described 1972).—Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly cloudy in a.m., becoming overcast with intermittent light rain in p.m.; temp. 31° to 55°F.; wind SW, 0-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty-two observers in 7 parties including 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 56 (24 on foot, 32 by car, 5 at feeders); total party-miles, 367 (26 by foot, 341 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Dickcissel. Observers: Helen Angier, Corda Bott, Edith Burchfield, Brad Cabe, Paul Cabe, Thomas Cabe, Carolyn Falk, Chase Fitch, James Gum, Stanley Heatwole, Josephine King, Irene Larner, YuLee Larner, John Mehner (compiler), Walter Mehring, Arthur Mizzi, Isabel Obenschain, Julie Russell, Brian Scruby, James Sprunt, Ruth Snyder, Samuel Snyder. The light-phase Rough-legged Hawk was seen by King and Mehner and the Swamp Sparrow by Scruby and Ruth Snyder. The Cabes found the Dickcissel during count week with a flock of House Sparrows (exact date not given).

19. WAYNESBORO (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Sherando, as described 1971; open fields 45%, woodland 30%, ponds and streams 15%, residential 10%).—Dec. 15; 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. 25° to 35°F.; wind E, 0-5 m.p.h.; 1-3 inches snow, water partly open. Twenty-three observers in 8 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 65 (34 on foot, 26 by car, 5 at feeders); total party-miles, 337 (40 by foot, 297 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Dickcissel. Observers: Isabel Bosserman, Corda Bott, Brad, Paul, and Tom Cabe, Virginia Driver, Chase Fitch, James Gum, Betty Hausrath, John and Mozelle Henkel, Mrs. J. R. Henson, Irene Larner, Si and YuLee Larner, Jean Mehler, Isabel Obenschain, Julie Russell, Brian Scruby, Ruth Snyder (compiler), Sam Snyder, Charles Stevens, Betty Wilshusen. The Common Loon and Palm Warblers were seen by Stevens and the Yellow-rumped Warbler by the Cabes. Si and YuLee Larner observed the Chipping Sparrow with a flock of juncos.

20. LEXINGTON (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Washington and Lee University since 1929, as described 1972).—Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Partly cloudy becoming overcast with light rain in p.m.; temp. 32° to 44°F.; wind S, 0-5 m.p.h.;



ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 18 (14 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 93 (15 by foot, 78 by car). Observers: Judy and Kenneth Bradford, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ludt, Royster Lyle, Mrs. Allen Moger, Robert Paxton (compiler), George Tolley, Mrs. Edward Turner. The House Wren was seen by Kenneth Bradford and the Gray Catbird by Judy Bradford.

21. PEAKS OF OTTER (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Peaks of Otter Visitor Center, as described 1972).—Dec. 19; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mostly clear; temp. 12° to 22°F.; wind SW, 8-12 m.p.h.; 16-20 inches snow, water partly open, roads partly open. Wild food crop fair. Five observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 15 (8 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 45 (8 by foot, 37 by car). Observers: Garst Bishop, Almon O. English (compiler), Keith Fielder, Paul McQuarry, Gene Parker.

22. CLIFTON FORGE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Clifton Forge, NW to Valley Ridge, NE to Griffith, SW to Rich Patch Mines, including Douthat State Park, Iron Gate, and Glen Wilton; pastures 40%, woodland 35%, stream-sides 18%, cultivated fields 5%, residential 2%).—Dec. 16; 5 a.m. to 4 p.m. Overcast with moderate snow; temp. 30° to 36°F.; wind NW, 0-10 m.p.h.; 0-4 inches snow, water open. Wild food crop fair. Sixteen observers in 5 parties, 8 at feeders. Total party-hours, 34 (15 on foot, 19 by car); total party-miles, 169 (20 by foot, 149 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Pied-billed Grebe, Ruffed Grouse, Turkey, Hermit Thrush. Observers: Lois Caldwell, Alvin Croy, Steven Croy, Dave Hardy, Ed Kinser (compiler), Mr. and Mrs. A. E. LeHew, Bruce Olson, Amy Rice, Barbara Rice, Kevin Rice, Paul Rice, Jim Shires, Ambler Sutherland, Fred Thacker, Tim Truett. Both gulls were seen by the LeHews and Hardy and the Water Pipits by Kinser, Olson, and Truett.

23. ROANOKE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Wasena Bridge, central Roanoke Valley, including parts of surrounding mountains and southern Carvins Cove).—Dec. 15; 5:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Overcast; temp. 30° to 45°F.; wind SW, 5-30 m.p.h.; ground bare. Forty-two observers in 14 parties. Total party-hours, 90 (52 on foot, 38 by car); total party-miles, 570 (132 by foot, 438 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Redhead, Brown Thrasher, Snow Bunting. Observers: Charles Ames, W. P. Arthur, Margaret Brown, Carol Sue Burroughs, Edward Burroughs, Doris Clark, Foy Clark, Annie Dillard, John Eddy, Marian Eddy, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ellington, Martha Faw, Eunice Godfrey, Norma Harper, Raymond Harper, Rushia Harris, Lee Hawkins, Ellen Holtman, John Hudgins, Donald Huffman, Anderson Jordan, Teddy Jordan, Perry Kendig, Barry Kinzie, Janet Krakauer, Thomas Krakauer, Skippy Lyle, Carole Massart, Ernest Moore, Hazel Moore, Mrs. W. J. Nelson, Bill Opengari, Jane Opengari, John Pancake, Mike Purdy, Mary Ramsey, Kirk Richter, Suzanne Spede, Mrs. J. O. Stein, Julian Tinsley, Jr. (compiler), Max Travis. The Great Egret was seen by Massart, and Stein found the Black-billed Magpie on count day, though it had been seen and photographed by others during the preceding two months. The Red Crossbills were noted by Lyle and the Opengaris.

24. BLACKSBURG (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center near Linkous Store, as described 1972 with the addition of Radford Arsenal).—Dec. 19; 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mostly cloudy, becoming overcast in p.m.; temp. 15° to 35°F.; wind SSW, 0-2 m.p.h.; 3-8 inches snow, water partly open. Wild food crop good. Thirty-two observers, 28 in 11 parties, 4 at feeders. Total party-hours, 85 (48 on foot, 37 by car); total party-miles, 366 (50 by foot, 316 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Pintail. Observers: Curtis and Karen Adkisson, Bill Akers, Jean Ambrose, Bill Bradley, Dwight Chamberlain, Chris and Don Cochran, Dick Conner, Jim Craig, Charles Dachelet, Bob Downing, C. O. Handley, Charles Handley, Dick Harlow, Bob Hooper, Vincent Lucid, Anne Lyle, Burd McGinnes, Henry Mosby, John Murray (compiler), Bill Nance, Curtis Roane, Pat Rutherford, P. F.

Scanlon, Myron Shear, Joyce Simpkins, Ellison and Mary Linda Smyth, Connie Stone, Jim Whelan, Dave West. The Whistling Swan was seen by the Handley party.

25. TAZEWELL (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Four Way, as described 1972).—Dec. 31; 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast with rain, heavy in a.m.; temp. 46° to 56°F.; wind SW, 3-5 m.p.h. Twenty-two observers, 20 in 6 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 51 (17 on foot, 34 by car); total party-miles, 307 (24 by foot, 283 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Ruddy Duck, Bobwhite, Great Horned Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher. Observers: Joyce Buchanan, Turner Clinard, Sarah Cromer (compiler), Fred Dean, Fred Dean, Jr., Annella Greever, Jim Hurt, Madeline Hurt, Edwin Kinser, Louise Leslie, Pearl Leslie, Mark Mullins, Helen Parris, Jack Parris, Mauricio Schrader, Louise Shelton, Philip Shelton, Bob Speich, Jenny Surface, Harold Toms, Eddie Torrence, Nancy Ward. The Wood Duck was seen by Dean and Kinser, and Toms, Clinard, Speich, and Torrence found the Hooded Merganser. The Eastern Phoebe was noted by Jack Parris, Mullins, and Clinard and the Vesper Sparrows by Cromer, Dean, and Kinser. The Ruddy Ducks, a flock of seven, were seen three days before the count and one day afterwards by Kinser and others.

26. GLADE SPRING (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center at junction of routes 750 and 609; open fields and hedgerows 45%, mixed deciduous and pine woods 30%, river bottoms 13%, residential 7%, marshes and ponds 5%).—Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mostly cloudy to overcast with light, intermittent rain; temp. 32° to 43°F.; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Fifteen observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 44 (9 on foot, 33 by car, 2 at feeder); total party-miles, 230 (18 by foot, 212 by car). Observers: Elisabeth Aaron, Ellen Aaron, Lisa Aaron, Dorothy and Turner Clinard (compiler), Sarah Cromer, Fred Dean, Anton Decker, Annella Greever, Jim and Madeline Hurt, Ed Kinser, Mark Mullins, Mauricio Schrader, Jane White.

27. BRISTOL (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center junction Va. routes 647 and 654, as described 1972).—Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast with intermittent rain; temp. 37° to 45°F.; wind NE, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Eighteen observers, 15 in 7 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 43 (10 on foot, 30 by car, 3 by boat); total party-miles, 299 (16 by foot, 238 by car, 45 by boat). Observers: Judy Abbott, Rockwell Bingham (compiler), Rosemary Bingham, Mrs. W. W. Case, Wallace Coffey, Lelia Epperson, Kenneth Hale, Joseph Jackson, David McPeak, Conrad Ottenfeld, Helen Ottenfeld, A. E. Reynolds, Mary Smith, Thomas C. Smith, Enno vanGelder, Roger vanGelder, Diane Wilson, D. W. Yambert. The House Wren was reported by Wilson and the Chipping Sparrows by Jackson and Hale.

28. NICKELSVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Nickelsville, as described 1972).—Dec. 30; 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mostly clear; temp. 20° to 48°F.; wind NW, 3-7 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 45 (10 on foot, 34 by car, 1 at feeder); total party-miles, 102 (7 by foot, 95 by car). Seen in area count week but not on count day: Long-eared Owl. Observers: Joe and Thomas Finucane, Jeff Francisco, Garland, Grace, Homer, and Jean Osborne, Eddie Rudder, E. E. Scott (compiler). The Red-headed Woodpecker was found by Francisco and Scott and the Vesper Sparrow by the Osbornes. The Long-eared Owl, not seen on count day, remained in the area at least until 13 January 1974 and was seen by a number of observers, including Fred Alsop, Thomas Finucane, and E. E. Scott.

29. WISE COUNTY (all points within a 15-mile diameter, center Dorchester, as described 1972; deciduous woodland 40%, fields and pastures 25%, business and residential 21%, lakes and streams 12%, coniferous woodland 2%).—Dec. 15; 4:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast with intermittent snow and rain and some fog in

p.m.; temp. 30° to 45°F.; wind SSW, 10-25 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Wild food crop good. Seventeen observers in 7 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 58 (34 on foot, 24 by car); total party-miles, 272 (27 by foot, 245 by car). Seen in count area count week but not on count day: Red-shouldered Hawk. Observers: Bruce Carruth, Turner Clinard, Fred Dean, Evelyn Estes, Betty Gibson, Gaynelle Malesky, Mark Mullins, Dwight Peake, Richard Peake (compiler), Mauricio Schrader, Philip Shelton, Rockwell Smith, Gladys Stallard, Joseph Straughan, Tommy Straughan, Hazel Thrower, Edward Torrence (Cumberland Bird Club and guests). The Great Blue Heron was seen by Dean and Torrence and the Eastern Phoebe by the same observers plus Richard Peake. Schrader and Shelton saw the Common Ravens separately and Richard Peake the Red Crossbill and the Chipping Sparrow. The Savannah Sparrows were observed carefully by Dean, Torrence, and Richard Peake, while three different parties reported the Vesper Sparrows.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

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## FIELD NOTES FROM EXTREME SOUTHCENTRAL VIRGINIA

J. MERRILL LYNCH

During June 1973 I had the opportunity to do some field work in Greenville, Brunswick, and Mecklenburg Counties, Virginia, an area—judging from published records—that has been neglected ornithologically in recent years. The following records are the results of two June trips to this area, all but the tanagers occurring on 10 June 1973 in connection with the running of the Brodnax Breeding Bird Survey for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in southwestern Brunswick and southcentral Mecklenburg Counties.

### MALLARD, *Anas platyrhynchos*

A female with a brood of ten young was seen in a remote cove on the John H. Kerr Reservoir at the Kerr dam. The duck showed no signs of being a captive or tame individual. This is an unusual breeding record for the extreme southern Piedmont.

### RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, *Mergus serrator*

Three females and one male were observed with a spotting scope resting on the Kerr Reservoir at the dam. These birds were apparently late spring migrants, though nonbreeding summering birds are not unknown in eastern Virginia.

### RING-BILLED GULL, *Larus delawarensis*

A flock of seven immatures was observed at the Kerr dam. Although undoubtedly late migrants, the status of this species as a migrant in this area is not well known.

### CASPIAN TERN, *Hydroprogne caspia*

Two birds in apparently winter plumage (streaked foreheads) were observed in flight and resting on a sandbar with gulls at the Kerr dam. These must have also been late spring transients.

CLIFF SWALLOW, *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

I found at least 15 to 20 pairs nesting on Kerr dam during my visit there on 10 June. Micou Browne and Paul Sykes reported 183 pairs nesting in the Kerr Reservoir area in 1967 (*Audubon Field Notes*, 21: 554, 1967).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE, *Lanius ludovicianus*

This species was surprisingly frequent on the Brodnax Breeding Bird Survey route. Eight were recorded along the 24.5-mile route.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, *Mniotilta varia*

A singing territorial male was found near Bracey, Mecklenburg County. This species seems to be a very scarce and local breeder in this region.

SCARLET TANAGER, *Piranga olivacea*

Two singing males were seen near Skippers, Greenville County, on 7 June. This species has recently begun expanding its range eastward through the southern Piedmont and is now present in small numbers where it was totally absent three years ago. This area is on the western edge of the Coastal Plain.

539 Henry Street, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina 27870

## PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS ON THE UPPER JAMES RIVER

BILL J. OPENGARI

On a James River float trip from Eagle Rock to below Salt Petre Cave, a trip of about eight miles, Prothonotary Warblers, *Protonotaria citrea*, were observed and a nest site discovered by Barry Kinzie and myself on 27 June 1973. Eagle Rock is in Botetourt County on U. S. Route 220, about 13 miles south of Clifton Forge, where the Jackson River and the Cowpasture form the James. My wife and I had earlier that summer seen Prothonotary Warblers along the James but had not seen any nesting activity.

On the 27 June trip five Prothonotary Warblers were observed and two others identified by song at an interval of three-quarters to one and half miles between sightings along the river. The warblers were found on islands or shorelines that held dead or flood-damaged young sycamore trees. Many of the trees contained nest holes. On a small island a nest hole was found in a sycamore tree that was broken off at about eight feet. A Prothonotary was heard singing nearby, and later one of the adults was seen carrying food into the nest hole. The bird was yellow with blue wings and olive back. On 28 June Barry Kinzie photographed the warblers from a blind as the feeding of the young continued. When the young left the nest hole was not determined.

This is apparently only the second area west of the Blue Ridge where this bird has been found nesting (see *Raven*, 38: 54, 1967).

2735 Cedarhurst Avenue, N.W., Roanoke, Virginia 24012

SUMMER OCCURRENCE OF THE EVENING GROSBEAK IN  
GILES COUNTY, VIRGINIA

DAVID W. JOHNSTON

While teaching ornithology at the Mountain Lake Biological Station (elevation 3800 feet) in Giles County, Virginia, in 1973, I exposed my students to the use of mist nets as a tool in studying birds in the hand as well as banding of birds. One net, placed across a small stream bordered with hemlocks and deciduous trees, yielded a surprising catch on 26 June, namely, a female Evening Grosbeak, *Hesperiphona vespertina*. The bird, evidently an adult, showed no indication of breeding (i.e., no incubation patch), was photographed, banded (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service band number 791-44767), and released.

At the time we neither saw nor heard any other grosbeaks of this species. However, on 30 June approximately 200 yards from the net site, John Bazuin and I saw two individuals (both apparently females) of this species as they perched briefly high in some deciduous trees beside the main laboratory building.<sup>1</sup> We record this interesting encounter here because during the breeding season extralimital occurrences of this erratic species are rare.

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BACK BAY FIELD TRIP

JOHN PANCAKE

Despite the first gasless Sunday, more than 46 persons arrived in Virginia Beach to visit Back Bay and Craney Island on 1-2 December 1973. The weatherman rewarded them with bright, clear skies, broken more often by the honks and whistles of waterfowl than by clouds.

The Snow Geese at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge put on a display which was, as always, more impressive to visitors from points inland. (As the geese whirled against the blue, one Tidewater resident was heard ho-humming and speculating on the possibility of a yellowlegs in the next impoundment.) Fifteen species of ducks were reported at Back Bay, including the Common Goldeneye, Oldsquaw, Redhead, and Canvasback, and there were many Gannets and a heavy Laughing Gull migration offshore.

Sunday's trip to Craney Island turned up several more unusual birds, including two flocks of Snow Buntings, at least 20 Lapland Longspurs, a flock of 66 American Avocets, and a Western Grebe. Thirteen species of ducks were recorded, including the Green-winged Teal, which was not seen at Back Bay.

Fincastle, Virginia 24090

## REVIEWS

*How to Talk to Birds.* By Richard C. Davids. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1972: 242 pages including photographs. Price, \$6.95.

The complete title of this book is *How to Talk to Birds and Other Uncommon Ways of Enjoying Nature the Year Round*. If you buy this book expecting a compilation of facts on calling birds, you will be disappointed. If you look at the complete title of the book, then you will not be befuddled when you read "how to grow moths in your closet," or "the mystery of the Mima mounds," or "how to hunt deer successfully." Perhaps these are not chapters dealing completely with birds, but then aren't birders curious about the mysteries of all of nature? If not, they should be.

Mr. Richard Davids has written this book in a very warm and personal style that makes you feel that you have made a new friend when you finish the book. He has been a self-confessed nature lover from the age of seven. *How to Talk to Birds* not only reveals his love of nature but also his awareness of the schemes of nature. In fact, he wrote the first textbook on conservation ever published in the United States. His philosophy of life is reflected throughout the book . . . all of life is beautiful and mysterious and it is waiting for each of us—to see and to solve. Whether you are a birder or a butterfly nut or a hunter or lover of all of nature you will enjoy reading *How to Talk to Birds* by Richard C. Davids.

Sara L. Cramer

*The Dictionary of American Bird Names.* By Ernest A. Choate. Gambit, Incorporated, Boston, 1973: 261 pages and illustrations. Price, \$6.95.

Having recently provided a rather caustic review of Gruson's *Words for Birds in The Raven*, I am happy to discuss a book that admirably presents the aid that Gruson fell far short of providing. This book is Ernest A. Choate's *The Dictionary of American Bird Names*, published by Gambit, Incorporated. Choate gives the English and Latin names of every American species listed in the fifth edition of the *Check-list* of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Unlike *Words for Birds*, Choate's work is divided into three major sections: common names, scientific names, and biographical appendix. Thus one need not hunt through the entire book to find information. Also of help are a selected bibliography and an English/Latin glossary that enables a reader quickly to find the scientific name of a bird whose common name he possesses. In addition, the entries in Choate's text are suitably cross-indexed. All in all, *American Bird Names* has been designed for the ease of the reader.

Though Choate includes many picturesque anecdotes and other entertaining bits of information, he does not sacrifice accuracy in order to embellish his etymologies as Gruson does. Choate's clarity of style aids in the effectiveness of his presentation. An example is his discussion of the generic name of the Osprey, *Pandion*. Quickly and clearly he tells the mythological story of Procne, Philomel, and Tereus; had the scientist who created a new genus for the Osprey known his mythology, he would have created the genus *Tereus* rather than *Pandion*, because Tereus was changed to a hawk to chase the swallow, Procne, and the nightingale, Philomel. In noting that Linnaeus gave the name Phaeton, inept son of the sun god, to the tropic-birds, Choate comments: "Just why

such superb flyers as the tropic birds should have to bear the name of one most noted for ineptness in the air can be explained by giving credit to Linnaeus for a wry sense of humor."

Though Choate's book lacks the titillating explanations to be found in Gruson's *Words for Birds*, yet *The Dictionary of American Bird Names* will definitely appeal more to those persons who desire an accurate, usable reference work. Every serious birder will want to have this book on his shelf.

Richard H. Peake

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### CONSERVATION CORNER SURFACE MINING: LOOK AWAY, VIRGINIA?

RICHARD H. PEAKE

Recently W. E. Guckert, director of the Pennsylvania Mine Reclamation Bureau, visited surface mining sites in Wise County, Virginia. Terming these "a disgrace to the American intelligence," he claimed that even the worst reclamation jobs in Pennsylvania look better "than the best you have down here."

Surface mining or strip mining refers to the extraction of minerals from the earth by removing layers of soil and rock covering the mineral deposit by means of heavy equipment. Reclamation is the term used to describe whatever is done to the land once the minerals have been removed. Borrow pits from which sand has been taken are familiar sights in coastal Virginia; rock quarries abound elsewhere. For the most part, though, surface mining in Virginia has been confined to coal, and the coalfields are in the Cumberlands—in Buchanan, Dickinson, Wise, and a few surrounding counties.

Virginians today are perhaps a bit more knowledgeable about strip mining than they were in 1966, when the first legislation to control surface mining was enacted, or in 1972, when revised legislation regulating "stripping" came through the General Assembly in emasculated form despite monumental efforts by the industry to defeat the bill altogether. Now, in 1974, after a study by a legislative committee loaded from the beginning in favor of the industry, the General Assembly has passed a bill that does very little to improve the situation—in fact, weakens one key provision of the old law. Heretofore, a miner who forfeited his bond posted before his beginning a stripping operation could never again mine in Virginia. Now he can, if he appeals and receives a favorable judgment. A few delegates from the coal counties have time and again managed to block efforts to obtain effective legislation, so that the Virginia law today is weaker than similar laws in *all* neighboring states. Virginians have ignored the destruction in the Cumberlands.

What are the consequences? The Pound River and the Pound Reservoir are in effect dead as a result of acid and heavy metal drainage; downstream J. W. Flannagan Reservoir is in danger. Along the Pound, where a large population of Willow Flycatchers flourished a few years ago, the *fitz-brew* call of this species can be heard only on some unaffected tributary streams. From the air, the Cumberlands resemble the mountains of the moon.



