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CONTENTS

The Carolina Parakeet in the Virginias: A Review	3
By Daniel McKinley	
High Winds Bring Southern Visitors to Daleville	10
By Bill Opengari	
Snowy Egret Strays across the Blue Ridge	11
By Norwood C. Middleton	
Belted Kingfisher Flies through a Tunnel	12
By Richard N. Conner	
Cassin's Kingbird near Clifton, Virginia	12
By James W. Eike	
Northern Shrike in Nelson County, Virginia	13
By Richard H. Peake	
A Second Savannah Sparrow Breeding Record for Virginia	13
By Richard H. Peake and James G. Holt	
News and Notes	15
Information for Contributors	16

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 \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$125.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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THE CAROLINA PARAKEET IN THE VIRGINIAS: A REVIEW

DANIEL MCKINLEY

The presence of the Carolina Parakeet, *Conuropsis carolinensis*, in the Virginias within historical time is not to be doubted. However, you must search long and carefully for more than the merest mention of its occurrence there. Some claims, furthermore, must be suspected of being more promotional than true: trifling attempts to make Virginia sound like a tropical paradise to chilblained Englishmen. Even when not pure fabrication, some allusions are obviously cribbed from the reports of others.

Some grain remains after the winnowing and upon them the case rests. It is perhaps saddest of all that avowed naturalists who were on the scene left so few substantive, specific accounts. The scarcity of such reports, as shown by my search of travelers' journals, diaries, and tales over a period of nearly 20 years, in fact, hints that parakeets were uncommon in both these states. While they probably were commoner in the Ohio valley of West Virginia, there is not much in recorded history to prove that view.

The Parakeet in Virginia

In a bombastic and all-inclusive pronouncement typical of the times, in *A Briefe and True Relation of the Discoverie of the North Part of Virginia*, John Brereton in 1602 cited Laudonierre (Florida) and Thomas Hariot (North Carolina) for evidence of parrots in the New World and, by implication, in Virginia (1843: 116, 121). But it remained for an early and uncertainly known colonist, one Francis Perkins, to announce the presence of the species at the new colony of Jamestown. In a letter dated 28 March 1608 from that struggling settlement, the writer, who had arrived there on 2 January, wrote glowingly of what he had seen: "The country around there has a great abundance of wild swans, herons and cranes, wild ducks and other water fowl, with many other birds, as long as the winter continues, with the prettiest parrots that can be seen" (Brown, 1890: 175-177). (The seasonal qualification may refer only to the waterfowl, not the parrots; but, in any case, most of what he could say about seasonal changes would have been hearsay at best.)

In the first book to list parakeets among Virginia's avifauna, famed adventurer Captain John Smith wrote: "Of birds, the Eagle is the greatest devourer. Hawkes there be of diuerse sorts as our Falconers called them, *Sparrow-hawkes*, *Lanarets*, *Goshawkes*, *Falcons Osperayes*; but they all pray most vpon fish. *Patrridges* there are little bigger then our Quailes, wild Turkie are as bigge as our tame. [How remarkab'e to find a modest pioneer estimate of the size of wild turkeys!—they had become much larger by Ralph Hamor's time, as we shall see, and the next 200 years of frontier braggatry did nothing to diminish their superiority to their European cousins.] There are woosels or blackbirds with red shoulders, thrushes, and diuerse sorts of small birds, some red, some blew, scarce so bigge as a wrenne, but few in Sommer. In winter there are great plenty of Swans, Craynes gray and white with blacke wings, Herons, Geese, Brants, Ducke, Wigeon, Dotterell, Oxeies, Parrats, and Pigeons. Of all those sorts great abundance, and some other strange kinds, to vs unknowne by name. But in sommer not any, or a very few to be seene" (1612: 14-15). Significantly, perhaps, in Smith's first book (1608), he did not mention parrots or parakeets

at all. Natural history information in general, however, is there much less systematically treated than in the 1612 work; the presence of a bird more ornamental than edible may not have at first seemed worth listing. (It is interesting that two centuries later, English travelers and settlers were still moaning that American birds, especially those that could sing, were "in Sommer not any, or a very few to be seene"!)

A second book on Virginia's fauna followed hard upon that of Smith, although written by a man who had arrived a few years after the Captain's landfall in 1607. William Strachey's book also appeared in 1612, and in it he enlarged upon the vital matter of parrots (which he called by a name much nearer the present word parakeet): "Parakitoes I haie seen many in the Winter and knowne divers killed, yet be they a Fowle most swift of wing, their winges and Breasts are of a greenish colour with forked Tayles, their heades some Crymsen, some yellow, some orange-tawny, very beautyfull, some of our Colony who haue seen of the East-Indian Parratts, affirme how they are like to that kynd, which hath given vs somewhat the more hope of the neerenes of the South-Seas; these Parratts by all probability like ynough to come from some of the Countryes vpon that sea" (1953: 127). Whatever can be said of Strachey's literary light-fingeredness (and it seems that he was very much the copy-cat), this is more than a paraphrase of John Smith, as Elsa G. Allen once suggested (1951: 450). It ought to be recalled also that Strachey collected a valuable vocabulary of Indian words, including one for parrot (Harrington, 1955: 200).

The next appearance of the parakeet in Virginia travel literature is in the ingenuous contribution of Ralph (or Raphe) Hamor "the Yonger" in 1615. Despite the slightness of the parakeet reference, Hamor's account of the fauna deserves more than passing notice, for it is the sort of material that one must evaluate in reconstructing the natural history of European settlers of America. His easy assumption of providential favor ought not be overlooked either, for that too is part of the ecology of the Western invaders. Hamor added another layer of lacquer on the myth of an American Eden. An alleged superior natural increase of mammals in Virginia ("onely differing from ours in their increase," as he claimed of deer, "having usuall, three or foure Fawnes at a time"), he imputed "to the Providence of God, who for every mouth provideth meate." With perhaps a calculating interest in sharing the cornucopial harvest, he went on: "if this increase were not, the Naturals [= Indians] would assuredly starve." Thus, a smug allegation of superiority in European foresight joined with a providentially approved opportunism.

Mixing titillation with appetite, Hamor went on to consider each species in its turn, with a kind of childish enthusiasm that is hard to put aside: "Aposumes of the bignes and likeness of a Pigge of a moneth old, a beast of as strange incredible nature, she hath commonly seven young ones, sometimes more and sometimes lesse, which at her pleasure till they be a moneth old or more shee taketh up into her belly, and putteth forth againe without hurt to her selfe or them." And, as proof of good planning by the Almighty: "Of each of these beasts, the Lion excepted, my selfe have many times eaten, and can testifie that they are not onely tastefull, but also wholsome and nourishing food."

Hamor's list of birds is more succinct and less diverting: "There are fowle of diverse sorts, Eagles[,] wild Turkeys much bigger then our English[,]

Cranes, Herons white and russet[,] Hawkes, wild Pidgeons (in Winter beyond number of imagination, my selfe have seene three or four houres together flockes in the Aire, so thicke that even they have shadowed the Skie from us)[,] Turkeyes, Buzzards [no doubt he meant "Turkey Buzzards" but was badly served by his typesetter here, as by the absence of commas elsewhere], Partridge, Snipes, Owles, Swannes, Geese, Brants, Ducke and Mallard, Droeis [these two words, without comma, probably were intended to read "Mallard Drakes"], Shel-drakes, Cormorants, Teale, Wigeon, Curlewes, Puits, besides other small birds, as Black-birds, Hedge-Sparrows, Oxe-eyes, Wood-peckers, and in Winter about Christmasse many flockes of Parakertoths" (1906: 96-97). There were obviously some slips between Hamor's manuscript and the printed copy, forgetting the almost random placing of commas; I am quite uneasy about the word "Owles," for example. His seasonal restriction of parakeets is notable; others had them, as will be seen, in Virginia only in summer—the truth probably is that they appeared erratically, and that in all of these accounts there is a measure of mutual plagiarism.

In a letter written in March 1649 by an author unknown, the James River region is described: "We have most rare coloured Parraketoës, and one Bird we call the Mock-bird; for he will imitate all other Birds notes, and cries both day and night-birds, yea, the Owels and Nightingalls." In his list of mammals, "Passonnes" (opossums) occupy a place; while of some 25 birds, number 20 is "Parrots" (Anon., 1838: 15, 16-17).

Historian Philip A. Bruce noted the absence of reports of parakeets after the middle of the seventeenth century, citing their very significant absence from the well-grounded writings of Thomas Glover and John Clayton (1896, 1: 122). He might also have noted that most of the earlier accounts were rather slight, and for some reason he failed to mention the "records" of William Byrd and the perhaps more reliable claim of Mark Catesby, to be considered shortly. It is interesting, in this regard, to note that John Lawson, who knew North Carolina well, denied flatly in 1709 that "Parrakeetos" were to be found northward of North Carolina (1967: 146-147)—notable particularly since Lawson is sometimes supposed a source of Byrd's literary appropriations, if such they be.

However, we have it on the usually reliable word of Mark Catesby that parakeets were found in both "Carolina" and Virginia: "The Orchards in Autumn are visited by numerous flights of them; where they make great destruction for their Kernels only: for the same purpose they frequent *Virginia*; which is the furthest North I ever heard they have been seen" (1731: 11). Since Catesby had been in Virginia in the years between 1712 and 1719 and had come to know William Byrd, it is a question whether Byrd informed (or misinformed) Catesby or if perhaps Catesby had independent sources of information and that he was Byrd's informant. Byrd had it, in his literary account of the survey of the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, that "they rarely Venture so far North as Virginia, except in a very hot Summer, when they visit the most Southern Parts of it" (1929: 77-78). The first actual printing of this polished and rewritten version of the survey was in 1841, roughly a hundred years after Byrd's death. His secret diary of the period concerned (that is, 1728; both forms appeared in the 1929 volume) does not mention parakeets at all. Nor is there any hint of parakeets in his "Description of the Dismal Swamp and a Proposal to Drain

the Swamp" (1922) written in 1728. He probably added to the finished version of the boundary survey all the garnishes that he could gather from written accounts and common knowledge or lore.

In a trivial work, "Natural History of Virginia, or The Newly Discovered Eden," long attributed to Byrd (1940: 64), prospective—and earnestly yearned for—Swiss emigrants were told that in that "newly discovered Eden . . . there are also *parrots*." Such exotic news, intimating a delightful climate, evidently was thought sufficiently good to counterbalance the whole truth: "They are green in color, on their head orange-yellow mixed with red. These birds do great damage to the fruit trees, since they pick up the fruit and eat the kernels out of it. They like mulberries especially well, with which one may catch them. Within a few days they become quite tame and domesticated. Otherwise this bird is a very good and delicious tidbit; for this reason many are caught or shot." The parting sentence also no doubt helped further to justify the existence of the species! Percy G. Adams (1956-1957) believed the real author of the tract to have been Samuel Jenner, a Swiss writer in Byrd's hire, and thought that most of the natural history material was taken from John Lawson's book; but a trace of Catesby must probably be acknowledged, as noted above.

As if the parakeet as evidence of a topical clime were not enough, it also got caught up in what may be called "mood" literature. In some cases one cannot decide if writers actually saw parakeets or just thought they ought to have. A particularly ripe case is to be found in "Itinerant observations in America," written about 1745 by a visiting English novelist, compiler, and traveler. While on Chesapeake Bay, on the Virginia coast off Yorktown, he imagined a forest-plantation scene. He was presumably referring to Virginia, having just come up the east coast from Georgia. It was a lush Romantic picture he painted, with magnificent trees and soft winds: where "now and then the long pausing Scream of the *Turkey*, or the quick, smart Cry of the *Paroquet*, interrupts the responsive Lays of the *Turtle*, and the rest of the musical Choir, and passes in thrilling Chorus from Grove to Grove" (Kimber, 1878: 57).