It is true that strip mines open up the forest and thus provide great variety of bird habitat once plant succession has begun. In fact, the best all-around birding I know of in Wise County is to be found on the Clinch Valley College grounds, parts of which were stripped and then abandoned without reclamation over 20 years ago. But it is a dubious blessing to trade Swainson's Warblers for chats, Worm-eating Warblers for Prairie Warblers, or Scarlet Tanagers for Horned Larks.

Probably the only hope for the environment of the coal counties is an effective federal strip-mining law. In 1968 permits on active strip mines in Virginia numbered 105; today there are 545 active operations encompassing 55,558 acres. When these jobs have ended, nearly 75,000 acres of Virginia will have been stripped for coal. Strippable coal is not found in Virginia east of the Cumberlands; yet other minerals are. Already there has been talk of strip mining near Green Springs and in the upper Shenandoah Valley. Unless Virginians heed the devastation that has occurred in the Cumberlands and enact stringent controls of strip mining, they one day may not be able to look away from the strip mines in their own back yards.

Clinch Valley College, Wise, Virginia 24293

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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, has been revised to February 1974. The number in parentheses after the chapter name is the approximate total number of members of that chapter.

1. Augusta Bird Club (100), Staunton-Waynesboro
2. Cape Henry Audubon Society (160), Norfolk
3. Charlottesville-Albemarle Bird Club (85), Charlottesville
4. Clinch Valley Bird Club (20), Tazewell
5. Cumberland Bird Club (24), Wise
6. Danville Bird Club (24), Danville
7. Hampton Roads Bird Club (82), Newport News-Hampton
8. Lynchburg Bird Club (190), Lynchburg
9. Marion Bird Club (17), Marion
10. New River Valley Bird Club (18), Blacksburg-Radford
11. Northern Virginia Chapter (125), Arlington-Fairfax
12. Richmond Audubon Society (215), Richmond
13. Roanoke Valley Bird Club (135), Roanoke-Salem
14. Rockbridge Bird Club (10), Lexington
15. Spring Creek Bird Club (20), Darlington Heights

## NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY F. R. SCOTT

**MOUNTAIN LAKE OBSERVATIONS.** During the VSO annual meeting at Mountain Lake, Giles County, Virginia, 1-3 June 1973 (see *Raven*, 44: 50-53, 1973), a number of interesting field observations were made, some of which are noted below.

*American Woodcock.* Five full-grown birds were found together in a white pine thicket at Little Meadows (elevation 3100 feet) on 2 June by C. O. Handley, Jr., and others. Possibly these were a female with a brood of four young.

*Red-breasted Nuthatch.* A pair was seen at Little Meadows on 2 June (C. O. Handley, Jr., *et al.*) and 3 June (F. R. Scott, *et al.*), an unusual summer record here.

*Brown Creeper.* There were at least three singing males in the Little Meadows area during the meeting period, and two occupied nests were found here. On 2 June adults were seen entering and leaving a nest 20 feet up behind some loose bark on a dead white pine (Ruth Murray, Gertrude Prior, C. O. Handley, Jr., *et al.*). On 3 June another pair was found feeding young in a nest 18 inches off the ground behind the bark of a dead white oak (D. S. Messersmith *et al.*). Many observers were watching as one of the nuthatches mentioned above tried to enter this nest, only to be chased off by one of the creepers!

*Winter Wren.* A male was heard singing a number of times along War Spur Branch (elevation 3400 feet) on 1 June (F. R. Scott).

*Blue-winged Warbler.* J. W. Murray and others found a singing male in Poverty Hollow, northern Montgomery County (elevation about 2000 feet) on 3 June. Murray had previously found presumably the same bird here during May 1973 and later on 14 June, but it could not be located after that date.

*Purple Finch.* C. O. Handley, Jr., found a singing male at the Mountain Lake Biological Station (elevation 3800 feet) on 3 June, apparently the first summer record for this area.

*Red Crossbill.* Two were noted flying over Little Meadows on 3 June (F. R. Scott).

**BUFF-BREASTS RECORDED.** Two Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported in Virginia during the fall of 1972. C. C. Steirly saw one at Hog Island Refuge, Surry County, on 26 August, and another was found at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on 4 September by R. L. Ake and Bill Blakeslee.

**WINTER AVOCET CONCENTRATION.** W. W. Fogleman counted 60 American Avocets at Craney Island, Portsmouth, Virginia, on 7 January 1973, an unprecedented winter count for the state. These birds apparently did not remain here but a short time, as they were not reported by other observers.

**LATE HUMMINGBIRD SEEN.** A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was seen in Virginia Beach by Mrs. Betty Lancaster on 18 November 1972, an extraordinarily late date.

**WESTERN KINGBIRDS INLAND.** Two Western Kingbirds were present at Capahosic, Gloucester County, Virginia, from 28 October to 2 November 1972 according to Mrs. M. B. Peacock. Although fairly regularly recorded on the coast, this species is quite rare inland.

**RAVEN IN DOWNTOWN SALEM.** Perry F. Kendig observed a Common Raven in downtown Salem, Virginia, on 2 April 1973. The bird was flapping and soaring no more than one or two hundred feet over the intersection of South College Avenue and Thompson Memorial Drive.

**PINE GROSBEAKS IN SHENANDOAH PARK.** John B. Bazuin, Jr., found 4 Pine Grosbeaks, 2 males and 2 females, in Shenandoah National Park on 18 February 1973. The location was along the Appalachian Trail about a half mile north of Big Meadows in a patch of hemlocks and pines.

**LARK SPARROW INLAND.** Claire and James Eike observed a Lark Sparrow at their home near Clifton, Fairfax County, Virginia, on 3 October 1972. They were able to watch it for about 5 minutes.

**CORRIGENDUM.** Delete reference to Cedar Waxwing feeding young at Laurel Bed Lake, Virginia, on 17 June 1972 (*Raven*, 44: 33, 1973). On retrospect it now seems more probable to the observers that the occurrence represented the well-known courtship behavior that adults of this species engage in.

# 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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## EFFECTS OF ROOSTING COMMON GRACKLES ON A LOBLOLLY PINE PLANTATION

C. C. STEIRLY

Many bird books have extolled the virtue of birds and their beneficial relationship to the forests. Much of this is generally true; however, in serious outbreaks of forest insects there usually aren't enough birds around where and when the forester or wildland manager wants them. The pages of Forbush, McAttee, Eaton, and a host of other close observers indicate that birds are beneficial to forests and should be given protection and encouraged to remain in the woods through the erection of suitable nest boxes and the leaving of occasional decadent trees and snags for the hole nesters. The birds of prey exert considerable control over the population of small rodents which are in many cases injurious to the seedlings of small saplings of desirable trees. Nowadays, too, more and more people attach an aesthetic rather than an economic value to the birds of woodlands. All of this is of course good, and it is to be hoped that such attitudes toward birdlife will increase.

Now and then, however, the injurious effects of birds are brought to our attention, and most ornithologists and amateur bird watchers fail to come forward with suggested controls or even more than bird book information on the status of a given bird pest in a local area. These things are a bit embarrassing to the local bird watcher with any reputation as such.

In a recent early April the writer was called to investigate a "blackbird" situation in a 16-year-old loblolly pine plantation in Dinwiddie County, a mile west of Petersburg, one that he had helped start in 1957. The property manager had noticed many of the pines turning brown after rather heavy winter usage as a roost by "millions" of blackbirds. Thus for the first time in some 40 years experience in forestry in several forest regions, the writer became aware of the adverse effects of the impact of roosting birds on units of valuable forest growth.

A quick examination revealed that some six to eight acres in the interior of the 20-acre plantation were heavily damaged. Most of the pines had already lost many needles, and those remaining were completely brown. Some life was evident for the green buds on the terminals and lateral branches seemed to be intact and green. Were it not for the large accumulation of pine needles on the forest floor, one would have assumed that a forest fire had swept through this part of the plantation.

The writer soon identified the "blackbirds" as Common Grackles, *Quiscalus quiscula*, for there was a partly decomposed corpse about every 30 feet or so. Here and there a dead Starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*, was found—perhaps two percent of the total of the dead birds. Inquiries of people living nearby indicated that in the winter of 1971-72 the grackles had begun to use the area at night. Then during the winter of 1972-73 the flock sizes were vastly increased; another of these tales was of a column of blackbirds extended from the horizon to the focal point of the roost.

Underneath the layer of newly fallen pine needles there was a layer of bird excrement about a half an inch thick resting upon the leaf litter of the forest floor. It was this accumulation of droppings that was causing the damage and death of the pines. A number of soils, ecology, and plant physiology text books were referred to. All seemed to point toward an excess of nitrogenous matter,

and in fact a soils textbook suggested that this was the one fertilizer element that could be overapplied and with detrimental effects to the vegetation. Of course none of the books suggested an antidote. In fact all of them pointed to the problems of obtaining and retaining nitrates in the soil.

The writer, in following up a few leads, found a reference to an article in the April 1933 *Journal of Forestry* entitled "Forest Plantation Injured by Roosting Birds" by a forest ecologist. This was a scientific account of a similar incident in a 20-year-old white pine plantation in New York State. The author merely commented that the damage, which killed most of the trees outright, was caused by blackbirds, Starlings, cowbirds, etc.

Although the author didn't precisely identify the birds (an ecologist cannot get bogged down on every detail), he did make rather detailed soil studies within the roost area and in an unaffected area in the same plantation. The pH or soil reaction (an indication of acidity or hydrogen-ion concentration) in the roost area was 5.27, while that in the normal area was 5.29, a difference of no great significance. The accumulation of nitrate nitrogen was the crux of the situation, for in the roost area he found 394 parts per million of nitrate nitrogen but only 22 ppm in the normal area. The balance of his article was on suggested control measures to prevent the birds from using the area for this was in a watershed forest for a city water supply.

As of this writing the writer is uncertain as to whether the loblolly pines will die or recover. One of the hardest tasks for a forester is to say *yes* or *no* whether a stand of trees will live or die. It is usually a case of wait and see, and considering the experiences of the medical profession, the foresters do not have such a bad batting average on tree mortality prognostications.

In an attempt to bring the stand through, a thinning has been prescribed to give the better trees and those with more green buds a better chance to survive. Also the damaged trees, if fated to die, will be salvaged as pulpwood with a considerable monetary return to the landowner, and it is felt that in heavily thinning the area it will not be suitable as a grackle roost next winter.

Bird lovers who think that birds do only good are invited to come down and walk around in some six or eight acres that is not unlike the bottom of a bird cage. The writer was birdy enough to check each corpse for bird bands but found none.

P.O. Box 198, Waverly, Virginia 23890

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## UNUSUAL WATER BIRDS IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

ISABEL W. OBENSCHAIN

The heavy rains that hit the Valley of Virginia in 1972 caused an unusual rise in the water table of this limestone region and resulted in a number of temporary rain ponds and lakes. The most impressive of these was one that covered over 100 acres behind Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church near Mt. Meridian, northeastern Augusta County. Between 3 November 1972 and early January 1973 members of the Augusta Bird Club found 14 species of ducks (including swans) and several other kinds of water birds. The size of the lake



was such that it was quite impossible to get complete counts of all species present, and undoubtedly many were missed.

The following three species were especially significant for this valley county.

WHISTLING SWAN, *Olor columbianus*

Mozelle Henkel found one of this species here first on 8 November, and seven were seen 11-15 November. Maximum numbers of 34 were noted on 18-19 November by many observers, including John Mehner, James Sprunt, YuLee Larner, and other members of the club. Thirty to 31 were present from 29 November to 9 December (Max Carpenter *et al.*), and single birds were seen 3 and 7 January 1973 (Isabel Obenschain).

FULVOUS TREE DUCK, *Dendrocygnus bicolor*

Six of these birds were found here on 6 December (Mozelle Henkel), and eight were present 8-14 December (John Mehner, Max Carpenter, Ruth Snyder, and many others). They were photographed by John Carpenter on 9 December.

DUNLIN, *Calidris alpina*

This bird was noted three times: two on 3 November (Larner and Obenschain), 25 on 4 November (Obenschain), and three on 13 November (Obenschain).

Other species of particular interest included a Common Loon on 9 December (John and Max Carpenter,) 116 Green-winged Teal from 25 November to 6 December (Henkel *et al.*), three Shovelers on 29 November (Larner and Obenschain), 12 Canvasbacks on 18 November (Mehner *et al.*), peak counts of 100 American Coots and 100 Greater Yellowlegs on 3 November (Larner and Obenschain), and up to eight Ring-billed Gulls between 18 November and 9 December (Mehner, Carpenters, *et al.*).

920 Selma Boulevard, Staunton, Virginia 24401

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## FIRST GREAT CORMORANT SPECIMEN FROM VIRGINIA

GILBERT S. GRANT

On the morning of 29 October 1972 I found a dead Great Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax c. carbo*, on the beach at Lynhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach, Virginia. The specimen, an immature female, was salvaged as a study skin and deposited into the collection of the National Museum of Natural History (USNM No. 566681). Mrs. Roxie C. Laybourne kindly confirmed the identification of this specimen.

This appears to represent the first documented specimen for Virginia, although numerous sight records exist for the state. In fact, another immature Great Cormorant was seen later that same day by Robert L. Ake rather than prior to my finding the specimen as reported in *American Birds* (27: 36, 1973).

21 Alabama Avenue, Portsmouth, Virginia 23702

## A SORA RAIL ON TINKER MOUNTAIN

RICHARD N. CONNER, VINCENT J. LUCID

AND

IRVINE D. PRATHER

On 23 September 1973 at 1200 EST a Sora Rail, *Porzana carolina*, was encountered on the Appalachian Trail along the crest of the ridge of Tinker Mountain, 3 miles west of Roanoke, Virginia. The altitude at this point is 1950 feet, 780 feet above and one-half mile east of Carvin Cove Reservoir.

The Rail was crouched under a mountain laurel between two large rocks. As we approached, the bird flushed, only to land in the open upon a rock 5 feet in front of us. The Sora looked at us for approximately 15 seconds, then flew to a sourwood tree about 10 feet away, where it remained at least until we departed 5 minutes later.

Bent (Life histories of North American marsh birds, 1926: 310), quoting E. H. Forbush, reported that during fall migrations Sora Rails have been found as high as 12,500 feet in the mountains of western United States. It is suspected that the Sora Rail on Tinker Mountain was either a migrant which had departed recently from Carvin Cove Reservoir, or perhaps one that had picked an extremely dry environment for a rest stop. A third possibility is that the bird may have suffered a minor collision with a nearby electric powerline tower. Exhaustion or collision might explain the unusual rest location.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

## GOLDEN PLOVERS IN BOTETOURT COUNTY

JOHN PANCAKE

Four American Golden Plovers, *Pluvialis dominica*, were found in a field near Interstate 81 about 8 miles south of Buchanan in Botetourt County, Virginia, on 6 October 1973 by John Pancake. The birds were later seen by several others, including Bill and Jane Opengari, Barry Kinzie, and Mike Dowdy. Kinzie was able to get some good photographs of the birds. Eleven birds were noted on several later occasions, and Opengari observed the maximum of 12 on 14 October. The last observation was of two on 25 October.

Other shorebirds in the same field on 6 and 7 October were two Common Snipe, *Capella gallinago*, a Lesser Yellowlegs, *Tringa flavipes*, a Pectoral Sandpiper, *Calidris melanotos*, and a Semipalmated Sandpiper, *Calidris pusilla*.

Fincastle, Virginia 24090

## AN EASTERN SHORE CURLEW SANDPIPER

CHARLES R. VAUGHN

At the far north end of Wallops Island, Virginia, is a soft, sandy mud flat which, at normal high tide, still has about one acre exposed. In addition, there are spits of more pure solid sand which will support a vehicle. From about

April through October this area supports a transient population of shorebirds sometimes ranging up to several thousand.

On 20 August 1973 I drove a truck to this area. After stopping and walking around for about 15 minutes I noticed a shorebird with reddish brown on the breast, somewhat reminiscent of a Red Knot. The bird was resting with bill and head tucked against its back. Since knots are usually gregarious at this time of year and there were no other similar looking birds in the vicinity, I proceeded to flush the bird for further observation. As the bird lifted its head the bill gave the appearance of a definite decurvature. As I approached closer the bird flew off with the hundreds of peeps in the area and was lost before a clear view of the rump could be obtained. Further reflection on the field marks convinced me the bird was a Curlew Sandpiper, *Calidris ferruginea* (Pontoppidan), although without a second good look I was unwilling to report it as such.

On 25 August I returned to Wallops Island with members of the Washington, D.C., based Audubon Naturalist Society. As we walked into the same area, the bird was immediately apparent as the only red-breasted shorebird present. Careful approach caused the bird to hold its head out so the bill could be studied in detail. It was definitely decurved and somewhat thinner looking than that of a Dunlin. As the bird flushed, it flew directly away so its white rump and tail were clearly seen.

The bird stayed in the area the entire 45 minutes we were present. The only activity of the bird when not being disturbed was resting. It always rested alone, never seeking close company with any other birds in the area. At the same time within the several-acre region were 4 Dunlin, 600+ Sanderlings, 500 Western Sandpipers, 50 Ruddy Turnstones, 25 Black-bellied Plovers, 100+ Semipalmated Plovers, 20 Wilson's Plovers, 125 American Oystercatchers, seven Whimbrel, 20 dowitchers, and several hundred more Western or semipalmated Sandpipers. The Curlew Sandpiper was by far the least wary of any of the shorebirds except, perhaps, for the Wilson's Plovers. When approached to within about 15 meters, the bird would start to walk away and, if forced to fly, would scarcely move 50 meters and set down with its head immediately placed on its back to rest. Observers on this day totaled eight people including Vee Weegle (Washington, D.C.), Steve Allen (Towson, Md.), Harry Jones (Alexandria, Va.), Bob Flescher (California), and myself.

The next day I returned with Vee Weegle and Robert L. Ake (Norfolk) and once again found the bird. At that time I took several 35mm color slides, one of which is sufficiently detailed for identification. This constitutes the first photographic record of the Curlew Sandpiper for Virginia.

1306 Frederick Avenue, Salisbury, Maryland 21801

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## RINGED TURTLE DOVES NESTING NEAR WILLIAMSBURG

BILL WILLIAMS

The Monk Parakeet has stolen the show in recent exotic bird reports. However, this may not be the only foreigner on the move. In early March 1972 it came to the attention of Mitchell A. Byrd that there was an unusual pair of

whitish-colored doves taking up residency around a bird feeder in a mildly populated area off Route 31 between Williamsburg and Jamestown, Virginia.

Investigation proved the birds to be Ringed Turtle Doves, *Streptopelia risoria*, which show disjunct populations in Miami and Los Angeles, being designated cage birds. This dove is distinguished from the Mourning Dove by its larger size and its creamy white color. Across the nape of the neck is a single black stripe; hence the name Ringed Turtle Dove is applied.

It was suspected by the behavior of the pair that they were nesting and subsequent observations proved this to be quite true. The birds had constructed a typical dove nest of scattered twigs in the embrace of some small limbs in a Virginia pine, *Pinus virginiana*, approximately 15 feet off the ground.

As it turned out there were two young in the nest, and their antics led to bruises and scrapes to Dr. Byrd and Gary Seek who were called on whenever the youngsters fell from the nest, which happened at least two different times. Such falls eventually killed one of the young, which Dr. Byrd collected on 12 March. When last seen by us on 15 March, the other young was within a week or so of being able to leave the nest. It was clad in fluffy feathers the color of the adults, which were easily seen perched in trees adjacent to the nest tree. Two days later on 17 March Dr. Byrd's ornithology class observed the parents brooding. Whether this young actually fledged or not is unknown.

Unfortunately the doves were not reported during the spring of 1973. It would be pleasing to think that they did return, and since the owner of the feeder believes there were actually four birds in the area during March 1972, they may very well be around locally and keeping to themselves. Such a striking bird would be welcome and appreciated by anyone fortunate enough to observe them.

The origin of the doves is purely speculative. Most likely they were released or escaped cage birds. However, their feral nesting lends a glimmer of hope that in fact these may be an adventurous species seeking new areas for expansion. If the one young had been proved to fledge, then there would be some evidence to support this beyond the fact that the doves actually attempted nesting and raising of young.

157 West Queens Drive, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

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## STRANGE BEHAVIOR IN A YELLOW-THROATED VIREO

CONNIE STONE

During the summer of 1973 I observed strange behavior on the part of a Yellow-throated Vireo, *Vireo flavifrons*, near our cottage on Claytor Lake in Pulaski County, Virginia.

Early in the spring both the Red-eyed Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus*, and the Yellow-throated Vireo were very much in evidence in our yard. The Yellow-throated sang loudly from the top of a mature tulip poplar which dominates our front deck. The Red-eyed Vireos flitted about our side yard and finally decided to build in a maple tree not ten feet from the kitchen window. I watched the progress of the nest which, although the foliage was fairly dense, was still

visible from two of our windows. At no time did I see the nest of the Yellow-throated Vireo nor did I ever see two of that species at the same time, so I do not know whether or not he mated. I often heard the call and occasionally would get a glimpse of one of this species feeding in the tree tops.

The Red-eyed Vireos came and went to their nest, scolding me when I went near their territory. On 26 June 1973 the birds and nestlings were quite vocal. I could see heads popping out of the nest and decided to dedicate the afternoon hopefully to watching the young venture forth. I had a guest at the time and we both watched the drama. Much to my surprise I discovered a third bird was also in the act—trying to feed the nestlings. The Red-eyed Vireos were fighting off an intruder who was certainly not of the same species. I observed it carefully and identified a Yellow-throated Vireo—male or female? When both Red-eyes were away from the nest, it would sneak in and feed the most aggressive nestling.

About an hour after we started watching, the first young got out on a limb and worked its way up the tree. It appeared definitely of the Red-eyed species—a miniature of the adults. The second nestling was not as well developed and not a Red-eyed Vireo. It was quite vocal and gray, and when it got out of the nest, it was unable to cling to the branch and fell to the ground—a Brown-headed Cowbird, *Molothrus ater*. All three adults were distraught. I went out to pick up the cowbird and was divebombed by all three. I put it back on a branch anxious to see what would happen.

When the Red-eyed Vireos were feeding the young Red-eye, the Yellow-throated would feed the cowbird. I watched it feed both species. The Red-eyed fledgling was enticed to another tree where it was followed by the Yellow-throated provider. When I last observed the birds in late afternoon, the Red-eyed Vireos were feeding the helpless cowbird. I had replaced it several times and finally put it in some low bushes farther from the house and nearer its Red-eyed nestmate. The Yellow-throated Vireo was still attending the Red-eyed fledgling with the Red-eyed adults attacking it whenever they had time to notice this activity.

There were no more young in the nest. I heard the Red-eyed Vireos call for several days but did not see the Yellow-throated Vireo in our vicinity after 26 June.

101 West Eighth Street, Radford, Virginia 24141

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## DICKCISSELS NESTING IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

RUTH S. SNYDER

Mrs. Virginia Driver deserves the credit for finding singing Dickcissels, *Spiza americana*, in early July 1973 in two locations in Augusta County outside Waynesboro, Virginia. I went with her on 13 July and confirmed her identification.

On 19 July James Gum, Mozelle Henkel, Brian Scruby, and I went to the two places. At the first, in a young orchard off Route 635, James found a nest with 4 eggs. He practically had to push the female off to see the eggs. At the other location, along a lane off Route 664 between Lyndhurst and Sherando,

he found a nest in a blackberry bush. It contained 3 feathered young with the female waiting close by to feed them and the male overhead. Both nests were between 3 and 4 feet off the ground and constructed of the same materials. Later, one nest went to John Mehner, of Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, and the other to Ralph Hostetter, of Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg.

On 23 July James Gum, Isabel Obenschain, Julie Russell, Brian Scruby, and I went back and discovered one cold egg left in the first nest and the young gone from the other. A few days later Mozelle Henkel heard a Dickcissel in the vicinity of the first nest.

There have been other recent Dickcissel sightings in this area. Eugene Kerby had one at his feeder north of Waynesboro near U.S. Route 340 from 6 December 1973 through 6 March 1974. By March it had assumed an obvious male plumage. I saw another at the home of Mrs. Elsa Hauser on Afton Mountain near Swannanoa on 10 December 1973. I checked immediately with Mr. Kerby, who assured me that "his" bird was in his yard at the time I was seeing Mrs. Hauser's, so there were at least two in the area for a time in December.

1245 Chatham Road, Waynesboro, Virginia 22980

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## HARRIS' SPARROW IN DECEMBER IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

CHARLES R. SMITH AND J. WALLACE COFFEY

On 30 December 1972 we observed an immature Harris' Sparrow, *Zonotrichia querula*, in Washington County, Virginia. The bird was found during the Bristol, Tennessee-Virginia, Christmas Bird Count. We found the bird along Virginia Route 664 about 0.5 mile northeast of the intersection of Virginia Routes 664 and 670. The locality of the observation is in the Avens Bridge area of the South Holston Reservoir (TVA).

We watched the bird from 1315 to 1346 hours EST and followed it for about 0.2 mile as it moved along the road in a fencerow overgrown with sassafras saplings, honeysuckle, poison ivy, greenbrier, red cedar, and black locust. In this area, Route 664 passes through predominantly open countryside with a field of corn stubble on one side and waist-high weeds in a field on the opposite side of the road.

The Harris' Sparrow was accompanying a flock of about 20 White-crowned Sparrows, *Zonotrichia leucophrys*, along the fencerow. It often perched on prominent and exposed branches, facing the observers, or turned sideways and showed its back for good views of all features and colors. We each observed the bird using 7x35 binoculars and a 30x spotting scope. We used binoculars to watch the bird as close as 15 feet, and the spotting scope was used at distances of 75 feet or less. The weather was clear and comfortable with no wind or precipitation and a slightly overcast sky.

The following diagnostic features were noted: rusty-red to pink bill, crown uniformly of brownish feathers tipped with buff and unstriped, sides of head yellowish-brown, no eye-ring, dark malar stripes, white chin and throat, black

"V" on breast, stripes or streaks along flanks, two white wing-bars, upper back heavily striped, and rump and upper tail coverts plain buffy gray (very noticeable in flight). The bird was slightly larger than the White-crowned Sparrows it accompanied and could be separated easily from them by its size as they moved along the fencerow when we approached for closer observation. We identified the bird using Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* while we observed the bird in the field.

Department of Natural Resources  
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850  
521 Cedar Valley Road, Bristol, Tennessee 37620

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## THE 1974 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON

The Cape Henry Audubon Society served as host for the 1974 meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, which was held at the Mariner Motel in Virginia Beach on 10-12 May.

President Mitchell A. Byrd opened the business meeting at 8 p.m. on Friday, 10 May. He called on Mrs. Carol Massart, chairman of the Nominating Committee, who submitted the following slate of nominees:

*President:* Dr. Richard H. Peake, Wise

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

*Secretary:* Dr. Robert J. Watson, Arlington

*Treasurer:* Mrs. Ruth A. Beck, Williamsburg

*Editor:* F. R. Scott, Richmond

*Board of Directors, Class of 1977:*

Anton M. Decker, Marion

Mrs. M. W. Lerner, Jr., Staunton

Paul E. McQuarry, Lynchburg

*Board of Directors, Class of 1975:*

Austin R. Lawrence, Falls Church (to fill the unexpired portion of Dr. Peake's term)

No nominations were offered from the floor. A motion that the nominations be closed and that a unanimous ballot be cast for the above nominees was approved.

Dr. Byrd announced that, by decision of the Board of Directors, the 1974 VSO Conservation Award will go to the person or persons responsible for recent legislation strengthening the protection of birds of prey in Virginia. Dr. Robert Ake, chairman of the Local Arrangements Committee, described plans for field trips. The business meeting then adjourned and the members enjoyed a film, "Winged World," produced by the National Geographic Society.

On Saturday morning, 11 May, members boarded buses for field trips to Dismal Swamp and Fisherman Island. The Dismal Swamp trip featured excellent views of the elusive Swainson's Warbler, lured from hiding by a tape recording of its song played by the trip leader, Mr. David Hughes. Fisherman



Island proved a delight to the members who visited there, with both an active heronry and a large colony of Royal Terns, with a few Sandwich Terns mixed in.

Dr. J. J. Murray, Jr., Vice President of the Society, presided when papers were presented on Saturday afternoon, 11 May. Mr. Bill Williams, of the College of William and Mary, described the results of his study of nesting Glossy Ibises in two heronries on the Eastern Shore. Weight, bill length and width, and length of the tarsus had been measured at different stages of growth. Evidence was found that the Glossy Ibis nests at slightly lower elevations than other herons and that it occupies a different feeding niche.

"Some Interesting Ornithological Questions" were posed by Dr. Robert L. Ake, of Old Dominion University. What is the status of the Bachman's Sparrow in Virginia? Once it was apparently common in some areas, but no more. Will the White Ibis follow the Glossy Ibis in extending its breeding range into Virginia? Incursions of young White Ibises, similar to those of Glossies a few years ago, have already been noted. Do the large flocks of avocets recently seen at Craney Island portend an attempt to nest there? Does the Upland Sandpiper nest in Virginia? What is the status of certain northern birds that have been seen in Highland County (Mourning and Nashville Warblers, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes) and in northeastern Virginia (Henslow's Sparrow, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Sharp-tailed Sparrow)? Concluding on an affirmative rather than an interrogatory note, Dr. Ake described his discovery of Savannah Sparrows nesting in Highland County in 1973. In comment from the floor, Mrs. Jane Church reported that Upland Sandpipers are apparently currently breeding in Loudoun County.

Geographic variation in the House Sparrow was the subject of Dr. Charles R. Blem, of Virginia Commonwealth University. The House Sparrow is well adapted for such an investigation, since it is widely distributed over North America (as over the rest of the world) and is nonmigratory. Dr. Blem found that the species in North America divides broadly into two populations, a northern and a southern, with some evidence of selective adaptation to the different environments. A similar study of the Starling has now begun but is more complicated because that species is at least partly migratory.

Dr. Richard H. Peake presented "Summer Observations on Mount Rogers," prepared by his colleague at Clinch Valley College, Dr. Philip Shelton, who could not be present. Dr. Shelton visited Mount Rogers five times during July and August 1973. He found singing male Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, the former species occurring at the summit and the latter just below. A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher seen on the two August trips may have been either a breeding bird or an early migrant.

During an intermission, Mr. Hansel Hughes urged members to join and support the National Audubon Society, while Mrs. Brooks Sylvette described wilderness proposals for Assateague and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge being considered by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Mr. Watson added that the Board of Directors had already placed the Society on record in support of the Assateague proposal but stressed that letters from individuals were also needed.

The continuing study of the Osprey by the College of William and Mary was the subject of two papers. Dr. Mitchell Byrd, director of the project, sum-

marized nesting success rates over a four-year period, 1970 through 1973. The average number of young per active nest for each year was as follows:

1970: 0.96 (based on 194 nests studied)

1971: 0.69 (based on 309 nests studied)

1972: 0.72 (based on 344 nests studied)

1973: 0.98 (based on 445 nests studied)

Thus the population decline seems to have been reversed, at least for the time being. Partly for this reason, according to the speaker, manipulation of Osprey egg clutches had been abandoned. However, the rate of reproduction remains below the maintenance level (1.22 young per active nest). In answer to a question from Dr. Murray, Dr. Byrd indicated that the maintenance figure may be too low; it was computed on the basis of an assumption (now known to be incorrect) that Ospreys begin full breeding activity at three years of age.

Mr. Jerry Via had measured the pesticide contents of 85 unhatched eggs taken from Osprey nests. He found residues of DDT, PCB, and dieldrin. Plotting the findings against the thicknesses of the shells showed no correlation. However, the speaker pointed out that nearly all of the unhatched eggs had thinner shells than eggs measured before 1947.

The Hampton Roads Bird Club has had great success with its Eastern Bluebird nesting project in Newport News Park, according to Mrs. Dorothy Silsby. The boxes, made of wood by a local craftsman, are placed on seven-foot metal poles. The program has drawn much favorable attention in the community, though experience with vandalism has demonstrated the unwisdom of placing boxes immediately along trails. Pine needles are the principal nesting material used by the bluebirds. Other species that have used the boxes are the Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and Brown-headed Nuthatch.

The concluding speaker was Miss Jennifer Shopland, of William and Mary, whose subject was "Variation in the Family Motmotidae," based on field work in Guatemala for the Field Museum in Chicago. With colored slides, the speaker illustrated almost every species in this family, stressing variations in size, coloration, and the presence or absence of "rackets" in the tail feathers. Geographic variation extends below the species level, with one species of motmot being divided into 23 races.

At the Friday evening banquet, Dr. Byrd invited the attention of the audience to an entertaining new publishing venture, *The Raveing*, copies of which had been disseminated to every member by a talented but carefully anonymous group of individuals believed to be connected with the College of William and Mary. Dr. Byrd then introduced Dr. Fred J. Alsop, assistant professor of biology at East Tennessee State University, who, through the medium of colored slides, conducted the audience on a vicarious trip to Bathurst Inlet and Victoria Island, in the Canadian Arctic. Among the many excellent pictures presented by the speaker, particular interest attached to those depicting a nest of Peregrine Falcons on a sheer cliff, the photography requiring placement of a blind in a highly precarious position.

Following Dr. Alsop's address, Dr. Byrd recognized Mrs. Walter Post Smith, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, who submitted resolutions tendering thanks to all those responsible for the success of the meeting.

The President then declared the meeting adjourned. The majority of those in attendance, however, stayed over through Sunday morning for another

round of field trips to Dismal Swamp, Fisherman Island, and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

### VSO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1973

#### CASH BALANCE 1 JANUARY 1973

General Fund .....	\$1,568.33	
Endowment Fund .....	991.45	
Publication Fund .....	2,500.00	\$5,059.78

#### CASH RECEIPTS

Membership dues and subscriptions .....	\$2,354.00	
Gifts, including Raven pins .....	47.62	
Sales		
Patches and decals .....	\$113.25	
Field checklists .....	115.55	
Birds of Rockbridge County .....	10.50	
Back issues of THE RAVEN .....	29.75	269.05
Interest .....	225.81	2,896.48

#### CASH DISBURSEMENTS

Printing of THE RAVEN .....	\$1,402.86	
Postage and mailing, newsletter and RAVEN .....	123.00	
Printing of VSO envelopes, newsletter covers, and renewal forms .....	192.04	
Printing of field checklists .....	394.06	
Stationery .....	50.23	
Film for annual meeting .....	47.75	
Treasurer (postage) .....	50.00	
Affiliations		
Conservation Council of Virginia .....	\$100.00	
National Audubon Society .....	25.00	
Virginia Wildlife Federation .....	152.25	277.25
		2,537.19

#### CASH BALANCE 31 DECEMBER 1973

General Fund .....	\$1,401.63	
Endowment Fund .....	1,089.90	
Publication Fund .....	2,927.54	\$5,419.07

#### DISPOSITION OF CASH ASSETS 31 DECEMBER 1973

Williamsburg United Virginia Bank, Williamsburg, Virginia—checking account .....	\$1,876.79	
First & Merchants National Bank, Williamsburg, Virginia—savings account .....	1,042.28	
First National Bank, Farmville, Virginia— certificate of deposit .....	2,500.00	\$5,419.07

Total 1973 membership: 661, including 442 active, 109 sustaining, 29 contributing, 46 junior, 20 life, and 15 chapter members.

RUTH A. BECK, Treasurer

## REVIEW

*Adventures in Birding: Confessions of a Lister.* By Jean Piatt. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1973: 265 pages. Price, \$7.95.

Have you ever wondered what causes VSO'ers Bob Ake, Paul DuMont, and Paul Sykes to rush frantically over the North American continent to add new species to their life lists? Would you like to know what the 600 club is? Do you wish to read the tales of a big-time lister told with a flair for wittily erudite description? If your answer to these questions is yes, or even maybe, then you will enjoy Jean Piatt's *Adventures in Birding*.

Piatt describes how he and his wife gradually have succumbed to the lure of the list chase—how their eyes searched for *the new bird* and became glazed with lister's fever, a disease which, unlike buck fever, grows more and more severe with constant hunting. This fever reaches its critical point for the Piatts when they amass a respectable list for their home state of Pennsylvania. Its virulence increases as the listers travel to Florida, California, and Alaska. In Alaska for the second time they reach the 600 club or the Brotherhood, the band of persons who have amassed a list of 600 or more different species of birds positively identified in North America.

Piatt's enthusiasm for listing does not blind him to its humorous moments. Among these for Piatt are encounters with Dr. H. and the Redstart Lady. "It was Dr. H. that chilled us on birds for years," says the author; "she used birding as a ploy for gossip and companionship, and always with herself in the driver's seat." The Redstart Lady "seemingly manifests genuine interest in birds but she never troubles to use binoculars or buy a field guide." This lady "is most humble . . . and invariably seeks guidance . . ." but her "descriptions are so garbled and devoid of crucial data that we are seldom able to identify her bird. It is, of course, always either 'a little brown bird' or a bird 'about the size of a robin.' "

Piatt's style is witty and erudite (a bit too erudite for some members of the Brotherhood, if I read their mutterings correctly). This style and Piatt's humor prevents *Adventures in Birding* from deteriorating into a mere list of birds seen when and where. For those of us who cannot summon energy and, especially, money for the long trip across continents, Piatt recommends the state bird list, though he feels the state list "is a highly artificial and tedious sort of thing and one soon longs for distant hills and exotic birds." I can't agree with him, though I too often long for distant hills. For me, no thrill is greater than that which comes with each Lincoln's Sparrow well seen in my local bird haunts. The flash of recognition and remembrance of times past that comes at that moment may be equalled on distant hills, but not surpassed.

Richard H. Peake

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CONSERVATION CORNER

ROBERT J. WATSON

The principal accomplishment of the 1974 session of the Virginia General Assembly in the field of conservation was an emendation of the law relating to the protection of wildlife. The old law provided for a continuous open

season on "predatory or undesirable species" of birds and animals. "Predatory" birds were listed as "blackbird, buzzard, crow, English sparrow, hawk, jaybird, owl and starling." An amendment sponsored by the VSO, enacted in 1956, provided partial protection for hawks and owls, allowing them to be killed only when a landowner or a county board of supervisors found it "necessary" to protect poultry or game birds.

In the legislation enacted in 1974, the phrase "predatory birds and animals" has been eliminated and replaced by the phrase "nuisance species," defined as "blackbirds, crows, cowbirds, grackles, English sparrows, [and] starlings." Still further, the first four of these species are to be classed as nuisance species "only when found committing or about to commit depredations upon ornamental or shade trees, agricultural crops, livestock or other property, or wildlife, or when concentrated in such numbers and manner as to constitute a health hazard or other nuisance." The full protection of the law, therefore, is now extended to hawks and owls as well as "buzzards" and "jaybirds."

Aside from this bill (which passed because it did not trample on any powerful toes), the achievements of the Assembly were modest indeed: an increase in the permit fee for strip mining, from \$6 to \$12 per acre, and diversion of some money from the sacrosanct highway fund to pay for mass transit. Against these meager progressive measures must be set the defeat of several highly important proposals. The more glaring failures were the following:

1. The Assembly declined to move away from the absurd and thoroughly outmoded practice of allowing localities to make decisions regarding the use and disposition of land. A task force of the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council had recommended that the Assembly take the first timid step toward the assertion of rightful state responsibility by providing protection for areas designated as "critical." A bill for this purpose received no serious consideration and never got out of committee. Yet this was the same Assembly that contributed to the defeat of Federal land use legislation by memorializing Congress to the effect that land use decisions are a responsibility of the states!

2. Action on a bond issue to purchase land for the Virginia Outdoors Plan was postponed. This plan was launched some years ago with great fanfare, but little has been accomplished; most of the areas earmarked for acquisition remain in private hands, and some have already been lost forever. Everyone knows what is happening to land values in Virginia; obviously a bond issue is the only hope for carrying out whatever remains of the original plan.

3. A proposal to establish the first scenic river in Virginia (a portion of the Staunton River in Halifax and Campbell Counties) was blocked by persons wanting the river to be intensively developed or dammed for hydroelectric use. The scenic river program, another measure hailed as a great constructive step when it was first enacted on paper, has never gotten off the ground and now may be regarded as hopelessly moribund.

4. Legislation to require a deposit on containers was likewise rejected in committee; instead, a commission was directed to study the container problem and report to the Assembly by 1 November 1975 (too late, obviously, for consideration in next year's Assembly).

The defeat of these key environmental measures attests to the pervasive influence of those who profit by waste and despoliation. Clearly conservationists

have a long way to go in building an organization in Virginia strong enough to be heard by our lawmakers.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

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## NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY F. R. SCOTT

**PELAGIC OBSERVATIONS OFF VIRGINIA.** The growing interest in offshore bird trips has resulted in a number of recent records of interest. A boat trip off Cape Henry, Virginia, with 47 birders led by R. L. Ake and P. G. DuMont on 20 May 1972 recorded one or more Greater Shearwaters, 10 Sooty Shearwaters, one Cory's Shearwater (J. M. Abbott), 178 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 7 Red and 16 or more Northern Phalaropes, and 2 Pomarine and 8 Parasitic Jaegers. A similar trip on 30 September 1972, also led by Ake and DuMont, yielded 2 Cory's Shearwaters, 55 Northern Phalaropes, and one Pomarine and 6 Parasitic Jaegers. On a trip to Norfolk Canyon on 14 May 1973, 65 miles east of Fisherman Island, M. L. Wass counted 20 Red Phalaropes (20-65 miles out) along with 25 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, many jaegers, including both Pomarine and Parasitic, and a surprising Osprey about 65 miles offshore. On 20 May 1973 another trip with about 40 observers led by Ake and DuMont recorded 2 Sooty and one Cory's Shearwaters, 85 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 7 Pomarine and one Parasitic Jaegers, a Roseate Tern (J. M. Abbott), and 3 probable Arctic Terns. The last species, observed by Ake and DuMont as well as R. A. Rowlett, P. W. Sykes, and others, was a first sight record for Virginia. Two Common Loons, 4 Greater Shearwaters, 120 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, and 2 Gannets were noted in this same area on 27 May 1973 (Ake, DuMont, *et al.*).

**PETRELS IN CHESAPEAKE BAY.** There were several observations of Wilson's Storm-Petrels in Chesapeake Bay during June 1973. M. A. Byrd and Gary Seek counted 18 one mile off Kiptopeke on 9 June, and 4 were seen in the mouth of the York River on 19 June (Bill Williams). On 23 June Byrd, Seek, and C. W. Hacker noted 42 in Mobjack Bay.

**SUMMERING WATERFOWL.** As usual there were numerous reports of summering nonbreeding waterfowl in Virginia during 1973. Among these were 2 adult Whistling Swans at Dyke marsh, Fairfax County, during June and July (J. M. Abbott *et al.*), 2 Brant near Fisherman Island on 29 July and 2 near Wreck Island on 4 August (R. B. Clapp and J. S. Weske), 3 Ruddy Ducks at Alexandria during June and July (Abbott *et al.*), and 4 Ruddy Ducks at Craney Island, Portsmouth, on 27 July (Bill Williams and Bill Akers).

**CLAPPER RAIL IN ALBEMARLE COUNTY.** A Clapper Rail, apparently just recently hit by a car and still bleeding, was picked up dead just south of Charlottesville on U.S. Route 29 after dark on 7 October 1972 by Robert S. Merkel. The specimen was saved and has now been deposited in the National Museum of Natural History. Inland records of this species are very rare in Virginia.

**BLACK RAIL AT FISHERMAN ISLAND.** On 3 March 1973 R. L. Ake and R. L. Anderson flushed a Black Rail twice on Fisherman Island, Northampton County, Virginia.

**PURPLE GALLINULE IN ROANOKE COUNTY.** Bill J. Opengari reports that an injured Purple Gallinule was found in a field in Roanoke County, Virginia, on 30 May 1973. The location of the discovery was near U.S. Route 581 about 1 mile from the Roanoke city limits. The gallinule was in good plumage and showed no outward appearance of injury to wings, legs, or body; however, the bird seemed very weak and would not stand. Two days after discovery the bird died. Identification was made by Bill Opengari, Jerry Via, and Mike Dowdy. The specimen was given to Jerry Via of the College of William and Mary to be used as a study skin.

**PURPLE GALLINULE AT CHINCOTEAGUE.** R. A. Rowlett observed an adult Purple Gallinule at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia, on 28 July 1973.

**LATE OYSTERCATCHER BREEDING.** A young American Oystercatcher caught and banded at Metomkin Island, Accomack County, Virginia, on 5 August 1973 was unusually late for a nonflying bird (R. B. Clapp and J. S. Weske).

**GOLDEN PLOVERS IN VIRGINIA.** Among the better counts of American Golden Plovers during the fall of 1972 were 28 at Kiptopeke Beach on 17 September (M. A. Byrd, Lou Bjostad, and Jerry Via) and 20 at Hog Island, Surry County, on 24 September (R. L. Ake).