The emptiness of Kimber's allusion (for the Virginia coast at least) is obvious from the thoroughly hard-headed entry in the diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, in Virginia's tidewater Richmond County, on the Rappahanock River. He wrote from a lifetime's experience as a plantation owner and was alert to every natural phenomenon (he was born in Virginia in 1710 and was well educated). Colonel Carter reported that for some three or four days previous to 15 June 1774 "there has been seen at my fork and mangorike plantations [names for two of his land holdings] a flight of birds about 20 in Number, something larger than a Paroquete and not So large as a Parot but of a most beautiful yellow from an orange to a lemon [obviously, he only looked at one part of the bird, in this case the head, which he aptly described]. I had an overseer who shot at them and killed two this morning as they were feeding on the green blackberries. . . . There is something surprising in this Appearance. I don't remember ever to have heard of such a bird in this Country before. Their Chattering first attracted the eye. I wish one had been Caught alive. It cannot be imagined that such a number could have got away from on board any ship that might have brought one or two in; and by what means their flight could have been directed to Virginia from

where they must have bread is I think difficult to be conceived. I have had them both skinned, and stuffed and in order to lie on my Mantle Peice" (1965, 2: 829). The size of the birds and their loquacity, flocking habits, and foods all bespeak the Carolina parakeet wandered out of its range; no other bird can be suggested as the object of Carter's interest at that time of year.

Although Thomas Jefferson listed the parakeet among Virginia's birds in 1781, he did so only upon authority of Catesby and his copiers (1894: 171).

Neither Wilson nor Audubon had anything specific to say about the parakeet in Virginia. On the other hand, neither knew the state very well at first hand. The only really comprehensive early survey of the matter historically was that of Rives (1890), and he ended by leaving the species out of his list of birds to be specifically credited to Virginia (Murray, 1933: 192). A later summary of Virginia birds adds nothing to previous accounts (Murray, 1952: 62).

The Parakeet in West Virginia

There is nothing in any early account to place the parakeet in West Virginia except along the Ohio River, and even there the reference is early nineteenth century. Wilson's suggestion that the species was known to occur at Marietta, Ohio (1811: 92), and a similar claim by Hildreth (1826) that parakeets sometimes appeared at the mouth of Hocking River brought parakeets up the Ohio valley to the level of Wood County, West Virginia. Audubon's later assertion that at one time "they could be procured as far up the tributary waters of the Ohio as the Great Kenhawa" (now Kanawha) River (1831: 138) was somewhat more conservative, for that stream empties into the Ohio farther downstream, in Mason County.

Nothing appeared on the species in West Virginia during the rest of the nineteenth century, so far as the published record goes. Rivers (1890) did not indicate any West Virginia records for parakeets, nor did Earle Amos Brooks mention them in his list of 1909.

In our century, Ridgway resurrected Audubon's rather indefinite claim (1916: 147). Probably upon Ridgway's authority, Johnston included the species in his work, characterizing it at length but failing to indicate its status in the state (1923: 89). Neither comprehensive lists by Doan (1888) or Bibbee (1934) mentioned the parakeet.

It was not until Bent and his collaborators combed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service files that an interesting and perhaps valid reference to the parakeet in West Virginia came to light. According to Bent, the species was found "casually" in "West Virginia (White Sulphur Springs)" (1940: 10). Although not further identified, the basis of the record was undoubtedly an undated manuscript note in Fish and Wildlife Service archives from Thaddeus Surber: "One seen by me Aug. 1881"—below which on the card someone has written: "—sure." There can be no doubt about Surber's accuracy as an observer of nature (at least later—he was only 10 years old in 1881). Furthermore, he wrote several reports on birds in the area of White Sulphur Springs, a town on the upper Kanawha River, Greenbrier County, in the early 1890s. In fact, in 1891, he reported upon the skin of a parakeet in his collection; but that was a bird from Florida. He did not mention parakeets in his careful list of the birds of Greenbrier County (1889; this rare account was checked for me by Norman L. Ford). It is disturbing that Surber never mentioned the in-

stance in any of his own publications, and I tend to think he did not place complete confidence in his observation. However, the erratic appearance of the species at localities having saline and mineral springs ("salt licks" etc.) has been amply documented; the White Sulphur Springs region may have had such a visitation, although the date is a rather late one, all things considered.

In discussing the southern component in West Virginia's avifauna, Maurice Brooks (1941: 101) mentioned the Surber reference (without identifying the author of it) and noted an Audubon "sight record" for the mouth of Great Kanawha River. These "records" presumably led to the shaky remarks in his somewhat later check-list that Audubon "tells of taking specimens near the mouth of the Great Kanawha River" and that "Surber tells of finding these birds" (1944: 25). But, clearly, available evidence is that Surber at best saw no more than one bird and that Audubon but obliquely attributed their presence to the Kanawha.

The story ends with a single, substantial (and almost historical) record. It is that of a parakeet humerus from a recently excavated Indian village that dates from about 1650. Among the many bones of birds and mammals there was also the skull of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The site is located at Buffalo, Putnam County, on the lower Kanawha River (Guilday, 1971: 36, 37). This slight but definite record need not be overemphasized as evidence of primeval scarcity of the species in the Ohio valley, for it is probable that the bones accumulated in the Indian village represented large, common species that were regularly available. The parakeet, being small in size, erratic in appearance in any one locality and swift in flight, hardly qualified as a reliable food item.

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HIGH WINDS BRING SOUTHERN VISITORS TO DALEVILLE

BILL OPENGARI

On 31 May 1976 a Common Gallinule, *Gallinula chloropus*, was sighted by Almon English on a small pond north of Roanoke, Virginia. The pond is about

12 miles north of Roanoke near the community of Daleville on routes 220 and 675 in Botetourt County. This sighting caused many interested observers to visit the pond that week and find several other unusual birds for this area.

The following day, 1 June, Norwood C. Middleton and John Pancake went to the pond about noon and observed two Common Gallinules, an American Coot, *Fulica americana*, and a Purple Gallinule, *Porphyryula martinica*. The last bird was described as rail-like and having a vivid blue body, red face, and yellow-orange legs without red bands at the top. I arrived at the pond later that afternoon and was joined by John and Marion Eddy, Ernest and Hazel Moore, and Barry Kinzie. We observed the two Common Gallinules but could not locate the Purple Gallinule. The Common Gallinules displayed charcoal plumage, white flank stripes, and yellow-tipped, red bills.

I noticed on arriving an unusual number of Great Blue Herons, *Ardea herodias*, on the small pond. I counted 8 of these, while there seemed to be Green Herons, *Butorides striatus*, on every prominent rock and stump on the shoreline. In one group of three Great Blues was a large white wading bird. We set up a 60x scope and observed that the bird was as large as the Great Blues and had a yellow bill and yellow legs. The distance was about 300 yards and the light good. We felt that the bird was the white phase of the Great Blue Heron, formerly considered a separate species known as the Great White Heron.

The white heron was observed again at the same pond on 2 June by my wife Jane and me as well as Barry Kinzie and others at closer range. Later that day, Middleton, unaware of our sighting the day before, saw the heron at very close range and concluded the bird was the white phase of the Great Blue, as he also noted the yellow bill and yellow legs.

The white-phase Great Blue was last seen and identified on 4 June by Kinzie at the pond. Also observed there were two adult and two immature Black-crowned Night Herons, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, on 1 June (Kinzie) and 12 June (Keith Fielder) and a Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, on 3 June (Fielder, Opengari, and Paul McQuarry).

These birds found that week on the pond could have been the result of high winds. Winds up to 50 miles per hour had buffeted the Roanoke Valley on 31 May, and the Associated Press weather data feature in the local newspaper reported that the high winds were centered in southwest Virginia on that date. On 29 and 30 May tornadoes, thunderstorms, high winds, and hail were reported in Louisiana and Texas with eastward moving wind storms throughout the South.

Route 1, Box 491, Daleville, Virginia 24083

SNOWY EGRET STRAYS ACROSS THE BLUE RIDGE

NORWOOD C. MIDDLETON

An accommodating Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*, spent a week on a quarter-mile stretch of the Roanoke River in the City of Salem in August 1976, affording a score or more interested observers to be in on what apparently was the third recorded appearance west of the Blue Ridge in Virginia for this common coastal species.

One of my numerous trips to the river in pursuit of an informal summer survey of birds for the Roanoke Valley Bird Club produced the egret at 6:30 a.m. on 9 August. By midmorning, my alert had brought several club members to see the young, stately, white bird with its subdued but plainly yellow feet feeding actively in the open among the exposed rocks of the river beside which a residential street ran.

Barry Kinzie photographed the bird, and he and I learned from a resident, Mrs. Charles D. Messinger, that it had appeared on the river the day before—Sunday, 8 August—following showers and thunderstorm activity across the state. The next Saturday, 14 August, other saw it before a heavy rainstorm, but it had disappeared from the area by the next day. Mrs. Messinger reported the incongruous spectacle of the egret being flushed from its feeding area that Saturday by some young men in a small, four-wheel-drive vehicle driving in the shallows of the river.

The only previous records of this species west of the Blue Ridge seem to be one seen at Saltville in late summer 1950 by Stephen M. Russell (*Raven*, 24: 37, 1953) and one at Lexington on 28-30 April 1962 observed by Joshua Womeldorf and J. J. Murray, Sr. (*Raven*, 33(2): 14, 1962).

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BELTED KINGFISHER FLIES THROUGH A TUNNEL

RICHARD N. CONNER

On 10 July 1976 I observed an unusual flight behavior of a male Belted Kingfisher, *Megasceryle alcyon*. The kingfisher was flying along Strouble's Creek headed southwest toward the route 460 bypass that goes around Blacksburg, Virginia. Occasionally the bird would drop down toward the water as if attempting to dive for a fish. When the kingfisher reached the bypass, it flew through the tunnel for vehicular travel that passes under the bypass rather than flying over the highway. The bypass at this point is built up on a dike that is about 6 m higher than normal ground level. Strouble's Creek passes under the dike via two 1.3-m-diameter pipes. The tunnel that the kingfisher flew through is 3.4 m in diameter, 40 m long, and lies 3 m to one side of the pipes that Strouble's Creek flows through.

Over the past 5 years I have watched kingfishers fly down Strouble's Creek in this area. Every time until 10 July they had flown over the bypass rather than through the tunnel.

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CASSIN'S KINGBIRD NEAR CLIFTON, VIRGINIA

JAMES W. EIKE

On 30 August 1976 at 12:20 p.m. I walked out into the yard of my home near Clifton, Fairfax County, Virginia, and noted a kingbird on our telephone wire near the house with a yellow underbody. At first glance this appeared

to be a Western Kingbird, *Tyrannus verticalis*. Observation with binoculars, however, showed no white on the outer tail feathers and a noticeably smaller white throat patch. My wife Claire and I kept the bird under constant observation until 5 p.m., when it flew off to the east toward Alexandria. The bird was the most sedentary flycatcher I have ever seen, and there was no question in my mind but that it was a Cassin's Kingbird, *T. vociferans*. Claire and I had plenty of time to study the bird and to use our reference books, and we examined the bird from all sides.

It permitted observation as close as 15 feet. It made only one sally after an insect that we could observe, but it took occasional flights of 50 to 60 feet to eat one or two poke berries. Early in the afternoon it disappeared but was quickly found on the wire above the fenceline near the road. It returned to its favorite perch close to the house. It sat in excellent light, preening a great deal, fanning its tail, gaping often, and looking about. It had a slightly olive-gray back, dark face from just below eyes (but *not* black), white chin and upper throat, dark gray breast, and light yellow wash on underbody (including under tail coverts). There were white tips on the tail feathers but not pure white and sharply cutoff as in the Eastern Kingbird, *T. tyrannus*. There was no appearance of a crest, and the mandibles were dark. The gray breast faded downward into a paler gray, then shaded into the yellow on the abdomen. The bird was silent throughout the period.

I watched this bird constantly from my deck chair, with binoculars and clipboard, for nearly all of the 5-hour period it was here.

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NORTHERN SHRIKE IN NELSON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

RICHARD H. PEAKE

While driving north on route 151 in Nelson County, Virginia, with my wife and son on 21 December 1960, I saw a bird perched on a utility wire beside the road. The bird appeared to be a shrike, and I stopped about 50 yards down the road and left the car to obtain a better view. Through 7 x 35 binoculars I saw that the bird was indeed a shrike and, more surprising, that it was brown. Carefully approaching the bird, which was not very wary, I was able to move within 20 yards of it and make a leisurely observation. The shrike had a light-brown breast mottled with dark bars or flecking; its head, back, and tail were a darker brown. Consulting the field guides I had with me, I decided that the bird must be an immature Northern Shrike, *Lanius excubitor*.

Although this report is considerably belated, it seems advisable to put it on record at this time, since it has not been previously published.