**KILLDEERS NESTING ON ROOF.** M. L. Wass removed 4 young Killdeers off the roof of Maury Hall at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at Gloucester Point, Virginia, on 12 July 1973. After placing the birds on a nearby lawn, he watched one of the parents take charge of the young. The roof had a 16-inch parapet all around it, and he felt the birds would die unless moved.

**UPLAND SANDPIPERS NEAR LEESBURG.** J. B. Bazuin, Jr., observed 5 Upland Sandpipers between 20 and 23 May 1973 in the vicinity of Balls Bluff Cemetery and Point of Rocks just north of Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia. These may have been breeding birds.

**CURLEW SANDPIPERS AT CHINCOTEAGUE.** Two Curlew Sandpipers, both in near-breeding plumage, were observed at Chincoteague Refuge on 13 May 1973 by Paul G. DuMont, who submitted detailed written descriptions of the birds. Apparently one of these birds was seen on 11 May by Jackie Grodie, a refuge employe, who described the observation to DuMont. This seems to be the second sight record of this bird for Virginia (see RAVEN, 27: 73, 1956).

**ANOTHER LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.** John D. Danzenbaker, of Linwood, New Jersey, writes that on 30 September 1972, following a pelagic field trip out of Lynnhaven Inlet in Virginia Beach, he visited Fort Story (Cape Henry) with his family. Among a large assortment of terns and gulls here, he found a dark-backed gull about the size of a Herring Gull. Since the bird reminded him of the Lesser Black-backed Gulls he had just seen shortly before in England, he examined it carefully. The bird had bright yellow legs (not



pink), a dark back just a shade lighter than an adult Great Black-backed Gull, and was slightly smaller, a perfect adult Lesser Black-backed Gull.

**COMMON TERNS NESTING ON BAY.** On 2 June 1973 H. T. Armistead found a Common Tern colony of 16 nests, all with one to 3 eggs each, on Herring Island, Accomack County, Virginia. This is just a few miles south of the Maryland border below Smith Island and north of Tangier. The colony is the first of this species to be found on the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay.

**ROYAL AND SANDWICH TERNS NESTING.** R. B. Clapp and J. S. Weske visited several tern colonies on the Virginia coast in July and August 1973. Royal Tern colonies were found on Fisherman Island (700 pairs estimated on 29 July), Ship Shoal Island (3500 pairs on 9 July), and Metomkin Island (no estimate made on visit on 5 August because of the late date). The number of young banded at each colony was, respectively, 634, 3309, and 344. Mixed in with the Royals were several pairs of Sandwich Terns, estimated at 30 pairs at Fisherman Island (estimate by Mike Erwin) and 25 pairs at Ship Shoal Island. Thirty-nine young were banded in all, including 11 at Metomkin Island, the northernmost breeding site of this species found on the East Coast. These numbers confirm the continuing increase of the Sandwich Tern in Virginia. Adults seen feeding fledged young of this species at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on 22 July 1973 (W. W. Fogleman) were undoubtedly birds from one of these colonies.

**OWLS NESTING.** Two owls' nests were recently reported. On 5 May 1973 J. W. Eike and some 20 members of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the VSO found a Barred Owl nest in a hollow in a tree in Bull Run Regional Park, Fairfax County. The nest contained an adult and 3 young. L. K. Malone trapped and banded an adult Screech Owl in a nest in a Wood Duck box at Chincoteague Refuge, also on 5 May 1973. The 4 downy young were later banded on 30 May.

**LATE SPRING TRANSIENTS.** R. J. Watson recorded singing Swainson's Thrushes at Arlington, Virginia, on 3 and 4 June 1973, and one was heard singing at nearby Fort Hunt, Fairfax County, on 5 June 1973 (J. M. Abbott). A singing Blackpoll Warbler at Clifton, Fairfax County, on 15 June 1973 was also very late (J. W. Eike).

**WAXWINGS NESTING AT DYKE.** Two pairs of Cedar Waxwings were seen nest building at Dyke marsh, Fairfax County, on 3 June 1973 by J. M. Abbott. The nests were apparently abandoned shortly thereafter.

**LAPLAND LONGSPURS INLAND.** There have been two recent inland reports of Lapland Longspurs in Virginia. J. M. Abbott found one at Dyke marsh, Fairfax County, on 23 November 1972, and another was seen by J. B. Bazuin, Jr., in Loudoun County near Evergreen Mills (Routes 617 and 659) on 9 April 1973.

## 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 historical and bibliographic reviews and life-history and behavioral notes, especially when these are based on observations in Virginia. 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 *CBE Style Manual*, third edition, prepared by the Council of Biological Editors. It is available for \$6.00 postpaid from the American Institute of Biological Sciences, 1401 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22209. 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* and subsequent supplements. 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), \$3.00 for active members, \$5.00 for sustaining members, \$10.00 for contributing members, \$100.00 for life members.

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## A CHECK-LIST OF THE BIRDS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

JOHN W. MURRAY

The area covered by this list includes all of Montgomery County, the city of Radford, and that part of the New River bordering on them. It is largely situated on a plateau through which runs the eastern continental divide and is partly dissected by the tributaries of two rivers. The northeastern part is drained by the Roanoke River which flows eastward to the Atlantic Ocean, while the southwestern part is drained by the New River which flows, via the Kanawha, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, into the Gulf of Mexico. It is located at about 37° 0' to 37° 21' N latitude and 80° 10' to 80° 37' W longitude. The county was formed in 1776 when Fincastle County was divided. It is bounded on the north by Gap and Sinking Creek Mountains, on the east by Roanoke County, on the south by Floyd County and the Little River, and on the west by the New River.

The elevation ranges from about 1200 feet at Lafayette on the Roanoke River to 3760 feet on Poor Mountain and is from 1650 to 1730 feet along the New River. Five mountain ridges with crests near 3000 feet run through the county in a northeast-southwesterly direction. The area of the county is divided between wooded mountain ridges, rolling agricultural lands, and narrow stream valleys. The county contains two large towns: Blacksburg, the home of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Christiansburg, the county seat.

Several factors may be cited in trying to account for the large number of bird species that have been found in this area. The location at medium latitude, the boundary of two drainage systems and in the path of migration, is doubtless a major factor. The trees found in this area include both northern forms such as the White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) and southern forms such as Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*). The presence of mountains over 4000 feet in neighboring Giles County may account for the occasional appearance in summer of such northern birds as the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Canada Warbler, and Brown Creeper. Another factor is the number of observers here who are competent to recognize the birds and sufficiently interested to report them.

This list is the result of the observations and records of a number of people over a period of 82 years. The earliest records available are the two papers in *The Auk* published by Professor Ellison A. Smyth, Jr., reporting his observations from 1891 through 1925. Ralph Brown served as librarian at V.P.I. between 1925 and 1947 and was so kind as to lend me his notes covering this period. C. O. Handley and his son, Charles, Jr., recorded bird observations between 1935 and 1947 and have sent me much of their findings. My own observations cover the period between 1944 and 1974. Many other members of the community have made valuable contributions to the body of information on birds of this area as can be seen from the list of sources given for the dates cited in the check-list.

The names of birds used are derived from the A.O.U. *Check-List of North American Birds*, Fifth Edition, 1957, and the thirty-second supplement (*Auk*, 90: 411-419, 1973). Except for the few cases where subspecies are distinguishable in the field, only the species name is listed. The name of the species is followed by a statement of the relative abundance and the part of the year it is

present insofar as this can be judged from the data. The extreme dates for each period the bird is present are then given together with a symbol for the source of the record (e.g., S<sub>1</sub> for E. A. Smyth—see list). Most of the available data for each species have been plotted along a date line. In many cases, the records are numerous within a certain period and absent, or few and scattered at other times. The dates shown in parentheses are derived from these plots and represent the times of high probability of occurrence of the species. This is only appropriate when the plots show a high concentration with a perceptible cut-off time.

#### OBSERVERS WHO HAVE FURNISHED BIRD RECORDS FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

A <sub>1</sub> C. E. Addy	H <sub>5</sub> Arthur Hale	O <sub>1</sub> J. C. Oakes
A <sub>2</sub> Curtis Adkisson	J <sub>1</sub> R. E. Jenkins	R <sub>1</sub> Curtis W. Roane
B <sub>1</sub> Ralph M. Brown	J <sub>2</sub> Harry Jacobson	R <sub>2</sub> Willis C. Royall, Jr.
B <sub>2</sub> Mrs. R. E. Blaser	K <sub>1</sub> Kathleen Klimkiewicz	R <sub>3</sub> M. H. Ryland
B <sub>3</sub> J. L. Bishop	K <sub>2</sub> Clyde Kessler	R <sub>4</sub> Stephen M. Russell
C <sub>1</sub> Donald G. Cochran	L <sub>1</sub> Mark Larson	R <sub>5</sub> Martha Roane
C <sub>2</sub> Mrs. J. W. Clark	L <sub>2</sub> Vincent J. Lucid	R <sub>6</sub> E. V. Russell, Jr.
C <sub>3</sub> Dwight R. Chamberlain	L <sub>3</sub> Mrs. Willard Lyle	S <sub>1</sub> Ellison A. Smyth, Jr.
C <sub>4</sub> R. N. Conner	M <sub>1</sub> John W. Murray	S <sub>2</sub> G. Myron Shear
D <sub>1</sub> Richard V. Dietrich	M <sub>2</sub> Donald H. Messersmith	S <sub>3</sub> Mary Linda Smyth
D <sub>2</sub> Glenn Dudderar	M <sub>3</sub> David Moore	S <sub>4</sub> Allen J. Stickley
D <sub>3</sub> Robert Downing	M <sub>4</sub> J. J. Murray	S <sub>5</sub> Mrs. C. A. Stone
D <sub>4</sub> W. R. DeGarmo	M <sub>5</sub> Burd S. McGinnes	S <sub>6</sub> Joyce Simpkins
G <sub>1</sub> Larry Griffin	M <sub>6</sub> Henry S. Mosby	U <sub>1</sub> Jack Unbehaun
G <sub>2</sub> Michael Grubb	M <sub>7</sub> George McBath	W <sub>1</sub> Robert J. Watson
H <sub>1</sub> C. O. Handley	M <sub>8</sub> Robert McDowell	W <sub>2</sub> Edwin O. Willis
H <sub>2</sub> Charles O. Handley, Jr.	M <sub>9</sub> Mrs. B. S. McGinnes	W <sub>3</sub> David A. West
H <sub>3</sub> R. J. Hader	M <sub>10</sub> R. D. Michael	
H <sub>4</sub> Robert G. Hooper	N <sub>1</sub> Donald Nelson	

COMMON LOON, *Gavia immer* (Brunnich). Uncommon transient and winter visitor; 17 April (H<sub>2</sub>) to 20 May (N<sub>1</sub>) and 7 November (M<sub>1</sub>) to 28 December (M<sub>1</sub>).

RED-NECKED GREBE, *Podiceps grisegena* (Boddaert). One record. Smyth (1927) secured a specimen from the College ice pond 26 January 1914.

HORNED GREBE, *Podiceps auritus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon winter visitor; 24 October (H<sub>1</sub>) to 9 April (M<sub>1</sub>).

PIED-BILLED GREBE, *Podilymbus podiceps* (Linnaeus). Common transient, uncommon winter visitor (28 February to 11 May and 30 August to 1 December). One summered in 1950 according to C. W. Roane (personal communication).

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL, *Pterodroma hasitata* (Kuhl). Accidental. One record. Smyth (1912) had a specimen 30 August 1893 following a "terrible storm" on the South Atlantic Coast.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT, *Phalacrocorax auritus* (Lesson). Rare. Four records, 7 October 1939 (Handley, 1940), 28 April 1940 (H<sub>1</sub>), spring 1967 (Klimkiewicz, 1965), and 22 September 1974 (R<sub>1</sub>).

GREAT BLUE HERON, *Ardea herodias* Linnaeus. Uncommon. Records throughout the year but no nesting record. Most common in April.

GREEN HERON, *Butorides virescens* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, nests; 4 April (S<sub>1</sub>) to 27 December (D<sub>1</sub>). Rare after 1 October.

LITTLE BLUE HERON, *Florida caerulea* (Linnaeus). Rare summer visitor. Eight records, 28 March (B<sub>1</sub>) to 19 September (B<sub>1</sub>).

CATTLE EGRET, *Bubulcus ibis* (Linnaeus). Rare. Three records, 11 April 1969, Mrs. J. W. Clark watched one following a tractor discing a field on the Alley farm near Riner, Virginia; 1 May 1974, Mark Larson observed one near Stroubles Creek on the V.P.I. Farm; and 3 July 1975, Clyde Kessler saw one also on the V.P.I. Farm.

GREAT EGRET, *Casmerodius albus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer visitor, no nest record; 6 February ( $L_1$ ) to 23 October ( $D_1$ ), mostly July-August.

LOUISIANA HERON, *Hydranassa tricolor* (Muller). Accidental. Two records, 24 July to 12 August 1936 (Handley, 1940) and 4 May 1941 ( $B_1$ ).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON, *Nycticorax nycticorax* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer visitor. Eleven records scattered over the period from 31 January ( $G_1$ ) to 11 October ( $H_1$ ).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON, *Nyctanassa violacea* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer resident; 29 June ( $M_1$ ) to 13 August ( $M_1$ ). A pair nested on an island in the New River near Ingles Ferry in 1970 according to George McBath (personal communication).

LEAST BITTERN, *Ixobrychus exilis* (Gmelin). Uncommon summer visitor, no nest record; 3 May ( $B_1$ ) to 14 October ( $M_1$ ).

AMERICAN BITTERN, *Botaurus lentiginosus* (Rackett). Uncommon transient and winter visitor; 30 August ( $H_1$ ) to 14 June ( $H_1$ ).

WHISTLING SWAN, *Olor columbianus* (Ord). Rare winter visitor. Three visits, 13 December ( $C_3$ ) to 6 March ( $M_3$ ). First reported by C. O. Handley, Jr., on 27 December 1968.

CANADA GOOSE, *Branta canadensis* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient and winter visitor (4 October to 11 May). Four stayed on the V.P.I. pond until 18 July in 1947, possibly escapes. Formerly a regular transient in March according to Smyth (1912).

SNOW GOOSE (BLUE FORM), *Chen caerulescens* (Linnaeus). Rare. One record on New River 14 November 1966 by D. R. Chamberlain (1967).

MALLARD, *Anas platyrhynchos* Linnaeus. The wild birds are common winter visitors. A semiwild resident population on the V.P.I. pond is derived from eggs introduced about 1937. A female was flushed from a nest with eggs near Prices Fork 3 May 1970 ( $M_1$ ).

BLACK DUCK, *Anas rubripes* Brewster. Common winter visitor, rare in summer (10 September to 25 May).

GADWALL, *Anas strepera* Linnaeus. Winter visitor. This species was first recorded by Smith (1927) on 26 February 1922. By 1950, it was fairly common in winter but it has declined to uncommon status; 17 September ( $D_1$ ) to 16 June ( $W_1$ ).

PINTAIL, *Anas acuta* Linnaeus. Winter visitor, formerly common, now uncommon; 10 September ( $M_1$ ) to 16 May ( $H_1$ ).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL, *Anas crecca* Linnaeus. Uncommon winter visitor; 16 September ( $H_1$ ) to 5 June ( $W_2$ ).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL, *Anas discors* Linnaeus. Common transient, rare winter visitor; 3 September ( $H_1$ ) to 8 June ( $H_1$ ).

EUROPEAN WIGEON, *Anas penelope* Linnaeus. Accidental. Two records, 16 October 1943 to 26 April 1944 (Handley, 1945) and 6 March 1945 ( $B_1$ ).

AMERICAN WIGEON, *Anas americana* Gmelin. Common winter visitor, rare in summer (11 September to 13 May). One summered in 1940 according to C. O. Handley (1951).

NORTHERN SHOVELER, *Anas clypeata* Linnaeus. Uncommon winter visitor, 11 September ( $H_1$ ) to 15 June ( $H_1$ ) (11 September to 3 May).

WOOD DUCK, *Aix sponsa* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, uncommon winter visitor.

REDHEAD, *Aythya americana* (Eyton). Uncommon winter visitor (28 November to 5 April). One spent the summer in 1943 according to C. O. Handley (1951).



RING-NECKED DUCK, *Aythya collaris* (Donovan). Uncommon winter visitor, common transient, 10 October (M<sub>1</sub>) to 15 May (H<sub>1</sub>).

CANVASBACK, *Aythya valisineria* (Wilson). Uncommon winter visitor; 14 October (M<sub>1</sub>) to 7 May (M<sub>1</sub>) (29 November to 3 May).

GREATER SCAUP, *Aythya marila* (Linnaeus). Uncommon winter visitor; 29 October (B<sub>1</sub>) to 24 April (M<sub>1</sub>).

LESSER SCAUP, *Aythya affinis* (Eyton). Common winter visitor, rare in summer (22 October to 15 May).

COMMON GOLDENEYE, *Bucephala clangula* (Linnaeus). Common winter visitor; 7 November (M<sub>1</sub>) to 15 May (H<sub>1</sub>) (7 November to 1 April).

BUFFLEHEAD, *Bucephala albeola* (Linnaeus). Common winter visitor, formerly rare as Smyth had only one record; 31 October (M<sub>1</sub>) to 18 May (H<sub>1</sub>) (31 October to 1 May).

OLDSQUAW, *Clangula hyemalis* (Linnaeus). Rare winter visitor. Six records, 17 November (G<sub>1</sub>) to 6 March (Handley, 1945).

HARLEQUIN DUCK, *Histrionicus histrionicus* (Linnaeus). Rare. A male was seen on the New River 20 February 1973 by Curtis Adkisson and Michael Grubb (1973) in company with a flock of Buffleheads. It was later seen by Grubb on 4 March and 7 April 1973 at the same place.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, *Melanitta deglandi* (Bonaparte). Rare winter visitor. Four records, 9 January (M<sub>4</sub>) to 9 May (H<sub>2</sub>).

SURF SCOTER, *Melanitta perspicillata* (Linnaeus). Rare. Two records, two females on New River 19 November 1967 and ten on 21 January 1968 (M<sub>1</sub>).

RUDDY DUCK, *Oxyura jamaicensis* (Gmelin). Uncommon transient, rare winter visitor (14 October to 30 May). One summered in 1952.

HOODED MERGANSER, *Lophodytes cucullatus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common winter visitor; 7 October (H<sub>1</sub>) to 20 June (H<sub>3</sub>) (3 November to 28 April).

COMMON MERGANSER, *Mergus merganser* Linnaeus. Rare winter visitor. Five records, 20 November (H<sub>1</sub>) to 8 April (B<sub>1</sub>).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, *Mergus serrator* Linnaeus. Uncommon transient, rare winter visitor; 17 November (W<sub>2</sub>) to 10 May (M<sub>1</sub>).

TURKEY VULTURE, *Cathartes aura* (Linnaeus). Common resident. A roost on the New River cliffs within the Radford Arsenal contains over a hundred birds. Two chicken-sized young 26 June 1941 (H<sub>1</sub>).

BLACK VULTURE, *Coragyps atratus* (Bechstein). Common resident. A nest on Brush Mountain had two eggs 13 May 1944 (M<sub>1</sub>), downy young with black primary feathers on 1 July. Roost on New River cliffs contained over 700 birds 4 January 1974 (D<sub>3</sub>).

GOSHAWK, *Accipiter gentilis* (Linnaeus). Rare. Three records, 19 November 1906 (S<sub>1</sub>), 20 December 1938 (H<sub>1</sub>), and August 1952 (D<sub>1</sub>).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK, *Accipiter striatus* Vieillot. Uncommon resident.

COOPER'S HAWK, *Accipiter cooperii* (Bonaparte). Uncommon resident.

RED-TAILED HAWK, *Buteo jamaicensis* (Gmelin). Fairly common resident. Smyth (1927) found a nest with full-fledged young in May 1914.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK, *Buteo lineatus* (Gmelin). Uncommon resident.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK, *Buteo platypterus* (Vieillot). Uncommon summer resident; 14 April (B<sub>1</sub>) to 2 November (B<sub>1</sub>). Smyth reported breeding records, but there are no recent nest records.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, *Buteo lagopus* (Pontoppidan). Rare winter visitor. Five records, 27 December (B<sub>3</sub>) to 18 January (S<sub>2</sub>).

GOLDEN EAGLE, *Aquila chrysaetos* (Linnaeus). Rare fall and winter visitor. Smyth

(1912) had nine records, one 15 August, the rest in November, December, and February. The only record since 1936 was 21 October 1971 ( $L_2$ ).

BALD EAGLE, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (Linnaeus). Rare. Eight records scattered throughout the year. The only record since 1940 was 22 September 1972 ( $D_2$ ).

MARSH HAWK, *Circus cyaneus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient and winter resident; 26 August ( $H_1$ ) to 3 June ( $H_1$ ).

OSPREY, *Pandion haliaetus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient and rare winter visitor; 10 September ( $H_2$ ) to 7 June ( $W_1$ ).

PEREGRINE FALCON, *Falco peregrinus* Tunstall. Rare. Seven records scattered throughout the year. Formerly nested on the New River cliffs ( $M_4$ ).

MERLIN, *Falco columbarius* Linnaeus. Rare transient and winter visitor; September ( $S_1$ ) to 14 April ( $W_2$ ).

AMERICAN KESTREL, *Falco sparverius* Linnaeus. Fairly common resident.

RUFFED GROUSE, *Bonasa umbellus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common resident.

BOBWHITE, *Colinus virginianus* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

RING-NECKED PHEASANT, *Phasianus colchicus* Linnaeus. Uncommon resident. Introduced at times but fails to persist.

TURKEY, *Meleagris gallopavo* Linnaeus. Uncommon resident. It was extirpated and reintroduced in 1960 from birds trapped in northern Virginia.

SANDHILL CRANE, *Grus canadensis* (Linnaeus). Accidental. One immature bird was present at Christiansburg from 1 July to 21 October 1965 according to A. O. English (1966).

KING RAIL, *Rallus elegans* Audubon. Rare. One record. One bird, trapped in a muskrat trap, was brought to Smyth (1912) on 12 November.

VIRGINIA RAIL, *Rallus limicola* Vieillot. Formerly uncommon, now rare; 25 April ( $B_1$ ) to 11 November ( $B_1$ ). No records since 1940.

SORA, *Porzana carolina* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient; 20 April ( $W_1$ ) to 29 May ( $W_2$ ) and 22 August ( $H_1$ ) to 30 October ( $G_1$ ).