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A SECOND SAVANNAH SPARROW BREEDING RECORD FOR VIRGINIA

RICHARD H. PEAKE AND JAMES G. HOLT

When the Virginia Society of Ornithology conducted its foray in the Tazewell area in 1972 (Scott, 1973), there was much speculation about the status

of the Savannah Sparrow, *Passerculus sandwichensis*, in southwestern Virginia. This speculation increased when Savannah Sparrows were found during the Mount Rogers foray in 1974 (Scott, 1975). Adding to suspicions concerning the possibility of this species breeding in southwestern Virginia was Ake's location of the first Virginia nest of the Savannah Sparrow in Highland County in 1973 (Ake *et al.*, 1976) and Alsop's finding the first Tennessee nest in Hawkins County that same year (Alsop, 1977).

On 19 July 1975 James G. Holt located Savannah Sparrows breeding at Tazewell. While walking across a level field below Lincolnshire Reservoir in Tazewell, Holt flushed a light-brown sparrow. This bird flew a few feet, then ran along a small rut in the grass, stopping in a bare spot. The observer carefully noted the bird from 30 feet through 7 x 35 binoculars and identified it as a Savannah Sparrow: he noted its streaked breast without distinct breast spot and its yellow lores.

Approaching this bird, he saw another flush and run after landing in the same manner as the first. This second individual had less clearly defined stripes and lores; it was carrying an insect in its beak, which it continued to hold even after being flushed twice.

Holt then withdrew a short distance and sat to observe the pair in order to locate their nest. Calling constantly, the first bird moved within 20 feet of the observer. About 10 minutes later the second bird, still carrying the insect, flew to a spot about 100 feet from Holt, who lost sight of it as it moved behind several clumps of grass. Soon it flew to a spot 40 feet behind the observer and, after hunting for several minutes, caught another insect and carried it to the same general area where it had taken the other. After watching this behavior repeated three times, Holt approached the location where the bird had taken the insects. There he found several shallow (4-inch) gullies overgrown with thick grass and clover in the midst of sparse grass. After watching awhile longer, he moved to the spot where the bird was taking the insects and found one young bird sitting motionless in a gully under some clover. The bird appeared flightless and ran to avoid capture, but Holt seized it and noted its juvenal plumage: the tail, wing, and head feathers were only partially developed and the bird was not much over 2 inches long. Its breast feathers were more fully developed and similar to those of the adults.

An hour later Holt returned to the area with his wife and relocated this juvenile as well as a second about 25 feet from the first. This second bird was in about the same stage of development as the first.

Despite intensive efforts Holt could not find a nest, but his observations constitute the second breeding record for the Savannah Sparrow in Virginia and the first for southwestern Virginia and Tazewell County.

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY F. R. SCOTT

AMERICAN BITTERN NEAR BLACKSBURG. Robert L. Lochmiller found an American Bittern along Craig Creek, Montgomery County, Virginia, on 2 April 1977. Relatively few of these are found west of the Blue Ridge, and this observation was fairly early.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS IN SPRING. There were two reliable reports of Baird's Sandpipers, one of our rarest spring birds, in Virginia during the spring of 1977. John and Thelma Dalmas observed 2 at Craney Island, Portsmouth, on 12 May and recorded the usual field marks, including size (slightly larger than nearby Semipalmated Sandpipers), black legs, wing tips longer than the tail, scaly looking brown back, sturdy black bill, pale tan upper breast, and white lower breast and belly. They were able to watch the birds for about 15 minutes in good light at a distance of about 25 yards.

Two other Baird's Sandpipers were discovered by Fred Murray in a wet pasture 2 miles west of Powhatan Courthouse, Powhatan County, on 18 May 1977. The birds were very tame and allowed an approach to within 20 yards. The buffy color, black legs, scaly backs, and other field marks were noted, and, when flushed, the birds showed dark rumps and no obvious wing stripes. This appears to be only the second Piedmont record of this species.

TREE SWALLOW NESTING NEAR WILLIAMSBURG. A nest box at the Kingsmill golf course in James City County, Virginia, was used by a pair of Eastern Bluebirds in April 1976, and the young birds had fledged by 6 May. According to James Hadden, the box was reoccupied by a pair of Tree Swallows which had laid one egg by 21 May. On 14 and 23 June the nest contained 3 young Tree Swallows, and by 1 July these had fledged. Hadden photographed this nesting and showed the pictures at a meeting of the Hampton Roads Bird Club. This seems to be the first recorded nesting of this species in southeastern Virginia in almost 50 years.

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 that have not previously been published in the VSO Newsletter. 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*, fourth edition, prepared by the Council of Biological Editors. It is available for \$12.00 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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CONTENTS

Virginia Christmas Bird Counts—1977-78 Season	19
By F. R. Scott	
Recent Sightings of Eagles in Southwestern Virginia	32
By C. S. Adkisson, R. N. Conner, I. D. Prather, and J. W. Via	
Migrating Hawks in Bedford County, Virginia	33
By James L. Carter	
Mountain Plover at Chincoteague	34
By Claudia P. Wilds	
Imitation of Nonavian Sounds by Mockingbirds	35
By Richard N. Conner	
Sprague's Pipit at Chincoteague	36
By Kenneth H. Bass	
Banding Results at Kiptopeke Beach in 1976	38
By F. R. Scott	
News and Notes	39

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 \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$125.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1977-78 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

Was it only last year that I thought I detected a topping out in participation in Christmas bird counts in Virginia? As it turned out, last year was only a breather, and this year the seemingly endless annual increases in coverage and participation resumed. On the record 34 counts submitted there is a grand total of 903 named participants, and 698 of these are different! That is a hefty 124—or 22%—more than the previous record of 574 last year. Coverage also increased 14% to a record 3026 party-hours, and 11 counts equaled or exceeded 100 party-hours each.

There were 203 different species reported (including an unidentified alcid), the same as last year, plus a hybrid duck (Mallard X Black Duck), a color phase (Blue Goose), and two subspecies (Ipswich Sparrow and two races of the Palm Warbler, the latter not differentiated in the tabulation). For the second consecutive year no new species were added to the cumulative list of all species seen on Virginia Christmas counts, and that list remains at 273.

New counts this year are Williamsburg and Northern Shenandoah Valley, though the latter has appeared in *American Birds* for the past two years. We also welcome back Glade Spring after a lapse of one year. Not submitted this year but appearing in *American Birds* were Calmes Neck, Danville, and Wachapreague. This summary, of course, is of necessity confined to those counts submitted to *The Raven*.

Eight counts reached or surpassed 100 species, the most surprising being 100 at Northern Shenandoah Valley, a first for the area west of the Blue Ridge. The other seven were on the Coastal Plain, mostly near the coast, with Cape Charles as usual taking the laurels with 162 species. Two others (Williamsburg and Kerr Reservoir) barely missed the magic figure with 99 each. Weather leading up to the counts was somewhat warmer than normal in November and December up to 26 December, when severe cold set in, and there was no appreciable snow during the count period, which lasted from 17 December 1977 through 2 January 1978. Overall, the weather was as good as—or better than—could reasonably be expected.

The count tabulation in Table 1 is more or less in order of distance inland from the coast. Counts 1-10 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 11-17 were on the Piedmont, and 18-34 were from the Blue Ridge westward. Very abbreviated details on each count are given at the end of this summary. As in the past three years the initial tabulation of these counts was done by Walter P. Smith.

Loons were in low to moderate numbers, but the number of Horned Grebes inland indicated that some migration was still taking place, at least on 17 December. No Red-necked Grebes or Great Cormorants were found, but the count of 1291 Gannets at Little Creek was impressive. Green Herons were found on three counts, including Northern Shenandoah Valley, and 6 Cattle

TABLE 1 (following 8 pages). The 1977-78 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The underlined figures indicate an unusual species or an unusual number of individuals for that particular count.

	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Gordonville	12. Charlottesville	13. Warren	14. Burlington Heights	15. Kerr Reservoir
Date	12/26	12/27	12/31	12/29	12/17	1/1	12/18	12/17	12/20	1/2	12/27	1/2	1/1	12/28	1/2
Common Loon	135	39	8	44	3	25	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4
Red-throated Loon	9	23	3	145	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Loon sp.	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Horned Grebe	191	32	17	473	474	68	15	81	1	3	...	...	...	...	11
Pied-billed Grebe	9	49	20	53	41	1	9	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	7
Gannet	1	4	1291	25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Double-crested Cormorant	27	5	...	...	18	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Blue Heron	110	96	80	45	42	30	72	61	41	73	1	...	1	1	76
Green Heron	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Little Blue Heron	11	5	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cattle Egret	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Egret	27	1	43	17	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snowy Egret	24	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Louisiana Heron	34	25	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-crowned Night Heron	34	45	10	58	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Bittern	5	4	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glossy Ibis	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wute Swan	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whistling Swan	489	80	...	3170	7	418	66	14	26	3	...	...	...	...	...
Canada Goose	4348	3693	39	1080	8	71	1890	12,200	280	250	1247	677	134	...	16
Brant	4583	3575	293	36	84	468	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White-fronted Goose	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose	12,645	459	7	12,100	...	...	6	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose (blue form)	25	...	...	3	...	...	6	200	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hallard	803	1962	709	734	344	63	511	1082	85	893	211	170	89	...	677
Hallard X Black Duck	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black Duck	2453	933	259	761	30	33	23	338	20	1002	133	61	53	...	739
Cadwall	250	82	30	1634	5	...	...	8	...	66	...	...	1	...	22
Pintail	156	114	4	1533	3	...	175	1528	...	...	...	1	...	...	82
Green-winged Teal	272	161	39	55	20	...	...	156	...	29	...	1	2	1	50
Blue-winged Teal	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
European Wigeon	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Wigeon	179	245	541	5200	915	4	4	21	...	48	1	...	5	...	435
Northern Shoveler	210	13	39	13	10	...	...	25	...	1	...	...	1	...	...
Wood Duck	13	6	28	8	...	...	6	154	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Redhead	5	2	4	11	4	15	11	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
King-necked Duck	1	95	600	16	...	...	3	410	...	1	26	6	10	21	19
Canvasback	6	31	73	804	409	231	302	12	28	912	...	2	7	...	...
Greater Scaup	52	54	11	28	1	4	8	1	...	303	...	...	...	...	2
Lesser Scaup	14	127	119	186	475	459	111	3	670	342	1	12	21	4	8
Scaup sp.	3	11	...	...	10	...	...	1	...	174	...	...	...	...	...
Common Goldeneye	256	191	30	30	709	404	32	...	41	8	...	1	...	...	...
Bufflehead	925	1580	171	52	266	868	55	32	6	105	1	...	...	...	3
Oldsquaw	934	240	1380	45	158	190	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Harlequin Duck	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
King Eider	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White-winged Scoter	58	51	17	12	14	120	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Surf Scoter	836	1698	131	1017	392	1083	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black Scoter	218	285	119	1456	7	217	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scoter sp.	200	220	...	...	2000	2500	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruddy Duck	32	26	26	444	61	666	574	...	450	58	...	...	...	...	...
Hooded Merganser	50	61	308	51	2	...	31	39	2	11	8	8	6	2	72
Common Merganser	...	9	...	...	6	1	...	101	50	440	...	...	...	...	...
Red-breasted Merganser	55	189	25	48	69	95	4	...	6	9	...	...	...	...	...
Merganser sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Duck sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Turkey Vulture	125	199	...	33	...	39	4	17	13	5	64	182	41	50	44
Black Vulture	28	7	1	110	...	16	...	18	...	...	60	38	27	10	88
Goshawk	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-shinned Hawk	15	11	3	11	3	7	1	8	3	6	3	6	4	...	...