YELLOW RAIL, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* (Gmelin). Rare. Smyth (1927) had three specimens in October 1915. No records since then.

BLACK RAIL, *Laterallus jamaicensis* (Gmelin). According to J. J. Murray (1952), "Handley, Jr. took a specimen at Blacksburg May 27, 1939, and also recorded it from November 7 to December 17, 1943." No other records.

PURPLE GALLINULE, *Porphyryla martinica* (Linnaeus). Rare. R. M. Brown recorded two on 4 October 1944. No other records.

COMMON GALLINULE, *Gallinula chloropus* (Linnaeus). Formerly uncommon transient, rare summer and winter visitor, now rare (29 April to 25 May and 16 September to 12 November).

AMERICAN COOT, *Fulica americana* Gmelin. Common transient, uncommon winter visitor (10 August to 19 May). One summered in 1944 and in 1950.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, *Charadrius semipalmatus* Bonaparte. Uncommon transient; 6 May ( $W_2$ ) to 3 June ( $M_1$ ) and 7 July ( $H_1$ ) to 5 October ( $M_1$ ).

KILLDEER, *Charadrius vociferus* Linnaeus. Common resident.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, *Pluvialis dominica* (Muller). Rare transient; 25 March ( $W_2$ ) to 3 April ( $M_1$ ) and 16 September ( $H_1$ ) to 8 October (Handley, 1940).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, *Pluvialis squatarola* (Linnaeus). Rare transient. Four records, 11 May ( $W_2$ ) and 16 September (Handley, 1940) to 24 September ( $M_1$ ).

RUDDY TURNSTONE, *Arenaria interpres* (Linnaeus). Accidental. One record. C. O. Handley, Jr. (1946b), reported one seen by the V.P.I. ornithology class 24 May 1946.

AMERICAN WOODCOCK, *Philohela minor* (Gmelin). Uncommon. Records scattered throughout the year. No nest records.

COMMON SNIBE, *Capella gallinago* (Linnaeus). Common transient and winter visitor. Most abundant in late March and early April; 14 August ( $H_1$ ) to 22 May ( $W_1$ ) (27 September to 9 May).

WHIMBREL, *Numenius phaeopus* (Linnaeus). Accidental. Two records, 9 April 1930 ( $B_1$ ) and 18 March 1935 ( $B_1$ ).

UPLAND SANDPIPER, *Bartramia longicauda* (Bechstein). Formerly common summer resident, now rare; 25 March ( $H_1$ ) to 4 September ( $H_1$ ). C. O. Handley (1951) had six nest records in 1936 to 1942. H. S. Mosby had a nest record about 1960. No records since 1965.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER, *Actitis macularia* (Linnaeus). Common transient. Formerly nested according to Smyth (1912). No recent summer records (10 April to 1 June and 1 August to 12 October). One winter record, 26 December 1955 ( $H_2$ ). More common in spring.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER, *Tringa solitaria* Wilson. Common transient; 10 April ( $H_1$ ) to 28 May ( $H_2$ ) and 15 July ( $H_1$ ) to 17 October ( $H_1$ ).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS, *Tringa melanoleucus* (Gmelin). Uncommon transient; 9 March ( $H_2$ ) to 8 June ( $H_1$ ) and 21 July ( $H_2$ ) to 20 November ( $H_1$ ).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS, *Tringa flavipes* (Gmelin). Transient, common in spring, uncommon in fall; 23 February ( $H_1$ ) to 6 June ( $H_1$ ) and 9 July ( $H_1$ ) to 4 November ( $H_1$ ).

WILLET, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* (Gmelin). Accidental. One record: 3 June 1945. (Murray, 1945).

RED KNOT, *Calidris canutus* (Linnaeus). Accidental. Two records, one on 7 to 16 September 1937 (specimen) ( $H_2$ ) and 26 March 1955 ( $W_2$ ).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER, *Calidris melanotos* (Vieillot). Uncommon transient; 12 March ( $H_1$ ) to 24 May ( $W_2$ ) and 23 July ( $H_1$ ) to 7 November ( $R_1$ ).

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, *Calidris fuscicollis* (Vieillot). Rare spring transient; 13 May ( $H_1$ ) to 11 June ( $W_1$ ). Handley, Sr., considered it a regular transient (personal communication).

LEAST SANDPIPER, *Calidris minutilla* (Vieillot). Fairly common transient; 30 April ( $W_1$ ) to 2 June ( $H_1$ ) and 15 July ( $M_1$ ) to 24 September ( $H_1$ ).

DUNLIN, *Calidris alpina* (Linnaeus). Accidental. Three records, 18 May 1924 ( $S_1$ ), 11 May 1949 ( $M_1$ ), and 9 December 1964 ( $M_1$ ).

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER, *Calidris pusilla* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient; 3 May ( $W_1$ ) to 6 June ( $H_1$ ) and 21 July ( $H_1$ ) to 15 October ( $H_1$ ).

WESTERN SANDPIPER, *Calidris mauri* (Cabanis). Rare transient; 7 May ( $H_1$ ) to 4 June ( $H_1$ ) and 14 August ( $H_1$ ) to 17 August ( $H_1$ ).

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER, *Limnodromus griseus* (Gmelin). Rare transient. Eight records, 26 March ( $W_2$ ) to 16 May ( $W_2$ ) and 16 August ( $H_1$ ) to 5 September ( $S_1$ ).

STILT SANDPIPER, *Micropalama himantopus* (Bonaparte). Rare. One visit. One bird with a flock of Lesser Yellowlegs, 5 October 1957 (Murray, 1958) to 13 October 1957 ( $S_2$ ).

RED PHALAROPE, *Phalaropus fulicarius* (Linnaeus). Accidental. One record: Smyth (1927) had a specimen secured 21 September 1912 from a flock of Pectoral Sandpipers.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE, *Steganopus tricolor* Vieillot. Accidental. One record. Mark Larson observed one on a pond near Blacksburg 27 May 1973.

HERRING GULL, *Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan. Rare winter visitor. Ten records, 20 November ( $O_1$ ) to 12 April ( $W_1$ ).

RING-BILLED GULL, *Larus delawarensis* Ord. Irregular transient and rare winter visitor; 8 October ( $H_2$ ) to 12 June ( $M_1$ ). Flocks occasionally found on New River or on college parking lots.

LAUGHING GULL, *Larus atricilla* Linnaeus. Accidental. One record. Mark Larson observed one among a flock of Ring-billed Gulls on a V.P.I. parking lot 30 April 1973.

FRANKLIN'S GULL, *Larus pipixcan* Wagler. Accidental. One record. Smyth (1912) secured a specimen from near the V.P.I. ice pond 22 October 1898.

BONAPARTE'S GULL, *Larus philadelphia* (Ord). Uncommon spring transient, rare in fall and winter; 24 March ( $S_3$ ) to 18 May ( $H_2$ ) and 31 October ( $J_1$ ) to 1 January (Smyth, 1927).

FORSTER'S TERN, *Sterna forsteri* Nuttall. Rare transient. Three records, 25 April ( $M_1$ ) (Murray, 1945), 16 May ( $H_2$ ), and 17 September 1945 (Handley, 1945).

COMMON TERN, *Sterna hirundo* Linnaeus. Uncommon transient; 23 March ( $M_1$ ) to June ( $S_1$ ) and 23 August ( $B_1$ ) to October ( $M_1$ ).

ROYAL TERN, *Thalasseus maximus* (Boddaert). Accidental. One record, 9 May 1947 ( $W_1$ ).

CASPIAN TERN, *Hydroprogne caspia* (Pallas). Accidental. Two records, two on 17 September 1945 in hurricane weather (Handley, 1945) and four on the New River 8 October 1967 ( $M_1$ ).

BLACK TERN, *Chlidonias niger* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient and summer visitor; 4 April ( $H_1$ ) to 24 September ( $S_1$ ).

ROCK DOVE, *Columba livia* Gmelin. Common resident.

MOURNING DOVE, *Zenaida macroura* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

PASSENGER PIGEON, *Ectopistes migratorius* (Linnaeus). Extinct. Smyth (1912) said his notes recorded six seen in the late fall of 1892 near Blacksburg. He was unwilling to assert positively—20 years later—that this was the case.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO, *Coccyzus americanus* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 26 April ( $H_1$ ) to 17 October ( $M_1$ ).

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (Wilson). Uncommon summer resident; 26 April ( $S_1$ ) to 29 September ( $H_1$ ).

BARN OWL, *Tyto alba* (Scopoli). Uncommon resident. Four nest records, two in December.

SCREECH OWL, *Otus asio* (Linnaeus). Fairly common resident.

GREAT HORNEDE OWL, *Bubo virginianus* (Gmelin). Uncommon resident.

SNOWY OWL, *Nyctea scandiaca* (Linnaeus). Rare. R. D. Michael reported seeing one fly over his yard in Blacksburg in early spring 1972.

BARRED OWL, *Strix varia* Barton. Uncommon resident.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio otus* (Linnaeus). Rare. Three records: a pair 26 November 1915 (Smyth, 1927), a nest with four young 9 May to 20 May 1939 (Addy, 1940), and one 15 August to 21 August 1961 ( $D_1$ ).

SHORT-EARED OWL, *Asio flammeus* (Pontoppidan). Rare. Six records, 13 November ( $H_2$ ) to 28 December ( $W_1$ ).

SAW-WHET OWL, *Aegolius acadicus* (Gmelin). Rare winter visitor. Five records, 27 December ( $H_5$ ) to 13 January ( $S_3$ ).

WHIP-POOR-WILL, *Caprimulgus vociferus* Wilson. Uncommon summer resident; 5 April ( $B_1$ ) to 17 October ( $M_1$ ).

COMMON NIGHTHAWK, *Chordeiles minor* (Forster). Fairly common transient, rare summer resident; 26 April ( $S_1$ ) to 18 November ( $D_1$ ) (9 May to 26 May and 15 August to 2 October).

CHIMNEY SWIFT, *Chaetura pelagica* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 31 March ( $B_1$ ) to 20 October ( $S_1$ ) (16 March to 16 October).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD, *Archilochus colubris* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 10 April ( $D_1$ ) to 21 October ( $M_1$ ) (17 April to 17 October).

BELTED KINGFISHER, *Megaceryle alcyon* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

COMMON FLICKER, *Colaptes auratus* (Linnaeus). Common resident. More common in summer.

PILEATED WOODPECKER, *Dryocopus pileatus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common resident.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER, *Centurus carolinus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common resident.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon resident, formerly common (Handley, 1937). More common in spring.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER, *Sphyrapicus varius* (Linnaeus). Fairly common winter visitor; 4 September (B<sub>1</sub>) to 19 May (W<sub>2</sub>) (23 September to 1 May).

HAIRY WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos villosus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common resident.

DOWNY WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos pubescens* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

EASTERN KINGBIRD, *Tyrannus tyrannus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common summer resident; 7 April (D<sub>1</sub>) to 6 October (H<sub>1</sub>) (19 April to 4 September).

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER, *Myiarchus crinitus* (Linnaeus). Fairly common summer resident; 20 April (W<sub>1</sub>) to 16 September (M<sub>1</sub>). Rarely found after mid July.

EASTERN PHOEBE, *Sayornis phoebe* (Latham). Common summer resident, uncommon winter visitor.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax flaviventris* (Baird and Baird). Formerly a common transient according to Smyth (1912). No records since 1931.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax virescens* (Vieillot). Common summer resident; 25 April (B<sub>1</sub>) to 11 October (H<sub>1</sub>). Scarce after July.

ALDER FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax alnorum* Brewster. Rare. One record, 5 July 1975 (C<sub>4</sub>).

LEAST FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax minimus* (Baird and Baird). Uncommon transient, rare summer resident, formerly common; 19 March (S<sub>1</sub>) to 15 October (B<sub>1</sub>).

EASTERN WOOD PEWEE, *Contopus virens* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 25 April (B<sub>1</sub>) to 19 October (H<sub>1</sub>).

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, *Nuttallornis borealis* (Swainson). Rare. Three records, 17 May 1959 (M<sub>1</sub>), 24 May 1973 (H<sub>4</sub>), and 20 August 1974 (S<sub>2</sub>).

HORNED LARK, *Eremophila alpestris* (Linnaeus). Fairly common winter visitor, uncommon summer resident. Nest records: May 1937, May 1940, and April 1942 (H<sub>2</sub>). Both *E.a. praticola* and *E.a. alpestris* occur, the former being the common form.

TREE SWALLOW, *Iridoprocne bicolor* (Vieillot). Uncommon transient; 23 March (S<sub>5</sub>) to 19 May (H<sub>1</sub>) and 9 August (H<sub>1</sub>) to 4 October (H<sub>1</sub>).

BANK SWALLOW, *Riparia riparia* (Linnaeus). Rare transient; 1 April (S<sub>1</sub>) to 23 May (M<sub>1</sub>) and 5 August (W<sub>1</sub>) to 27 September (H<sub>1</sub>).

ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* (Vieillot). Fairly common summer resident, formerly rare as Smyth had only one record; 29 March (H<sub>1</sub>) to 25 September (H<sub>1</sub>).

BARN SWALLOW, *Hirundo rustica* Linnaeus. Common summer resident; 1 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 10 October (H<sub>1</sub>) (5 April to 20 August).

CLIFF SWALLOW, *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* (Vieillot). Rare transient, formerly summer resident; 23 March (S<sub>5</sub>) to 21 September (S<sub>2</sub>). Handley, Jr., saw two nests in the Roanoke Valley in 1938. Smyth (1912) called it an "abundant summer breeding resident."

PURPLE MARTIN, *Progne subis* (Linnaeus). Fairly common summer resident, local; 22 March (S<sub>1</sub>) to 30 September (H<sub>1</sub>) (21 August).

BLUE JAY, *Cyanocitta cristata* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

COMMON RAVEN, *Corvus corax* Linnaeus. Uncommon resident. Nest records 1973 ( $C_3$ ) and 1974 ( $H_4$ ).

COMMON CROW, *Corvus brachyrhynchos* Brehm. Common resident.

FISH CROW, *Corvus ossifragus* Wilson. Rare winter visitor. C. O. Handley had six records in 1936-37; 20 December ( $H_1$ ) to 12 March ( $H_1$ ).

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, *Parus atricapillus* Linnaeus. Fairly common winter visitor; 10 October ( $M_1$ ) to 17 April ( $M_1$ ). Found in summer at higher elevations in neighboring Giles County.

CAROLINA CHICKADEE, *Parus carolinensis* Audubon. Common resident.

TUFTED TITMOUSE, *Parus bicolor* Linnaeus. Common resident.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH, *Sitta carolinensis* Latham. Common resident.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH, *Sitta canadensis* Linnaeus. Fairly common winter visitor; 12 August ( $S_1$ ) to 13 May ( $B_1$ ) (20 September to 10 May).

BROWN CREEPER, *Certhia familiaris* Linnaeus. Fairly common winter visitor (8 October to 22 April). One summered in Poverty Hollow at 2000-foot elevation in 1967 (Murray, 1967).

HOUSE WREN, *Troglodytes aedon* Vieillot. Common summer resident, rare winter visitor (10 April to 1 October).

WINTER WREN, *Troglodytes troglodytes* (Linnaeus). Fairly common winter visitor; 13 September ( $H_1$ ) to 5 May ( $H_1$ ) (9 October to 18 April).

BEWICK'S WREN, *Thryomanes bewickii* (Audubon). Rare resident, formerly common.

CAROLINA WREN, *Thryothorus ludovicianus* (Latham). Common resident.

LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN, *Telmatodytes palustris* (Wilson). Rare summer resident; 23 April ( $W_1$ ) to 30 October ( $S_1$ ). Smyth found one nest (1912). No records since 1938.

SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN, *Cistothorus platensis* (Latham). Rare transient; 4 May ( $H_1$ ) to 13 May ( $H_1$ ) and 13 August ( $H_1$ ) to 24 October ( $S_1$ ). No records since 1944.

MOCKINGBIRD, *Mimus polyglottos* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

GRAY CATBIRD, *Dumetella carolinensis* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, rare winter resident; 16 April ( $W_2$ ) to 28 December ( $S_3$ ) (21 April to 15 October).

BROWN THRASHER, *Toxostoma rufum* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, uncommon winter visitor.

AMERICAN ROBIN, *Turdus migratorius* Linnaeus. Common summer resident, uncommon winter visitor.

VARIED THRUSH, *Ixoreus naevius* (Gmelin). Accidental. One record 27 December 1962 (Dietrich, 1963).

WOOD THRUSH, *Hylocichla mustelina* (Gmelin). Common summer resident; 1 April ( $D_1$ ) to 30 October ( $D_1$ ) (19 April to 5 October).

HERMIT THRUSH, *Catharus guttatus* (Pallas). Uncommon transient and winter visitor; 22 September ( $B_1$ ) to 14 May ( $H_1$ ) (12 October to 10 May). Both *C. g. faxoni* and *C. g. crymophila* have been identified (Handley, 1948 and 1952).

SWAINSON'S THRUSH, *Catharus ustulatus* (Nuttall). Common transient, rare winter visitor; 1 September ( $H_1$ ) to 30 May ( $M_1$ ) (23 April to 30 May and 12 September to 19 October).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, *Catharus minimus* (Lafresnaye). Uncommon transient; 20 April ( $S_2$ ) to 26 May ( $M_1$ ) and 17 September ( $W_2$ ) to 17 November ( $W_3$ ).

VEERY, *Catharus fuscescens* (Stephens). Uncommon transient; 2 April ( $B_1$ ) to 23 May ( $W_2$ ) and 14 September ( $A_1$ ) to 25 September ( $W_2$ ).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD, *Sialia sialis* (Linnaeus). Uncommon resident, locally common.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER, *Polioptila caerulea* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 31 March (M<sub>1</sub>) to 2 October (H<sub>1</sub>) (11 April to 20 September).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET, *Regulus satrapa* Lichtenstein. Common winter visitor; 2 October (H<sub>1</sub>) to 2 May (B<sub>1</sub>) (9 October to 23 April).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, *Regulus calendula* (Linnaeus). Common transient, uncommon winter visitor; 8 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 19 May (M<sub>1</sub>) (19 September to 14 May).

• WATER PIPIT, *Anthus spinoletta* (Linnaeus). Uncommon, irregular winter visitor; 2 September (H<sub>2</sub>) to 15 May (W<sub>2</sub>).

BOHEMIAN WAXWING, *Bombycilla garrulus* (Linnaeus). Rare. One record, a single bird with a flock of Cedar Waxwings 2 March 1975 (N<sub>1</sub>).

CEDAR WAXWING, *Bombycilla cedrorum* Vieillot. Fairly common resident; nests.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE, *Lanius ludovicianus* Linnaeus. Uncommon resident. More common in winter.

STARLING, *Sturnus vulgaris* Linnaeus. Common resident.

WHITE-EYED VIREO, *Vireo griseus* (Boddaert). Fairly common summer resident; 17 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 17 October (M<sub>1</sub>) (20 April to 20 September).

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO, *Vireo flavifrons* Vieillot. Fairly common summer resident; 14 April (S<sub>1</sub>) to 6 October (H<sub>1</sub>) (20 April to 20 September).

SOLITARY VIREO, *Vireo solitarius* (Wilson). Fairly common transient, uncommon summer resident; 27 March (H<sub>1</sub>) to 26 October (W<sub>2</sub>) (10 April to 26 October). Presumably the summer birds are *V.s. alticola*.

RED-EYED VIREO, *Vireo olivaceus* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 17 April (B<sub>1</sub>) to 13 October (M<sub>1</sub>) (21 April to 29 September).

PHILADELPHIA VIREO, *Vireo philadelphicus* (Cassin). Rare transient; 14 May (M<sub>1</sub>) to 19 May (M<sub>1</sub>) and 5 September (M<sub>1</sub>) to 5 October (H<sub>1</sub>).

WARBLING VIREO, *Vireo gilvus* (Vieillot). Uncommon transient and summer resident; 17 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 30 September (G<sub>1</sub>).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, *Mniotilta varia* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 11 March (G<sub>1</sub>) to 27 October (R<sub>1</sub>) (15 April to 5 October).

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER, *Protonotaria citrea* (Boddaert). Rare. Four records, 26 April 1963 (M<sub>2</sub>), 7 June 1967 (M<sub>1</sub>), 5 May 1968 (U<sub>1</sub>), and 24 April 1973 (L<sub>1</sub>).

WORM-EATING WARBLER, *Helmitheros vermivorus* (Gmelin). Common summer resident; 17 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 15 October (M<sub>1</sub>) (27 April to 31 August).

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER, *Vermivora chrysoptera* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient and summer resident; 23 April (H<sub>1</sub>) to 15 September (M<sub>1</sub>).

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER, *Vermivora pinus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient, rare summer resident; 26 April (M<sub>1</sub>) to 4 September (M<sub>1</sub>).

BREWSTER'S WARBLER, *Vermivora chrysoptera* x *V. pinus*. Hybrid. Rare. Three visits, 2 May (S<sub>5</sub>) to 24 May (M<sub>1</sub>) (Murray, 1963; Klimkiewicz, 1965).

TENNESSEE WARBLER, *Vermivora peregrina* (Wilson). Transient; uncommon in spring, common in fall; 25 April (H<sub>1</sub>) to 20 May (W<sub>2</sub>) and 22 August (H<sub>1</sub>) to 13 November (W<sub>2</sub>) (28 August to 25 October).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, *Vermivora celata* (Say). Rare transient. Eight records, 10 April (Handley, 1945) to 30 April (W<sub>2</sub>) and 2 October (S<sub>1</sub>) to 1 November (W<sub>2</sub>).

NASHVILLE WARBLER, *Vermivora ruficapilla* (Wilson). Uncommon transient, rare winter visitor; 21 April (H<sub>2</sub>) to 15 May (B<sub>1</sub>) and 29 August (H<sub>2</sub>) to 2 November (A<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>5</sub>). One seen several times between 8 December 1952 and 10 February 1953 (Shear, 1953).



NORTHERN PARULA, *Parula americana* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 13 April ( $S_1$ ) to 17 October ( $M_1$ ) (19 April to 4 October).

YELLOW WARBLER, *Dendroica petechia* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 11 April ( $M_1$ ) to 9 October ( $H_1$ ) (15 April to 8 September).

MAGNOLIA WARBLER, *Dendroica magnolia* (Wilson). Common transient; 5 March ( $B_1$ ) to 31 May ( $M_1$ ) and 20 August ( $H_1$ ) to 27 December ( $R_5$ ) (28 April to 28 May and 1 September to 20 October).

CAPE MAY WARBLER, *Dendroica tigrina* (Gmelin). Common transient; 22 April ( $R_2$ ) to 27 May ( $M_1$ ) and 29 August ( $H_1$ ) to November ( $S_2$ ) (27 April to 15 May and 2 September to 30 October).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER, *Dendroica caerulescens* (Gmelin). Common transient, rare summer resident; 18 April ( $H_1$ ) to 25 October ( $M_1$ ) (29 April to 20 October). A few summer on the higher mountain ridges, presumably *D. c. cairnsi* (Handley, 1940; Murray and Watson, 1949).

YELLOW-RUMPED (MYRTLE) WARBLER, *Dendroica coronata* (Linnaeus). Common transient, uncommon winter visitor; 13 September ( $B_1$ ) to 24 May ( $B_1$ ) (2 October to 13 May).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER, *Dendroica virens* (Gmelin). Common transient, uncommon summer resident; 26 March ( $M_1$ ) to 29 October ( $M_1$ ) (22 April to 8 October). A few are present in summer on mountain ridges.

CERULEAN WARBLER, *Dendroica cerulea* (Wilson). Uncommon transient and summer resident; 20 April ( $D_1$ ) to 18 June ( $M_1$ ). No fall records.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER, *Dendroica fusca* (Muller). Common transient, uncommon summer resident; 19 April ( $M_1$ ) to 19 October ( $H_1$ ) (2 May to 10 October).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER, *Dendroica dominica* (Linnaeus). Rare. Eight records, 6 April ( $M_1$ ) to 28 May ( $D_1$ ).

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER, *Dendroica pensylvanica* (Linnaeus). Common transient, uncommon summer resident (Murray and Watson, 1949), more common in fall; 26 April ( $H_2$ ) to 17 October ( $W_2$ ) (29 April to 7 October).

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER, *Dendroica castanea* (Wilson). Uncommon transient; 3 May ( $S_2$ ) to 26 May ( $L_1$ ) and 7 September ( $D_1$ ) to 26 October ( $W_2$ ).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER, *Dendroica striata* (Forster). Common transient; 30 April ( $W_1$ ) to 12 June ( $R_1$ ) and 26 August ( $M_1$ ) to 24 October ( $B_1$ ) (3 May to 1 June). More common in spring.

PINE WARBLER, *Dendroica pinus* (Wilson). Common summer resident; 28 February ( $W_2$ ) to 27 December ( $C_1$ ) (22 March to 17 October). Smyth called it very rare (1912).

PRAIRIE WARBLER, *Dendroica discolor* (Vieillot). Common summer resident; 11 April ( $W_1$ ) to 7 October ( $B_1$ ) (19 April to 10 September).

WESTERN PALM WARBLER, *Dendroica palmarum palmarum* (Gmelin). Fairly common transient, uncommon winter visitor; 14 August ( $H_1$ ) to 29 May ( $M_1$ ) (4 September to 12 May).

YELLOW PALM WARBLER, *Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea* Ridgway. Rare transient; 7 April ( $H_1$ ) to 3 May ( $S_1$ ) and 7 September ( $B_1$ ) to 10 November ( $W_2$ ). No records since 1954.

OVENBIRD, *Seiurus aurocapillus* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 16 April ( $H_1$ ) to 17 October ( $W_2$ ).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH, *Seiurus noveboracensis* (Gmelin). Uncommon transient; 5 April ( $M_1$ ) to 4 June ( $W_2$ ) and 7 August ( $H_1$ ) to 19 October ( $M_1$ ).

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH, *Seiurus motacilla* (Vieillot). Common summer resident; 19 March ( $B_1$ ) to 21 October ( $H_1$ ) (9 April to 19 September).

KENTUCKY WARBLER, *Oporornis formosus* (Wilson). Uncommon summer resident; 21 April (M<sub>1</sub>) to 3 October (M<sub>4</sub>).

CONNECTICUT WARBLER, *Oporornis agilis* (Wilson). Rare transient; 21 May (H<sub>1</sub>) to 29 May (M<sub>1</sub>) and 5 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 24 October (W<sub>2</sub>).

MOURNING WARBLER, *Oporornis philadelphia* (Wilson). Rare transient; 10 May (H<sub>2</sub>) to 31 May (W<sub>3</sub>) and 13 September (A<sub>1</sub>—Handley, 1940) to 2 October (L<sub>1</sub>).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, *Geothlypis trichas* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 8 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 12 December (H<sub>2</sub>) (18 April to 3 October).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT, *Icteria virens* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 21 April (M<sub>1</sub>) to 17 October (S<sub>2</sub>) (25 April to 23 September).

HOODED WARBLER, *Wilsonia citrina* (Boddaert). Common summer resident; 16 April (M<sub>1</sub>) to 12 November (S<sub>2</sub>) (23 April to 28 September).

WILSON'S WARBLER, *Wilsonia pusilla* (Wilson). Uncommon transient; 24 April (S<sub>2</sub>) to 27 May (H<sub>1</sub>) and 25 August (S<sub>2</sub>) to 26 October (J<sub>1</sub>).

CANADA WARBLER, *Wilsonia canadensis* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient; 29 April (M<sub>1</sub>) to 28 May (H<sub>1</sub>) and 29 July (M<sub>1</sub>) to 22 September (M<sub>1</sub>). Breeds on higher mountains in neighboring counties.

AMERICAN REDSTART, *Setophaga ruticilla* (Linnaeus). Common transient, uncommon summer resident; 12 March (B<sub>1</sub>) to 13 October (W<sub>2</sub>) (22 April to 8 October).

HOUSE SPARROW, *Passer domesticus* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

BOBOLINK, *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient; 19 April (W<sub>1</sub>) to 2 June (H<sub>1</sub>) and 13 August (H<sub>1</sub>) to 12 October (H<sub>1</sub>). Formerly common according to Smyth (1912) and Handley (1951).

EASTERN MEADOWLARK, *Sturnella magna* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD, *Agelaius phoeniceus* (Linnaeus). Common transient and summer resident, uncommon and irregular winter visitor.

ORCHARD ORIOLE, *Icterus spurius* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer resident; 22 April (H<sub>1</sub>) to 9 September (H<sub>1</sub>) (26 April to 20 June).

NORTHERN (BALTIMORE) ORIOLE, *Icterus galbula* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, rare winter visitor; 7 April (G<sub>1</sub>) to 19 January (U<sub>1</sub>) (20 April to 10 September).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD, *Euphagus carolinus* (Muller). Fairly common winter visitor, common transient; 6 September (M<sub>1</sub>) to 12 May (M<sub>1</sub>) (3 October to 23 April).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD, *Euphagus cyanocephalus* (Wagler). Rare. Three records, 28 December 1954 (Handley, 1955), 27 March 1956 (W<sub>2</sub>), and 24 April 1956 (W<sub>2</sub>).

COMMON GRACKLE, *Quiscalus quiscula* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, irregular in winter. About 14,000 wintered in a mixed blackbird roost in Radford in 1971-72.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD, *Molothrus ater* (Boddaert). Common transient and summer resident, irregular in fall and winter.

WESTERN Tanager, *Piranga ludoviciana* (Wilson). Accidental. One record: Glenn Dudderar found one in the Dry Run Valley 3 May 1972.

SCARLET Tanager, *Piranga olivacea* (Gmelin). Common summer resident; 22 April (H<sub>1</sub>) to 11 November (D<sub>1</sub>) (26 April to 10 October).

SUMMER Tanager, *Piranga rubra* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer resident; 4 May (M<sub>1</sub>) to 21 July (M<sub>1</sub>). Early records were from the Roanoke River valley at 1500-foot elevation. In 1964 and 1965, it summered in the Poverty Creek valley at 2000 feet (Murray, 1966).

CARDINAL, *Cardinalis cardinalis* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, *Pheucticus ludovicianus* (Linnaeus). Uncommon transient, rare summer resident; 23 April (S<sub>2</sub>) to 31 October (H<sub>1</sub>). A pair appeared to be defending territory in Poverty Hollow at 2000-foot elevation 17 June 1974. Im-

mature birds were seen there 7 July 1974. Common breeder in the higher mountains of adjacent Giles County.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK, *Pheucticus melanocephalus* (Swainson). Accidental. One was present in Radford from 31 January 1971 (S<sub>6</sub>) to 11 April 1971 (S<sub>5</sub>) (Stone, 1972).

BLUE GROSBEAK, *Guiraca caerulea* (Linnaeus). Uncommon summer resident; 4 May (A<sub>2</sub>) to 20 August (S<sub>2</sub>)—Stickley, 1956; Shear, 1960).

INDIGO BUNTING, *Passerina cyanea* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident; 23 April (W<sub>2</sub>) to 18 October (H<sub>2</sub>) (26 April to 29 September).

PAINTED BUNTING, *Passerina ciris* (Linnaeus). Rare. Two records, 25 May 1940 (H<sub>2</sub>) and 7 September 1943 (H<sub>2</sub>).

DICKCISSEL, *Spiza americana* (Gmelin). Rare. Four records, 24 March (B<sub>2</sub>) to 1 April (M<sub>1</sub>) 1955, 25 and 27 May 1962 (R<sub>1</sub>), 2 June to 19 June 1967 (Roane, 1967), and 24 and 25 December 1969 (S<sub>5</sub>).

EVENING GROSBEAK, *Hesperiphona vespertina* (Cooper). Irregular winter visitor; 27 October (S<sub>2</sub>) to 23 May (D<sub>2</sub>). First found by R. M. Brown 16 March 1946 (Handley, 1946b). Since then, it has appeared in 13 out of 27 winters in flocks up to 50 or more.

PURPLE FINCH, *Carpodacus purpureus* (Gmelin). Irregular, fairly common winter visitor; 16 September (M<sub>1</sub>) to 15 May (M<sub>1</sub>).

HOUSE FINCH, *Carpodacus mexicanus* (Muller). Uncommon winter visitor, rare in summer; 28 October (M<sub>1</sub>) to 26 July (M<sub>1</sub>). First appeared at G. M. Shear's feeder 8 January 1971 and has come in increasing numbers each winter since then. One came to the author's feeder until 26 July 1974.

COMMON REDPOLL, *Acanthis flammea* (Linnaeus). Rare. One record, 27 February 1928 (B<sub>1</sub>).

PINE SISKIN, *Spinus pinus* (Wilson). Irregular winter visitor; 17 October (M<sub>1</sub>) to 31 May (C<sub>3</sub>).

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH, *Spinus tristis* (Linnaeus). Common resident.

RED CROSSBILL, *Loxia curvirostra* Linnaeus. Uncommon. Usually a winter visitor but it summered in 1970 (M<sub>1</sub>) and 1973 (C<sub>4</sub>). A road-killed specimen found 29 December 1970 was identified by Mrs. R. C. Laybourne as *L.c. minor*. Several birds observed in October 1970 showed the streaked breasts of immature birds suggesting that the species may have nested here that summer.

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL, *Loxia leucoptera* Gmelin. Rare winter visitor. Eight records, 8 November (W<sub>2</sub>) to 20 March (H<sub>1</sub>).

RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE, *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (Linnaeus). Common summer resident, uncommon in winter. It appears to be growing more common in winter. Smyth's (1912) latest record was 24 October.

SAVANNAH SPARROW, *Passerculus sandwichensis* (Gmelin). Fairly common transient, rare winter visitor; 28 August (M<sub>1</sub>) to 27 May (H<sub>1</sub>) (25 September to 7 May).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, *Ammodramus savannarum* (Gmelin). Summer resident, formerly common, now rare; and rare winter visitor; 23 January (W<sub>2</sub>) to 26 October (B<sub>1</sub>) (7 April to 8 August).

HENSLow's SPARROW, *Ammodramus henslowii* (Audubon). Rare. Three records, 21 April 1946 (H<sub>2</sub>), 7 May 1964 (Messersmith, 1964b), and 9 September 1972 (L<sub>2</sub>).

SHARP-TAILED SPARROW (NELSON'S), *Ammospiza caudacuta nelsoni* (Allen). Rare. Four records, 25 May 1908 (S<sub>1</sub>), 16 October 1938 (H<sub>2</sub>), 25 September 1954 (W<sub>2</sub>) and 22 October 1955 (W<sub>2</sub>).

VESPER SPARROW, *Poocetes gramineus* (Gmelin). Fairly common transient and summer resident; 5 March (W<sub>2</sub>) to 15 November (H<sub>2</sub>).

BACHMAN'S SPARROW, *Aimophila aestivalis* (Lichtenstein). Rare. Four records, 5 April 1931 (B<sub>1</sub>), 20 April (H<sub>2</sub>), 2 May 1902 (S<sub>1</sub>), and 14 August (H<sub>1</sub>).

DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED), *Junco hyemalis hyemalis* (Linnaeus). Common winter visitor; 28 September (W<sub>2</sub>) to 6 May (H<sub>1</sub>) (12 October to 23 April).

DARK-EYED JUNCO (OREGON), *Junco hyemalis oregonus* (Townsend). Rare winter visitor. Seven records, 26 January (D<sub>1</sub>) to 25 March (D<sub>1</sub>).

TREE SPARROW, *Spizella arborea* (Wilson). Winter visitor, formerly common, now uncommon; 22 October (H<sub>1</sub>) to 5 April (H<sub>1</sub>).

CHIPPING SPARROW, *Spizella passerina* (Bechstein). Common summer resident, rare winter resident (12 March to 12 November).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, *Spizella pallida* (Swainson). Accidental. One record, 8 October 1955 (W<sub>1</sub>—Murray, 1957).

FIELD SPARROW, *Spizella pusilla* (Wilson). Common resident, formerly summer resident according to Smyth (1912).

HARRIS' SPARROW, *Zonotrichia querula* (Nuttall). Accidental. One record. A specimen was found by George Cornwell and collected by Carl Holcomb 17 February 1967. It is now in the V.P.I. collection.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, *Zonotrichia leucophrys* (Forster). Common winter visitor; 14 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 3 June (D<sub>1</sub>) (10 October to 12 May). C. O. Handley Jr. collected a specimen of *Z.l. gambelii* 16 November 1940.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW, *Zonotrichia albicollis* (Gmelin). Common winter visitor; 21 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 28 June (M<sub>1</sub>) (3 October to 18 May).

FOX SPARROW, *Passerella iliaca* (Merrem). Uncommon transient and winter visitor; 10 October (H<sub>1</sub>) to 13 May (B<sub>1</sub>). Most common in March.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW, *Melospiza lincolni* (Audubon). Uncommon transient; 5 April (B<sub>1</sub>) to 23 May (W<sub>2</sub>) and 18 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 11 November (W<sub>2</sub>).

SWAMP SPARROW, *Melospiza georgiana* (Latham). Uncommon transient and winter visitor; 28 September (H<sub>1</sub>) to 26 May (M<sub>1</sub>).

SONG SPARROW, *Melospiza melodia* (Wilson). Common resident.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR, *Calcarius lapponicus* (Linnaeus). Rare. Two records, 1 May 1928 (B<sub>1</sub>) and 19 December 1945 (Handley, 1946a).

SNOW BUNTING, *Plectrophenax nivalis* (Linnaeus). Rare. Two records, 16 and 17 December 1943 (H<sub>2</sub>) and 10 and 11 February 1971 (D<sub>2</sub>).

In summary, over 270 species of birds have been recorded in this area from 1891 through April 1974. About 80 of these are rare and some have been found only once. The more common birds fall nearly equally into the four categories of residents, summer visitors, winter visitors, and transients.

Comparison of the records of Smyth and Handley with the more recent records reveals many changes in the abundance of bird species over the years, some increasing and others decreasing.

The following have become more abundant during the twentieth century: Black Duck, Gadwall (increased and later decreased), American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Bufflehead, Black Vulture, American Coot, Rough-winged Swallow, Blue Jay (Blacksburg area), Mockingbird, Swainson's Thrush, Black-poll Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Cardinal, Starling, and Evening Grosbeak.

The following have become less abundant during the same time interval: Canada Goose, Pintail, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Marsh Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Turkey (decreased and then increased), Virginia Rail (increased and then decreased), Sora, Common Gallinule, Upland Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper

(increased and then decreased), Black-billed Cockoo, Screech Owl, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Cliff Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Palm Warbler, Bobolink, Grasshopper Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow.

Several changes in status have occurred:

From transient to summer resident—Scarlet Tanager.

From transient to winter visitor—Common Snipe, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-crowned Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow.

From winter visitor to resident—Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, and Red Crossbill.

From summer resident to resident—Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Field Sparrow.

From summer resident to transient—Spotted Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, and Least Flycatcher.

I wish to express my thanks to the many observers who have reported their findings to me and especially Curtis Adkisson and Henry Mosby, who have read the manuscript and given me their suggestions.

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## BANDING RESULTS AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH IN 1973

F. R. SCOTT

The Kiptopeke Beach banding station, sponsored by the Virginia Society of Ornithology, ran for 51 days from 1 September to 21 October 1973 at its usual site in southern Northampton County, Virginia, overlooking the Chesapeake Bay. As compared with the results obtained in 1972 (see *Raven*, 44: 68-70, 1973), a few more birds were banded—7584 of 98 species versus 7331 of 95 species in 1972—but at the cost of seven more days of operation and 40% more net-hours (16,645 versus 11,878).

The netting efficiency dropped from 62 new birds per 100 net-hours in 1972 to 46 in 1973, the lowest in recent years. The high was set in 1970 with 95 new birds per 100 net-hours. Interestingly, the 1973 monthly breakdown reveals the September efficiency to be 50 and that for October to be 39, an unusual turnabout, since at this station the October netting efficiency is normally higher than that for September. Undoubtedly, the unusually warm fall weather and the scarcity of strong cold fronts had a bearing on this situation, as did the fact that the station closed prior to the main migration of winter residents. There were

also 677 repeats, 12 returns of birds banded here in previous years, and one foreign retrap.

In comparing station results in 1973 with those of previous years, it is difficult to discern a clear pattern. Since the station did not close until 21 October, versus 15 October in 1972, it was not unexpected to find that many winter residents were in higher numbers in 1973. For example, comparisons between 1973 and 1972 include Brown Creeper, 82 in 1973 (versus 17 in 1972); Winter Wren, 29 (versus 12); Hermit Thrush, 47 (Versus 23); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 163 (versus 89); and Swamp Sparrow, 41 (versus 19). Yet the most abundant winter resident, the Yellow-rumped Warbler, declined from 1637 in 1972 to only 440 in 1973, the lowest count since 1966, when the station was run with fewer nets for a shorter period of time.

American Redstarts hit a record high, rising from 1706 banded in 1972 to 2164 in 1973. Other increases of interest were Swainson's Thrush, 108 (1972) to 236 (1973); Red-eyed Vireo, 118 to 218; Black-and-white Warbler, 176 to 272; Palm Warbler, 142 to 272; Overbird, 151 to 230; Northern Waterthrush, 52 to 106; Wilson's Warbler, 10 to 34; Blue Grosbeak, 3 to 7; and Indigo Bunting, 42 to 102. Declines of interest, aside from the Yellow-rumped Warbler already mentioned, included Red-breasted Nuthatch, 34 to 4; Gray-cheeked Thrush, 149 to 87; and Veery, 202 to 172. Note that for the first time since 1970, Swainson's Thrushes again outnumbered the Gray-cheeks. Unusual birds for this station included a Merlin on 27 September (W. P. Smith), a first banding record here, a late Acadian Flycatcher on 17 October (Smith), a Warbling Vireo on 6 October (C. W. Hacker), a Golden-winged Warbler on 10 September (F. R. Scott), and a Clay-colored Sparrow on 4 September (Betty Lancaster and Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell—photographed—third station record and an extraordinarily early date for this species). There was one foreign retrap, an AHY F Common Yellowthroat netted by W. P. Smith on 28 September (band no. 1280-63808) banded originally by Mr. and Mrs. W. Pepper at Island Beach, New Jersey, on 19 May 1972. Of the 12 returns, three repeated once and one twice. The returns were a Bobwhite (from 1969), a Downy Woodpecker (from 1970), two Carolina Chickadees (one from 1969), three Carolina Wrens, a Brown Thrasher, two White-eyed Vireos (one from 1970), a Black-and-white Warbler, and a Cardinal. All of these were thought to be permanent or summer residents.

Peak flight days occurred on 8 September (681 birds trapped, 471 of them—or 69%—being redstarts), 13 September (340), 19 September (340), 30 September (350), 15 October (319), and 17 October (340). All of these were associated with the passages of cold fronts. On 10 September, without a front but with northeasterly winds, an intense flight occurred in the early morning causing an immediate furling of the nets since there were too few personnel to handle the numbers that were coming into the nets. The banding total for the day was only 219, but some 350 birds were released unbanded from the nets to minimize casualties.

From late September on, banding operations were enlivened by the occasional appearance, usually high overhead, of a large, bright green, long-tailed, and quite raucous parakeet. Although none of the banding group professed to expertise in the identification of alien parakeets, one suggested that it might be an Asian Ring-necked Parakeet. Observations of diurnally migrating birds were often hampered by the unfortunate fact that peak overhead movement of birds often occurred at times of peak banding activity. Nevertheless, a few



observations of interest were made. Cattle Egrets, for example, reached a peak in the station area of 306 on 12 September (Scott). Although the main hawk migration was either nonspectacular or was missed, Ospreys were noted in numbers the last week in September, with a peak count of 133 on 29 September (Scott and Smith). The only other hawk counts of note were also on 29 September when 130 Sharp-shins and 192 American Kestrels were noted. Other visual observations included a Western Kingbird over (but unfortunately not in) the nets on 4 October (Hacker) and peak counts of 70 Bobolinks and 33 Baltimore Orioles on 9 September. Pine Siskins, first recorded here on 6 October, increased to the point where 205 were counted on 20 October. It should be emphasized that these qualify only as incidental observations, as the station work load and available personnel did not permit regular periods each day devoted to visual observations.

Station operation was essentially the same as in previous years with up to 41 mist nets in use as weather and personnel permitted, but usually open from dawn to mid or late afternoon. In general, one licensed bander was in charge of the station for a week at a time. These were Mrs. Jane P. Church, C. W. Hacker, Mrs. Betty Lancaster, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F. R. Scott, and W. P. Smith. Backing these up were 98 other banders and assistants, whose aid was vital to the success of the operation.

The Kiptopeke banders are indebted to J. Howard Smith, Inc., of Port Monmouth, New Jersey, and John Maddox, of Virginia Beach, for permission to use their lands for the banding station and to Mitchell A. Byrd for the loan of some equipment. Thanks also go to W. P. Smith who—as usual—performed the thankless task of the final editing and tabulation of the field records.