[illegible]

	1. Chinoague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Katows	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Gordonsville	12. Charlottesville	13. Warren	14. Darlington Heights	15. Kerr Reservoir
Date	12/26	12/27	12/31	12/29	12/17	1/1	12/18	12/17	12/20	1/2	12/27	1/2	1/1	12/28	1/2
Cooper's Hawk	4	4	...	2	1	1	...	3	1	...	...	1	2	...	...
Red-tailed Hawk	26	46	8	37	13	4	9	39	16	56	15	31	26	4	18
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	11	5	29	5	8	4	5	12	19	1	2	2	6	6
Tough-legged Hawk	...	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Golden Eagle	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bald Eagle	2	...	1	...	...	2	1	4	3	3	...	...	...	...	2
Marsh Hawk	44	82	...	49	6	5	1	12	1	10	...	...	2	1	10
Osprey	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Peregrine Falcon	1	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Merlin	4	3	1	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Kestrel	38	98	15	128	47	26	17	25	12	6	11	20	13	5	11
Cuffed Grouse	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Bobwhite	271	112	80	60	45	44	41	90	86	105	25	8	100	6	43
Japanese Green Pheasant	...	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ring-necked Pheasant	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Turkey	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	2
King Rail	1	1	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Clapper Rail	10	13	1	...	4	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Virginia Rail	3	19	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sora	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Gallinule	...	...	1	8	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Coot	...	49	87	2615	94	...	24	8	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
American Oystercatcher	603	292	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Semipalmated Plover	12	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piping Plover	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Killdeer	64	38	86	99	52	12	1	77	1	27	5	1	6	...	16
Black-bellied Plover	1479	487	12	42	18	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruddy Turnstone	122	81	28	...	73	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Woodcock	15	28	...	2	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	2
Common Snipe	3	67	9	19	10	...	10	38	...	8	...	2	1	...	1
Whimbrel	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Spotted Sandpiper	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Willet	17	10	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Greater Yellowlegs	75	103	...	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Yellowlegs	54	94	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red Knot	32	14	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purple Sandpiper	...	1	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Least Sandpiper	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	54	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dunlin	13,168	5128	87	10	439	73	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Dowitcher	3	9	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Long-billed Dowitcher	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dowitcher sp.	9	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Western Sandpiper	147	1039	...	1	2	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Marbled Godwit	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sanderling	1329	778	138	666	390	72	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Island Gull	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Black-backed Gull	274	369	411	203	72	25	15	43	37	261	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Black-backed Gull	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Herring Gull	2876	3541	3860	583	975	503	301	234	53	2250	...	...	...	...	17
Ring-billed Gull	2033	2179	8100	2600	2480	501	2973	3313	14	3350	...	...	...	...	3784
Laughing Gull	...	...	45	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bonaparte's Gull	12	86	2624	133	26	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	4
Little Gull	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-legged Kittiwake	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gull sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Forster's Tern	...	...	44	13	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Alcid sp.	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rock Dove	74	1056	355	147	609	26	95	186	25	69	153	75	59	2	54
Mourning Dove	330	556	575	455	1652	751	70	365	360	484	554	507	661	307	290
Barn Owl	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

[illegible]

	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Gordonsville	12. Charlottesville	13. Warren	14. Darlington Heights	15. Kerr Reservoir
Date	12/26	12/27	12/31	12/29	12/17	1/1	12/18	12/17	12/20	1/2	12/27	1/2	1/1	12/28	1/2
Screech Owl	15	30	7	4	2	5	...	1	...	...	2	3	7	1	4
Great Horned Owl	12	9	1	13	2	...	...	1	...	...	4	1	7	...	3
Barred Owl	...	...	1	4	...	1	2	3	...	5	...	1	...	...	5
Long-eared Owl	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-eared Owl	9	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Belted Kingfisher	30	27	37	17	28	20	24	20	7	19	3	5	9	1	10
Common Flicker	177	156	133	126	171	61	92	148	30	86	10	45	62	12	66
Pileated Woodpecker	9	2	10	26	5	6	11	24	7	10	6	15	16	9	6
Red-bellied Woodpecker	62	23	41	40	43	34	33	103	49	99	26	37	46	13	29
Red-headed Woodpecker	...	1	1	3	...	...	1	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	13	5	4	14	8	4	7	22	10	5	6	11	19	7	10
Hairy Woodpecker	23	6	3	20	4	2	9	1	4	11	4	4	8	5	6
Downy Woodpecker	...	66	42	75	43	36	28	59	45	107	30	43	46	37	23
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern Phoebe	...	5	...	2	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	...	2	2	3
Horned Lark	38	60	...	...	...	...	61	...	...	...	34	16	13	...	11
Tree Swallow	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Jay	72	80	152	133	90	150	87	182	140	143	95	162	177	129	319
Black-billed Magpie	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Raven	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	5	...	...
Common Crow	907	273	263	535	627	366	195	326	2930	476	842	427	107	883	...
Pish Crow	25	3	39	238	812	15	...	1	3	19	1	21	3	...	...
Black-capped Chickadee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Carolina Chickadee	211	250	141	312	138	105	105	151	93	601	70	186	257	66	87
Chickadee sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tufted Titmouse	73	51	51	45	85	46	45	62	26	371	18	83	93	21	33
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	3	4	5	9	...	14	22	14	81	16	34	34	4	7
Red-breasted Nuthatch	17	54	14	3	2	...	7	8	19	37	18	43	28	3	12
Brown-headed Nuthatch	63	34	1	19	...	8	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Brown Creeper	22	7	13	8	26	1	9	8	4	32	3	3	3	6	10
House Wren	3	10	2	2	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Winter Wren	16	6	1	5	3	1	1	3	1	5	...	3	5	1	4
Carolina Wren	80	190	77	111	75	79	29	129	10	84	7	47	30	7	45
Long-billed Marsh Wren	3	8	...	12	26	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Short-billed Marsh Wren	1	5	...	5	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mockingbird	37	127	92	95	170	106	91	66	45	187	43	142	100	19	67
Gray Catbird	18	36	3	27	13	17	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	4
Brown Thrasher	13	7	14	32	17	10	8	13	...	...	1	1	1	...	8
American Robin	690	31	267	312	68	296	128	23	16	67	42	55	3	161	...
Hermit Thrush	28	58	1	9	2	5	3	9	2	22	9	8	7	10	7
Eastern Bluebird	29	13	1	12	21	111	66	30	54	13	36	58	52	63	54
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Golden-crowned Kinglet	54	18	8	8	6	3	7	24	...	43	2	6	30	7	23
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	10	16	40	25	3	15	15	2	20	...	5	6	17	...
Water Pipit	1021	474	121	344	29	30	...	20	...	43	...	...	50	42	...
Cedar Waxwing	336	115	108	14	170	298	12	161	250	185	47	171	567	...	395
Loggerhead Shrike	2	2	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	2	3	5	3	9
Starling	2125	9487	3150	2546	3170	1326	1187	3522	2200	1583	923	4472	1863	131	362
White-eyed Vireo	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Solitary Vireo	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-and-white Warbler	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Orange-crowned Warbler	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-rumped Warbler	5142	5379	136	3471	2504	1593	635	714	50	20	108	126	213	86	139
Bay-breasted Warbler	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Warbler	8	7	5	5	10	3	7	2	...	...	...	3	...	...	9
Palm Warbler	12	108	4	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Yellowthroat	1	2	...	5	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
House Sparrow	427	390	387	135	814	356	330	182	35	417	161	57	84	152	57
Eastern Meadowlark	796	257	14	406	119	133	143	85	17	1	126	51	187	46	237
Red-winged Blackbird	2018	1418	1176	11,075	5149	508	5234	1636	700	434	137	26	17	27	849