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## A WHITE IBIS IN THE APPALACHIAN REGION OF VIRGINIA

RICHARD A. ROWLETT

On 1 September 1973 I observed an immature White Ibis, *Eudocimus albus*, feeding in a small farm pond 30 yards west of the southbound lanes of Interstate Route 81 and about 11 miles south of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Virginia. I watched the bird for about two minutes as it fed in about two inches of water along the pond edge. I observed all of the necessary field marks including the decurved bill, which was fleshy pink on the basal two-thirds and about the face. The pale head and neck was heavily streaked with grayish brown, which contrasted sharply with the white belly and dark brown back. I did not flush the bird since there was no question regarding its identity. I revisited the area on the evening of 3 September but did not see the bird again.

There was no appreciable invasion or wanderings of the White Ibis to the Coastal Plain and Piedmont areas of the mid Atlantic region this year as there was during the late summer of 1972. Therefore, the occurrence of this bird west of the Blue Ridge was certainly a pleasant surprise. The fact that the bird was an immature is fairly typical of wandering waders, including the White Ibis, in the late summer.

715 Main Street, Apt. 5, Laurel, Maryland 20810

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL AT  
CHINCOTEAGUE REFUGE

MARSHALL HOWE

On 8 September 1973 I had an excellent view of a Lesser Black-backed Gull, *Larus fuscus*, on the outer beach of Assateague Island, Virginia, about one mile north of the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge parking lot. The bird was observed from about 100 feet standing with both Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, affording direct size comparisons. It was almost intermediate in bulk but probably somewhat closer to the Ring-billed. The bill was also intermediate but closer to that of the Herring. The basal half of the bill was yellowish and the distal half black. Leg coloration was yellow with a greenish cast. The mantle was dark gray, *much* darker than in the other species, but not as dark as that of the Great Black-backed Gull. The remainder of the plumage was white, the head, neck, and breast mottled liberally with light brown. The lores and cheeks were beige. I am, incidentally, very familiar with the various plumages of the Laughing Gull. Reference to specimens in the U. S. National Museum and to the detailed account in Witherby's *Handbook of British Birds* confirmed in my mind that the bird was *Larus fuscus graellsii*, the southern European form, in winter plumage.

This observation was not confirmed by other observers. I am aware that there are previous records of this species from coastal Virginia, but I thought this one would be of sufficient interest to report.

Bird and Mammal Laboratories  
National Museum of Natural History  
Washington, D. C. 20560

## RAVEN NESTING IN PIEDMONT VIRGINIA

CHARLES E. STEVENS

While walking along the Nelson County, Virginia, bank of the Rockfish River (Albemarle lies on the opposite side) on 15 April 1973, I heard the croaks of a Common Raven, *Corvus corax*, several times followed after a while by the sounds of its young, possibly being fed. After some investigation I saw its nest, a rather bulky stick affair, located about 30 feet up a cliff, where it was wedged in a large cleft. The north-facing bluffs here were high, steep and rocky. My attempt to try to work down from above or laterally along the precarious schist ledges in order to look down into the nest was unsuccessful as it was quite protectively located. Also the nestlings became quiet and would not show themselves.

This nesting record for the inner Piedmont is one of the few of which I am aware east of the mountains. The location is only two miles from the Rockfish's confluence with the James at Howardsville, and the elevation is 360 feet.

On 10 May 1966 Peter Mehrling found a Raven's nest with four young at an elevation of 1100 feet on Boaz Mountain, near Covesville in Albemarle County, which was situated 40 feet up in a Virginia pine amidst a pine stand. This

location is 10 miles east of the Blue Ridge in a group of small mountains. The birds were also said to have nested there in 1964. The record is especially interesting because Ravens in Virginia usually build nests on cliffs.

It is quite possible that the Raven which Tom Wieboldt and I saw at Willis Mountain in central Buckingham County on 19 March 1972 was nesting, as the mountain affords many cliffs with ledges and crevices difficult of access.

615 Preston Place, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

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### IN MEMORIAM

#### WILLIAM A. HOUSTON

Lt. Col. William A. Houston, USMC (Ret.), of Alexandria, Virginia, a member of the VSO, died suddenly on 14 March 1974 at the age of 59.

Col. Houston grew up in North Carolina and graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy in 1938. During a 21-year career in the Marine Corps, he saw service in both World War II and the Korean War. He retired in 1959 and took up a new career as a conservationist and citizen "activist" in community affairs. He was a leader in the effort in Fairfax County to bring the sewage problem under control and to institute an orderly system of land-use planning. He was Vice Chairman of the Environmental Quality Advisory Council for Fairfax County.

Col. Houston had served as Treasurer of the Virginia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy since 1968. He had been a Director of the Conservation Council of Virginia since 1969 and Director and Vice President of the Northern Virginia Conservation Council since 1970. He was also active in the Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States and the Northern Virginia Chapter of the VSO.

He is survived by his wife, Polly.

ROBERT J. WATSON

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### NEWS AND NOTES

#### COMPILED BY F. R. SCOTT

**MORE PELAGIC OBSERVATIONS.** On a boat trip offshore on 15 July 1973 Richard A. Rowlett counted 3 Cory's Shearwaters, one Greater Shearwater, and 82 Wilson's Petrels. These were all about 75 miles due east of Wallops Island, Virginia. On 18 November 1973 Robert L. Ake and Paul G. DuMont recorded 5 Parasitic Jaegers 8-10 miles off Virginia Beach and 27 Black-legged Kittiwakes 12-18 miles out.

**ANHINGA AT CHINCOTEAGUE.** An Anhinga was reported at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia, on 8 October 1973 by Eunice Liner of New York. The next day the same bird was found by Mr. and Mrs. Barry Sperling at the same spot, just south of the bridge crossing the channel between

Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. The yellow bill and orange throat were seen clearly as the bird sat on a piling with wings partly extended, before it flew some 150 yards away and landed in the water.

**WHITE IBIS APPEAR AGAIN.** There were two reports of White Ibis in southeastern Virginia during the summer of 1973. H. L. Hughes, Mr. and Mrs. David L. Hughes, and others observed an immature at Portsmouth on 12 July, and Marvin Wass found a flock of 10 immatures in Carter Creek, near Rosewell, Gloucester County, on 29 July.

**LONG-BILLED CURLEW ON EASTERN SHORE.** On 11 August 1973 Mitchell A. Byrd and M. D. Schiavelli carefully observed a Long-billed Curlew on Fisherman Island, Northampton County, Virginia.

**BUFF-BREASTS IN 1973.** Buff-breasted Sandpipers were recorded in three locations in Virginia during the fall of 1973. G. S. Grant and T. R. Barry found 12 at Craney Island, Portsmouth, on 1 September, and one was seen at Fisherman Island on 8 September by Robert Lowry and M. D. Schiavelli. At Chincoteague Refuge, F. Prescott Ward found 12 on 28 September, 7 on 30 September, and 3 on 12 October (plus other records on the Maryland part of Assateague Island). Several of these were photographed and the slides placed in the National Photoduplicate File (Nos. 262-1Ta and 262-1Tb).

**PHALAROPES DURING FALL 1973.** More than the usual number of phalaropes were reported in Virginia during the fall of 1973. Among these were a Northern Phalarope at Chincoteague Refuge on 16 September (L. K. Malone) and a Wilson's Phalarope at the same place on 3 October (J. O. Pullman). Four other Wilson's were seen at nearby Atlantic, Virginia, on August 19 (C. R. Vaughn). At Craney Island, Portsmouth, the peak count was 14 Wilson's and 9 Northern Phalaropes on 5 September (Bill Akers, Bruce Schweitzer, Jerry Via, and Bill Williams).

**VAGRANT WARBLERS AT NEWPORT NEWS.** The Black-throated Gray Warbler was discovered on three different occasions in Newport News, Virginia, recently by the Sydney Mitchells. One, a beautiful male, was seen with some Black-and-white Warblers by both of the Mitchells on 9 September 1973. The yellow spot in front of the eye was clearly seen. Another bird, this time an apparent female without a black throat, was seen in the same place on 20 January 1974, and again the diagnostic yellow spot was seen, the bird remaining until 31 January. The third observation, of a male this time, was made on 9 March 1974 by Dorothy Mitchell. Tentatively, these observations constitute the first sight records of this species in Virginia. The species was mentioned as hypothetical in the state by J. J. Murray (*Raven*, 34: 28, 1963), but details of any earlier records have not been located.

**LATE PRAIRIE WARBLER.** Harry and Edmund LeGrand found a very late Prairie Warbler at Chincoteague Refuge, Virginia, on 24 November 1972.

**LARK SPARROW WINTERING.** A Lark Sparrow spent the period from 15 December 1973 to 6 March 1974 at Redart, Mathews County, Virginia, and was observed on numerous occasions and photographed by Mary Pulley, coming to her feeders almost daily after 19 January. The color slide of the bird shows the characteristic facial pattern and the spot on the breast clearly.

ANNUAL MEETINGS OF  
THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

Organizational Meeting: Lynchburg, 7 December 1929

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|--|---|--|
| 1. Richmond<br>13-14 February 1931     | 14. Lexington<br>23-24 April 1948       | 28. Newport News<br>27-28 April 1962   |
| 2. Charlottesville<br>13 February 1932 | 15. Charlottesville<br>20-21 May 1949   | 29. Lexington<br>10-11 May 1963        |
| 3. Norfolk<br>20-21 January 1933       | 16. Harrisonburg<br>5-6 May 1950        | 30. Arlington<br>1-2 May 1964          |
| 4. Alexandria<br>9-10 March 1934       | 17. Danville<br>27-28 April 1951        | 31. Mountain Lake<br>21-22 May 1965    |
| 5. Roanoke<br>26-27 April 1935         | 18. Williamsburg<br>15-16 February 1952 | 32. Norfolk<br>18-19 February 1966     |
| 6. Lynchburg<br>21-22 February 1936    | 19. Arlington<br>8-9 May 1953           | 33. Richmond<br>28-29 April 1967       |
| 7. Richmond<br>23-24 April 1937        | 20. Lynchburg<br>23-24 April 1954       | 34. Charlottesville<br>10-11 May 1968  |
| 8. Lexington<br>29-30 April 1938       | 21. Norfolk<br>28-30 April 1955         | 35. Williamsburg<br>1-4 May 1969       |
| 9. Norfolk<br>17-18 February 1939      | 22. Salem<br>27-28 April 1956           | 36. Natural Bridge<br>8-10 May 1970    |
| 10. Harrisonburg<br>10-11 May 1940     | 23. Wachapreague<br>3-4 May 1957        | 37. Staunton<br>7-9 May 1971           |
| 11. Roanoke<br>9-10 May 1941           | 24. Blacksburg<br>2-3 May 1958          | 38. Fredericksburg<br>21-23 April 1972 |
| 12. Blacksburg<br>3-4 May 1946         | 25. Williamsburg<br>6-7 February 1959   | 39. Mountain Lake<br>1-3 June 1973     |
| 13. Charlottesville<br>16-17 May 1947  | 26. Bridgewater<br>29-30 April 1960     | 40. Virginia Beach<br>10-12 May 1974   |
|  | 27. Abingdon<br>8-10 June 1961          |  |

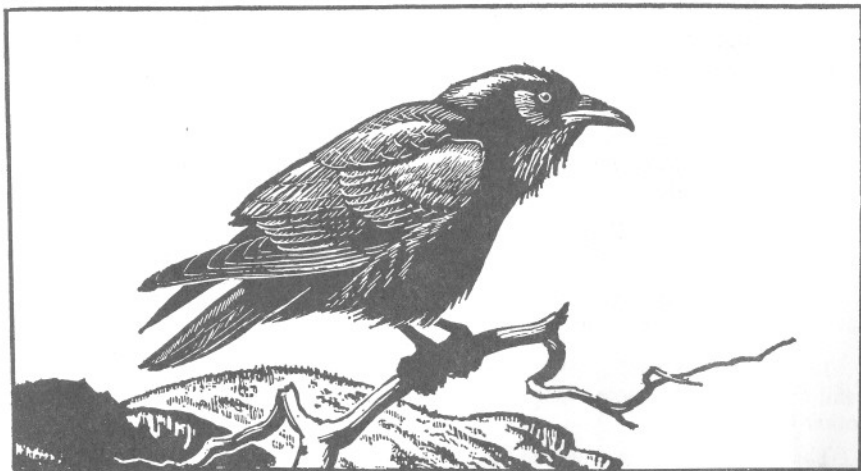
# The Raven

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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), \$3.00 for active members, \$5.00 for sustaining members, \$10.00 for contributing members, \$100.00 for life members.

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## INTERSPECIFIC ASSOCIATIONS OF COMMON RAVENS IN VIRGINIA

DWIGHT R. CHAMBERLAIN, ROBERT G. HOOPER,  
VINCENT J. LUCID, AND RICHARD N. CONNER

Crepuscular and diurnal interactions of sympatric species with Common Ravens, *Corvus corax*, have been documented for North America. Wing (1942) noted instances in Wisconsin and Washington where three individual ravens were aggressive or defensive during aerial encounters with Common Crows, *Corvus brachyrhynchos*, a Red-tailed Hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*, and a Prairie Falcon, *Falco mexicanus*; apparently none of the birds were injured during the interactions. Hoyt (in Bent, 1946) observed successive stoops by a Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*, at a Common Raven near Lexington, Virginia. Murray (in Bent, 1946) reported that ravens in Virginia pursued Turkey Vultures, *Cathartes aura*, often causing them to regurgitate, after which the ravens dropped to the ground to consume the disgorged food. Erskine (1968: 682) saw a Bald Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, dispatch several Common Ravens from a carcass on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. He also watched a raven with an object in its beak evade a subadult Bald Eagle by climbing in tight spirals. In April 1972 C. A. Dachelet (personnel communication) observed a pair of ravens near their nest that repeatedly dived at a subadult Golden Eagle, *Aquila chrysaetos*, in Rockbridge County.

In December 1971 Hooper saw seven ravens and two Golden Eagles soaring peaceably together in Tazewell County. In March 1973 Conner watched a raven displace nine Common Crows while foraging at a dump in Montgomery County (see Harlow *et al.*, 1975); he also observed a raven jump up and snap at a Common Crow flying low over the dump. In February 1972 Hooper saw two Common Crows attack a single raven in Craig County. Contact occurred several times before the raven was forced to land. In April 1973 Conner observed a raven near its nest strike a Red-tailed Hawk with its claws in Montgomery County. The hawk lost feathers during the aerial fracas. In March 1974 we saw a raven, near its nest which contained at least three eggs, dive at an immature Red-tailed Hawk in Rockbridge County; no contact was made, but the hawk quickly left the area. In April 1974 we observed aggressive encounters between three ravens and four Red-tailed Hawks near three raven nests in Rockbridge County. The nests contained one or more immatures. In each case, the parent ravens swiftly dispatched the hawks and emitted short, staccato, agonistic vocalizations. Near one nest, a raven exhibited short, rapid wing beats, not unlike those of an American Kestrel, *Falco sparverius*, while approaching a red-tail. One raven extended its claws while closely pursuing an adult Red-tailed Hawk. No contact was noted during any of the encounters.

Two nocturnal roost sites of the Common Raven were studied for associations with sympatric species in Giles County. One roost of at least 106 birds (see Lucid and Conner, 1974) was under surveillance between 6 January and 17 February 1973 and is designated Roost A. Another roost of at least 60 birds was observed between 27 February and 14 April 1973 and is designated Roost B.

A flock of Pekin Ducks, *Anas platyrhynchos*, remained near Roost A during the entire study period. We observed no interaction between the ravens and ducks.

Hutson (1945: 459) reported that Common Raven roosts may be hetero-specific. At Roost A, approximately 15 wild Turkeys, *Meleagris gallopavo*, walked into the roost site and flew up into the same and adjoining conifers used by the ravens for nocturnal roosting. We noted no interaction between the two species which apparently shared Roost A that night. Turkeys were observed at dusk in a field within 50 m of the roost on one other occasion which suggests that these birds roosted with the ravens more than once.

On another evening, an immature Golden Eagle flew over and away from a prenocturnal gathering of ravens at Roost A and disappeared. The eagle stimulated approximately 80 ravens to rise momentarily above the roost before settling back into the trees. About 6 minutes later, the eagle reappeared and stooped at the perched ravens before disappearing behind a ridge at treetop level. Approximately 75 birds subsequently arose from the roost, but we noted no pursuit or mobbing as the eagle flew away without quarry. The raptor flew over the roost a third time, and caused approximately 60 ravens to take flight before it disappeared; it was not observed again.

On two occasions at Roost A, several ravens that flew into the roost at treetop level abruptly "back-peddled" when nearing certain trees. We frequently noted this flight pattern among low-flying ravens that initially discovered us near their nests and thus speculated that the ravens saw or heard potential predators. Barred Owls, *Strix varia*, often hooted in or proximal to the roost site during crepuscular periods. Domestic dogs and bobcats, *Lynx rufus*, which occasionally frequented Roost A during late afternoons and at night, may have evoked evasive flight patterns from ravens arriving at the gathering.

We often observed Red-tailed Hawks perched near Roost A, and occasionally they flew over its perimeter. A raven flew approximately 10 m over a Red-tailed Hawk perched near the roost before encountering a second Red-tail which stooped at the raven before landing beside the first hawk. The raven steadily maintained its course to the roost.

At Roost B, an adult Red-shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus*, perched approximately 25 m above seven ravens playing and feeding in a field. The ravens showed no response to the hawk's sedentary presence or when it flew low over and away from the birds. A Barred Owl hooted intermittently near the ravens after the hawk disappeared. No responses were elicited from the corvids by the owl. Subsequent vocalizations emitted by Barred Owls did not stimulate reactions from the ravens.

On another occasion, a Turkey Vulture soared at about the same altitude near approximately 30 ravens flying to Roost B. We observed no interaction between the vulture and the ravens. At another time, five ravens were in the roost when two Turkey Vultures flew low over the corvids; no interaction occurred between the seven birds.

Several Common Crows apparently roosted in or proximal to Roost B on four different nights. On one evening, two crows pursued a raven and forced it to land in a conifer; the crows emitted mobbing vocalizations (see Chamberlain and Cornwell, 1971, pp. 615-618) during the chase. On a different occasion, a crow stooped at a raven perched on the periphery of the roost; no vocalizations were emitted by either bird.

In conclusion, singles and small flocks of Common Ravens were reactive to potential predators at feeding areas and active nests, but generally ignored them when near or within Roosts A or B. Ravens successfully defended their nests against avian predators of comparable or greater size and numbers. Large

aggregations of ravens responded passively to potential predators. They did not exploit numerous opportunities to mob avian predators at either roost. Ravens at or near roosts generally exhibited mild evasive behavior when pursued by avian species of high and low danger potentials.

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## WESTERN GREBE PHOTOGRAPHED AT CRANEY ISLAND, VIRGINIA

GILBERT S. GRANT

On the morning of 3 November 1973 I found a Western Grebe, *Aechmophorus occidentalis*, in the James River on the west side of the Craney Island impoundment in Hampton Roads, Virginia. The bird was swimming about 100 meters out and was studied carefully with 7 x 35 binoculars and a 30x scope periodically during the 3 hours I was there. Several 35 mm Kodachrome-X slides were obtained, and one was deposited in the slide collection at the National Photoduplicate File (Accession No. 001-1T) and as such constitutes the first documented photograph of a Western Grebe in Virginia. Unfortunately, the slides were not of suitable quality for publishing in *The Raven*.

The long, distinctly marked black and white neck; yellow, needle-like bill; white wing stripe extending to primaries; and a size nearly twice that of nearby Horned Grebes, *Podiceps auritus*, identified this bird as a Western Grebe. On 4 November 1973 my wife Sandy, Robert L. Ake, David L. Hughes, Wavell

W. Fogleman, Kim Fogleman, and I studied the Western Grebe in the same general vicinity. The bird was seen again on 17 November 1973 by Ake, P. G. DuMont, Fogleman, and the author and on 23 November 1973 by M. A. Byrd and myself. It was seen on 2 December 1973 by those participating in the VSO field trip to Craney Island. Repeated efforts to locate the grebe after 2 December 1973 failed until 16 March 1974 when Ake, Fogleman, Gary Williamson, the author, and several other observers of the Cape Henry Audubon Society found a Western Grebe in the same general area at Craney Island. Although this bird was in brighter, sharper plumage than the one studied in November and early December, it was probably the same individual, now in its nuptial plumage. It was seen again on 23 and 29 March and on 19 April by Fogleman, on 21 April by Ake, Fogleman, and myself, and on 5 May by Ake, Fogleman, Williamson, and the author, but has not been seen since that date.

The Craney Island bird was probably a spillover from the previous summer's population boom. Reproductive success in 1973 was excellent in the Central Rocky Mountains and Minnesota plus breeding for the first time in Arizona (Tate, 1973).

This represents the fourth sighting in Virginia. The first record was by F. R. Scott (1964) in the York River on 4 December 1963. The second sighting was on a lake near the Dulles International Airport 14-19 October 1964 by Abramson (1964) and others, and the third observation of a Western Grebe was at Claytor Lake State Park in Pulaski County from 24 January to 27 February 1965 (Klimkiewicz and Akers, 1965).

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## REDHEADS IN ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

JOHN S. PANCAKE

On 2 March 1974 while hiking around a lake in Rockbridge County, Virginia, I sighted a large raft of ducks and was surprised to find, upon examining them with a 15-60x scope, that they were mostly Redheads, *Aythya americana*. After first sighting them at about 2 p.m. I was able to watch them through the scope at ranges as low as 200-300 feet. I studied these ducks off and on for an hour and a half. Though the day was overcast, the sun broke through from time to time, reflecting from the red heads of the males. The birds had the typical chunky bill and forehead of a scaup. I counted 37 male as well as 12 female Redheads, told by their gray facial patches and lack of any conspicuous

white. For comparison there was a male Ring-necked Duck, eight scaup (both males and females), and a single Pintail.

The Redheads were in the middle of the lake, which was half drained. None of the birds appeared to be feeding. There were also Canada Geese and Hooded Mergansers on the lake, as well as Mallards and Black Ducks. The impoundment, called Lake Merriwether, is part of a Boy Scout camp built west of Goshen Pass. The dam is visible from Virginia Route 39.

The number of Redheads concentrated on Lake Merriwether is unusual for Rockbridge County. In *The Birds of Rockbridge County, Virginia* (Virginia Avifauna No. 1, 1957), J. J. Murray, Sr., lists this species as a transient and mentions five records, none for more than two birds.

Fincastle, Virginia 24090

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## GOSHAWK AT FORT BELVOIR

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

While covering the Springfield-Accotink Lake sector of the Fort Belvoir, Virginia, Christmas count on 23 December 1973, Dan Keeney and George Weickhardt observed an adult Goshawk, *Accipiter gentilis*, at close range. The observers were standing on the dam at Lake Accotink when they saw a large *Accipiter* flying towards them from a wooded area by the lake. As the hawk flew by at about 150 feet distant, they both had clear views of the gray-barred plumage below, the dark gray plumage above, the blackish cap, and even the red eyes! This is the first bird of this species recorded on this Christmas count since it began in 1941. There are, however, several winter records for the Goshawk in Fairfax County, Virginia, the first being on 6 February 1948 at Fort Belvoir (J. M. Abbott) and the second of one seen off-and-on between 10 and 26 December 1960 near Mount Vernon, Virginia, by Adolph Humphries (*vide* J. M. Abbott).

8501 Doter Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22308

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## RED-TAILED HAWK UTILIZATION OF CLEARCUTS

RICHARD N. CONNER AND CURTIS S. ADKISSON

Although clearcutting drastically alters the mature forest community and may detrimentally affect species requiring woodland habitat, it also has the potential to create favorable habitat for species preferring open areas, such as the Red-tailed Hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*.

Observations of Red-tailed Hawks were made in three different-aged clearcuts of oak (*Quercus* spp.)-hickory (*Carya* spp.) stands in the Jefferson National Forest in southwestern Virginia from October 1972 to June 1973. Forty visits were made to three different 1-year-old clearcuts, 37 visits to three different 5-year-old clearcuts, and 30 visits to two different 12-year-old clearcuts. Each clearcut was surrounded by extensive oak-hickory forest but was within 1500 m of small areas of open pasture. Red-tailed Hawks were seen regularly

soaring above ridge tops near each of the clearcuts studied. Records were made of Red-tailed Hawks flushed from each area.

The 1-year-old clearcuts averaged 24 hectares and were very open, with most vegetation less than 1 m tall. Not many dead snags or young live trees remained standing. Cut branches and logs from the timber harvest were scattered over most of the areas. Red-tailed Hawks were flushed on 16 of 40 visits, or 40 percent of the time, from this habitat type and more frequently during the spring and fall than in winter. Before the hawks flushed, they could be observed actively scanning the clearcuts as they perched on dead snags inside the clearcut or in live trees in the adjacent woods.

Regenerating stems had grown to a height of 2 to 3 m. in the 5-year-old clearcuts, which averaged 18 hectares. Few live trees and dead snags had been left in these areas. Red-tailed Hawks were seen leaving this habitat type on only two of the 37 visits, or 5 percent of the time. In these instances, during the spring, the hawks flew from dead snags.

Dense brush had grown to a height of 4 to 5 m in the 12-year-old clearcuts, which averaged 19 hectares and contained many dead snags. Red-tailed Hawks were never flushed from these two areas.

Since preliminary trapping of small mammals failed to show any great difference in rodent populations between areas, the variation in Red-tailed Hawk sightings may have resulted from a preference for the younger clearcuts. Red-tailed Hawks may benefit only initially from clearcutting. The openness of fresh clearcuts may aid in prey location and capture; but as clearcuts age, the increasing abundance of vegetation apparently limits detection and capture of small mammals.

We would like to thank the Southeastern Forest Experiment Station of the U. S. Forest Service since most field observations were made during another study partially funded by the Station.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

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## GOLDEN PLOVER IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

YULEE LARNER

On 6 April 1974 members of the Augusta Bird Club (Corda Bott, John Cacciapaglia, Jo King, Yulee Larner, Ann Moss, Isabel Obenschain, Julie Russell, and Elizabeth Taylor) discovered an American Golden Plover, *Pluvialis dominica*, at a wet-weather pond on Route 693 near Middlebrook, Augusta County, Virginia, two days after severe thunderstorms and tornadoes to the west. The bird was slightly larger than several Killdeer with which it was feeding along the edge of the pond. The observers carefully noted the bird's field marks, including its harsh call, which was compared later with the Peterson record of bird songs. The plover had a short black bill, was brownish-gray flecked with white, and had a buffy breast and slaty-gray legs. It had a black line through the eye and a white stripe above the eye and down the side of the head and neck. It flew very fast and called several times. When it flew, the

bird was uniformly light below and dark above with a dark tail. It showed no wing markings.

On 7 April a Golden Plover, evidently the same bird, was observed in the same spot by Mozelle and John Henkel.

1020 West Beverley Street, Staunton, Virginia 24401

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## FIRST SIGHT RECORD OF BAR-TAILED GODWIT IN VIRGINIA

ROBERT L. PYLE

While participating in the Chincoteague, Virginia, Christmas bird count 28 December 1973, Peter Pyle and I watched and studied a Bar-tailed Godwit, *Limosa lapponica*, along the causeway leading to Chincoteague Island. The bird was on a mudflat, north of the Causeway and just east of Queen Sound. It was observed under ideal light conditions, with the sun at our backs, through binoculars and scope at 50 to 150 yards distance, from about 2:30 to 3:20 p.m.

In body size it was definitely, but not enormously, larger than a Black-bellied Plover, of which there were many on the flat for close comparison. It had a typical godwit bill, very long, slightly upturned, and two-toned. The underparts (lower breast and abdomen to tail) were pure white. On the upper breast was a pale grayish tan wash, fairly sharply separated from the white below. A small finger of this wash protruded downward into the white in front of the folded wing. The back was strongly patterned, scaled, and boldly streaked. The general impression, however, without binoculars, was of a generally pale bird. The legs were light grayish.

On two occasions we had an excellent view of its flight pattern. Underwings were very light—virtually white except for a narrow dark edge around the tips of the primaries. No wing stripe was evident. The tail was white with six to ten narrow dark bars. Once, after alighting, the tail was exposed for a few moments, showing the barred pattern well.

The bird spent most of the time walking along the edge of the mudflat, feeding at the water's edge. It occasionally flew from one spot to another, but we could always relocate it, first by bill and back pattern, then by size. Once it walked directly across through the center of the exposed flat, among the roughly 100 Black-bellied Plovers and 1200 dunlins and small sandpipers also on the flat. At 3:20 p.m. it took flight, flew directly over us as it gained altitude, and headed south across the causeway in the general direction of the flats off the south end of Chincoteague Island. We watched it until it disappeared in the sunlight and haze.

I have observed this species previously, once on a similar mudflat under similar circumstances at leisure on the 1967 Honolulu, Hawaii, Christmas bird count. In June 1973 I had the opportunity to study them at several locations in western Alaska, in a range of plumages from pale to highly colored, and in aggregates of up to 14 and 17 individuals.

This species is abundant in the Old World but is a vagrant on the western side of the Atlantic. An unusual series of recent records, all of single birds, began with one seen by many observers at Port Canaveral, Florida, from mid



October 1970 through the Christmas count (Cocoa, Florida) on 29 December. Subsequent sightings have all been in spring, summer, and fall, as follows (all from *American Birds*): Moriches Inlet, Long Island, New York, 10 and 12 May 1971; Brigantine Refuge, New Jersey, 28 June through 23 August 1971; Pea Island, North Carolina, 29 August 1971; Somers Point, New Jersey, 19-24 May 1972; Cape Cod, Massachusetts, 9-16 September 1972; and Longport, New Jersey, 6-27 May 1973.

3205 Pickwick Lane, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015

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## UNUSUAL FORAGING BEHAVIOR OF A COMMON GRACKLE

PETER L. DALBY AND RICHARD N. CONNER

On 13 May 1974 while traveling by automobile on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, an unusual foraging technique of the Common Grackle, *Quiscalus quiscula*, was observed. One individual of a flock of grackles was foraging woodpecker fashion about 1 m above the ground on the side of a large sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*. This method of foraging was not mentioned by Bent (U. S. National Museum Bulletin 211, 1958: 374-390).

Facing upward, the bird pecked at the bark a number of times as though feeding. After several seconds, it flapped its wings and moved in a general upward direction for several centimeters, stopped fluttering, and resumed its pecking behavior while clinging to the side of the tree. Unfortunately, we were not able to stop and determine the food item sought by the grackle.

Department of Biology

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

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## PAINTED BUNTING IN SALEM, VIRGINIA

JOHN S. PANCAKE

Though skeptical of a report they had received from a Salem school teacher, Bill Opengari, Almon English, and Barry L. Kinzie on 12 March 1974 scurried to a residential neighborhood of Salem to find a male Painted Bunting, *Passerina ciris*, eating sunflower seed at a feeder a few feet from the house of the teacher, Richard C. Cornett, Jr. The bird had been coming to the feeder for several days, Cornett reported.

During the next week the bird appeared regularly at the feeder. There were often several cars packed with birders parked along Virginia Avenue in front of the Cornett house waiting for the regular late-afternoon appearances of the brightly colored male. Kinzie took a number of good photographs of the bird at the feeder with a 200 mm lens from a blind about 10 feet away on 14 March. The bunting, which stayed near the feeder for more than a week, was seen by at least 20 different birders from Roanoke and elsewhere. Among those who drove to Salem from Lynchburg to see the bird were Paul McQuarry and Myriam and Gene Moore. The last report of the bird came on 20 March.

Fincastle, Virginia 24090

## THIRD LE CONTE'S SPARROW RECORDED IN VIRGINIA

GILBERT S. GRANT

On 3 November 1973 while walking through the grassy area in the extreme southwestern corner of the Craney Island impoundment, Hampton Roads, Virginia, I found an adult Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramus leconteii* (= *Passerherbulus caudacutus*)—see American Ornithologists' Union (1973) for nomenclatural changes since the publication of the A.O.U. Check-list (1957).

The bird was studied in good light with the following notes recorded immediately after the observation: small size, short tail, ran on ground, and flew only when cornered; nape and upper back purplish streaked, extending to sides and blending into full buff-colored breast; whitish crown stripe, yellow line over eye, and yellowish-buff tinge below ear; ear also with a small dark bending streak; buffy eye ring noted. A subsequent search on 4 November and later dates proved unsuccessful for this elusive species.

This appears to represent the third record for Virginia. S. M. Russell (1955) found two Le Conte's Sparrows (one collected for the first state specimen) on the Christmas Bird Count on 25 December 1954 at Abingdon, Virginia. The second record came on 24 November 1970 when D. W. Sonneborn found a Le Conte's Sparrow on one of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Virginia, islands (Scott and Cutler, 1971). There are only five records for North Carolina, a summary of which appeared in Carter and Parnell (1973).

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Department of Biology, University of California  
Los Angeles, California 90024

## IN MEMORIAM: MARGARET HUNTER WATSON

*Life is a chronicle of friendship.*

Helen Keller

Margaret was singularly gifted in the art of friendship. Her smiling approach to life drew countless friends to her, and her capacity for enjoying her friends encompassed them all, every one, in the warmth of her personality. Her hospitality was boundless. To birders, a call to meet at Margaret's was a call

to good birding, good companionship, and coffee perking in the big kitchen in her gracious home at Darlington Heights.

Margaret was a loyal and devoted VSO member and served ably in the office of treasurer of the society from 1 July 1969 to 30 June 1972. She founded a VSO local chapter in her home community and guided its progress in bird study and conservation interests. Formerly known as the Spring Creek Bird Club, this group recently, in her honor, changed its name to the Margaret H. Watson Bird Club and rededicated itself to the goals and principles she had set up for the club.

Margaret Hunter Watson died 2 August 1974 at age 60. She was the widow of Roach A. Watson and leaves two sons, Hunter Watson of Farmville and Brett Watson of Greenville, North Carolina. She had retired in 1970 as postmaster at Darlington Heights. Active in many areas of community life, she taught church school for more than 20 years and made herself always useful in promoting the harmony and quality of life for those around her.

Her life was indeed an inspiring "chronicle of friendship."

Myriam P. Moore

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## PROJECT BLUEBIRD (1974) AT LYNCHBURG

WYATT R. MURPHY

During 1974 Project Bluebird at Lynchburg recorded a successful nesting season for the Eastern Bluebird. The study was conducted from 31 March to 8 August, during which time observers spent 66 hours on the highway. Of the flocks seen before the end of the period, the largest contained over 30 birds.

Final totals for the 66 nest boxes are the following: eggs laid, 427; eggs hatched, 322; young fledged, 272; eggs and young lost to all causes, 155; egg to fledgling success, 63.7%. Over a five-year period, 1298 birds have been fledged from Project Bluebird boxes.

Project members have learned that boxes located near heavy undergrowth, woods, and creek bottoms are more subject to predation than boxes located in open fields. They have also concluded that predators are more active during the second and third nestings than during the first.

4715 Old Dominion Drive, Lynchburg, Virginia 24503

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## REVIEWS

*The Birds of Britain and Europe with North Africa and the Middle East.* By Richard Fitter with illustrations by Hermann Heinzel and maps by John Parslow. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1972: 336 pages (16 unnumbered). Price, \$7.50.

In buying field guides to the birds of Britain and Europe, the question still remains what it has been for some time, "What shall I buy in addition to Peterson?" Now the answer to this question appears to be, "Heinzel and Fitter's guide."

First of all, the book's range of coverage demands attention. Whereas Peterson confines himself for the most part to western Europe, Heinzel and Fitter deal with "the whole of the Western Palearctic Region (except for parts of the Sahara and Arabia, central and eastern Iran, Afghanistan and Baluchistan), and so covers the Azores, the Canaries, Madeira, all Morocco, northern Egypt, all Iraq, the whole European part of the USSR, and Iceland." All the birds of Africa and the Middle East are handled as fully as European species; thus this guide serves admirably for Europe and the Middle East to Long. 60° and North Africa south to Lat. 28°N. There are also plates presenting vagrant thrushes from America and Siberia as well as desert babblers.

Hermann Heinzel's illustrations for this book show him to be a first-rate ornithological artist, and this guide's major strength lies in his illustrations, which are provided in greater numbers than in Peterson. Though some of Heinzel's cormorants, frigatebirds, wheatears, and other birds in flight are disappointing, this artist rivals Peterson in excellence.

Fitter's text also is of high quality, and the conciseness of his style allows this book to equal standard European field guides in size although its coverage is much greater. To achieve this, a small print has been used; but it is easy to read and, more important, handily placed. The text for each species appears between a range map for the species on the left and its illustration on the right, a very convenient arrangement. The textual comments are limited to field identification and complement the illustrations with descriptions of voice, habitat, and plumage. John Parslow's colored maps are clear and easily understood, superior to the black-and-white maps of Peterson. In addition, there is a supplement at the end of the guide giving larger, more detailed range maps for the British Isles, again an advantage over Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe*, third edition (1974).

On the whole, however, I am inclined to favor Peterson's system of analysis in his text, and there are of course some faults in Fitter's notes on identification. In contrast to Peterson, for example, Fitter fails to mention the pale underside of the Lesser Kestrel's wing, a prime field mark for separating this species from a Kestrel.

Those familiar with A. O. U. *Check-list* order will also find it disconcerting to hunt for orioles, crows, jays, and magpies *after* finches and sparrows even though this order was devised by Alexander Wetmore and has been used in works such as Thomson's *A New Dictionary of Birds* (1964). But perhaps it's time we changed our habits.

Aside from a few typographical errors, there is little else in the book of which to complain. It has separate indexes for English and scientific names and brief sections on how to identify and attract birds. This guide is well worth its price and should be in the library of anyone interested in the birds of Europe, northern Africa, and Asia Minor; and it should be in the pocket of anyone birding these areas.

Richard H. Peake

*Birding from a Tractor Seat.* By Charles T. Flugum. Privately printed, Box 30038, St. Paul, Minnesota 55175, 1973: 448 pages (13 unnumbered), 20 black-and-white drawings by Walter J. Breckenridge (reprinted from books by Olin S. Pettingill and Richard J. Dorer). Price, \$8.95.

This book will appeal to persons with an interest in the birdwatching experi-

ences of a Minnesota birdwatcher-farmer who tells of the habits and behavior of birds he has observed on his farm and in other parts of his state, since Flugum jumps off the tractor seat for a few trips away from the farm. However, the thrust of Flugum's book is less that of a "lister" than of an arm-chair (or tractor seat) philosopher, one who takes a visiting birder, a minister, on a tractor ride, during which Brewer's Blackbird is added to the visitor's life list.

Richard H. Peake

*Landscaping for Birds.* Edited by Shirley A. Briggs. Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States, Inc., 8940 Jones Mill Road, Washington, D. C. 20015, 1973: paper, 64 pages, pen-and-ink illustrations by the editor. Price, \$1.75 (\$2.00 postpaid; wholesale—10 or more copies—\$1.05).

For the homeowner desirous of attracting birdlife to his yard, this collection of essays originally published in the *Atlantic Naturalist* should prove helpful, well worth its low price, which would render its distribution a feasible project for a local chapter of the VSO or a garden club. Naturally enough, the book is directed primarily toward the Central Atlantic States, although its articles have a much wider application.

Irston R. Barnes' "Planting for Birds" begins the book; it is primarily a description of plants valuable in attracting birds. Several articles deal with basic landscaping advice tailored especially to the attraction of birdlife, and Edward Mullins, in "Landscaping the Bulldozed Lot," offers valuable aid to the average suburbanite homebuyer who has purchased a house already built on a plot denuded of topsoil and vegetation and then indifferently landscaped. The final essay is particularly valuable. Written by an Englishman, P. H. T. Hartley, it has been adapted, where necessary, to the conditions and plants of the Central Atlantic States.

*Landscaping for Birds* also contains a short list of additional sources and an index complete enough to be helpful.

Richard H. Peake

*Familiar Birds of Northwest Forests, Fields, and Gardens.* By David B. Marshal. Portland Audubon Society, 5151 N. W. Cornell Road, Portland, Oregon 97210, 1973: paper, 84 pages, 71 color illustrations by R. Bruce Horsfall and Zella M. Schultz. Price, \$2.50.

This book's modest price and excellent color illustrations will render it attractive to the audience for which it is designed: the beginning bird student of the Pacific Northwest. However, its fitness for this group renders it less than helpful to others interested in birdlife in the area. For example, after mentioning that five grebes occur in the Pacific Northwest, the author discusses only one—the Pied-billed Grebe. The organization of the text also leaves one frustrated at times. Though it generally follows A. O. U. *Check-list* order, for instance, herons appear before grebes, to be followed immediately by the Coot, which comes ahead of ducks.

The book contains a short section on attracting birds which should be of general interest. In addition, it has a helpful list of additional references and a satisfactory index.

Richard H. Peake

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## NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY R. H. PEAKE AND F. R. SCOTT

**IN APPRECIATION.** The Editor is indebted to Richard H. Peake for substantial aid in preparing this issue of *The Raven* for publication.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY BIRD SANCTUARY.** James W. Eike reports that due to the efforts and initiative of the Rocky Run Garden Club, all of Fairfax County has been declared a bird sanctuary by the county's Board of Supervisors. Arrangements have been made for official bird sanctuary signs to be erected at all entrances to the county and at other key points. Led by President Anne W. Beresford, the club has also undertaken a countywide program of public education through the news media, the schools, and the libraries. This effort has included preparation and distribution of 5500 copies of three printed leaflets on birds.

**CATTLE EGRETS INLAND IN FALL.** At about 11 a.m. on 18 September 1973, 15 Cattle Egrets flew in to a pond on the farm of Carlyle Broun at Sweet Briar, Amherst County, Virginia, according to Gertrude Prior, who saw the birds later as did Ernest Edwards. They apparently left that same evening. Inland records of this species in Virginia during the fall are very unusual.

**EARLY BROAD-WINGED HAWK.** The VSO field trip to Fisherman Island, Virginia, on 19 August 1973 recorded a very early Broad-winged Hawk (M. A. Byrd, F. R. Scott, *et al.*). This may be the earliest state record for an apparent fall migrant. It is not known to nest on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

**EAGLES FIGHTING IN LANCASTER COUNTY.** On 24 September 1974 two adult Bald Eagles were observed in combat in the waters of Beach Creek in Lancaster County, Virginia, by Jeff Holden and David Kulski, who removed the birds from the water and separated them. Each eagle had its talons fastened in the breast of the other, and one died shortly after being taken from the water. With the prompt aid of W. A. Rothery, C. S. Robbins, and many others, the birds were turned over to Game Warden H. H. Pittman and were then transferred by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service facilities at Patuxent, Maryland, for study.

**UPLAND SANDPIPER AT NEW HOPE.** On 17 April 1974 two Upland Sandpipers were observed in a field on Route 608 near New Hope in Augusta County, Virginia, by Mozelle Henkel and Ruth Snyder. This species is new to the current Augusta County list.

**BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER NEAR RICHMOND.** On 15 September 1973 a Buff-breasted Sandpiper was shot accidentally by a dove hunter out of a flock of other shorebirds. The location was the lowlands of the James River in the southwestern corner of Henrico County, Virginia, near the Goochland County line. The specimen was turned over to Charles R. Blem and is now No. 502 in the bird collection of Virginia Commonwealth University. This is the first record for the Richmond area and the most inland for Virginia.

**AVOCETS STILL INCREASING.** American Avocets still appear to be increasing in Virginia at all times of the year. At Craney Island, Portsmouth, W. W. Fogleman recorded 49 on 3 July 1973, and they had increased here to 225 by 6 August (Bill Akers, M. A. Byrd, and Jerry Via). Up to 80 were



present here to mid November (R. L. Ake *et al.*), and the VSO field trip found 66 here on 2 December (F. R. Scott *et al.*). Many also remained through the winter, with a peak reported of 110 on 2 February 1974. At Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, 70 were noted on 16 November 1973 (L. K. Malone), 18 were recorded on the Christmas count on 28 December (David Abbott and others), and 2 were seen off and on to 2 March 1974 (L. K. Malone). Charles R. Vaughn also found 3 at Wallops Island on 31 August 1973.

**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD IN AUGUSTA.** On 11 April 1974 a female Yellow-headed Blackbird was found by John Mehner and his ornithology class from Mary Baldwin College on a trip to Smith's Pond, on Route 865 near Swoope, Augusta County, Virginia. The bird was found perched in bushes along the edge of the pond in a group of Red-winged Blackbirds.

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## INDEX TO VOLUME 45—1974

This index contains all but the most casual references to bird species (A.O.U. approved English names only) in the narrative text and annotated lists. It does not, however, include references to the tabulation of the Christmas bird counts (pp. 8-15).

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