16. Sweet Briar	17. Lynchburg	18. No. Shenandoah Valley	19. Shenandoah Park	20. Big Flat	21. Rockingham Co.	22. Augusta Co.	23. Waynesboro	24. Lexington	25. Peaks of Otter	26. Clifton Forge	27. Fincastle	28. Roanoke	29. Blacksburg	30. Tasewell	31. Glade Spring	32. Bristol	33. Nickelsville	34. Wise Co.
12/31	12/17	12/17	12/18	12/26	12/17	12/31	12/17	12/26	12/20	12/18	12/18	12/17	12/22	12/17	12/31	12/31	12/23	12/22
4 2	47 8 1 ...	19 6 4 ...	5 3 1 ...	... 3	2 2 3 ...	11	3	4	3	5 ... 3 ...	9 2	28 2 2 ...	20 3 2 ...	8 ... 3 ...	10 2	1	2 1	5 3 4 ...
1 20 7 14 ...	21 62 49 90 3	44 16 22 40 2	28 14 11 11 ...	... ... 6 3 ...	16 2 11 21 ...	11 10 7 27 1	17 6 18 14 2	5 11 3 16 1	... 3 4 4 ...	2 51 10	23 36 9 32 3	29 41 15 17 ...	11 11 4 18 14	10 1 19 7 3	27 6 27 4 ...	8 ... 5 4 ...	4 6 7 3 ...	2 2 10 3 ...
6 1 25 ... 1	34 20 107 7	6 17 116 4	3 3 44 3	3 2 18 ...	3 1 64 1	1 11 71 ...	10 3 67 ...	6 2 35 3	2 1 8 ...	1 12 38 ...	10 9 54 ...	16 36 64 ...	3 41 115 ...	... 2 36 1	7 8 90 4	1 2 10 1	2 6 20 2	4 10 48 ...
...	50 ...	45 ...	177 ...	...	143 ...	60 ...	31 ...	...	...	100 ...	18 ...	8 ...	9 ...	36 ...	12 ...	...	...	3 ...
85 ... 1	...	260 ...	197 ...	9 ...	206 ...	215 ...	207 ...	225 ...	25 ...	85 ...	520 ...	273 ...	266 ...	90 ...	242 ...	116 ...	61 ...	74 ...
156 ... 86	821 1 ...	1256 12 ...	1452 1 ...	14 ...	265 29 ...	966 584 ...	2387 726 ...	1281 ...	36 ...	527 ...	1058 ...	388 ...	486 ...	134 ...	328 ...	207 ...	383 ...	556 ...
41 20 45 ...	308 94 276 ...	211 121 14 ...	116 59 16 ...	22 5 2 ...	116 58 3 ...	102 75 9 ...	78 52 4 ...	68 30 32 ...	17 10 ...	210 71 23 ...	79 40 46 ...	137 64 47 ...	181 120 61 ...	75 69 2 ...	172 116 8 ...	25 12 3 ...	54 11 2 ...	150 72 15 ...
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1 12 ...	13 126 ...	3 49 ...	2 56 ...	1 4
25 ... 5	161 ...	271 ...	110 ...	1 ...	88 ...	179 ...	67 ...	59 ...	5 ...	33 ...	251 ...	161 ...	87 ...	3 ...	89 ...	43 ...	17 ...	14 ...
...
...	72 5	53 43	13 1	6 ...	7 3	2 ...	28 ...	145 5	15 8	...	9 13	7 18	10 4	7 ...	6 ...	9 ...	726 ...	11 6
13 ... 2	167 ...	101 ...	38	30 ...	17 ...	38 ...	46 ...	9 ...	22 ...	117 ...	35 ...	111 ...	10 ...	93 ...	10 ...	78 ...	47 ...
...
3 163 ...	234 2 3617	24 6 432,858	72 3	33 7	14 2	42 5	28 2	14 ...	77 1	208 2	33 ...	84	22 ...	2 ...	61 6	...
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	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Gordonsville	12. Charlottesville	13. Warren	14. Darlington Heights	15. Kerr Reservoir
Date	12/26	12/27	12/31	12/29	12/17	1/1	12/18	12/17	12/20	1/2	12/27	1/2	1/1	12/26	1/2
Northern Oriole	...	...	...	...	6	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rusty Blackbird	17	64	10	5	...	1	3	22	4	26	3	...	322	1	...
Brewer's Blackbird	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	1756	647	75	36	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	163	731	2566	15,400	338	64	275	20	5000	11	...	...	2	...	47
Brown-headed Cowbird	81	114	60	1070	241	50	55	62	6	13	3	...	...	7	8
Blackbird sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	328	388	253	205	180	398	160	315	170	446	147	225	411	176	247
Evening Grosbeak	22	10	18	10	53	5	1	205	73	17	32	27	26	1	91
Purple Finch	18	27	94	29	44	5	13	68	15	122	225	256	279	98	105
House Finch	30	36	18	...	13	4	4	6	2	40	132	56	372	...	...
Common Noddy	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Siskin	84	281	213	60	131	...	26	13	115	93	...	22	...	43	18
American Goldfinch	248	638	260	146	214	257	109	204	150	227	16	126	140	177	232
Red Crossbill	...	3	...	18	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	...	...
White-winged Crossbill	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Rufous-sided Towhee	79	55	78	86	70	55	41	41	11	9	2	3	8	3	34
Savannah Sparrow	510	1753	24	325	43	25	14	258	...	4	...	8	1	2	294
Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Grasshopper Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	20	138	6	2	7	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	4	21	18	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	5	55	...	1	...	...	3	...	...	3	...	4	...	...	2
Dark-eyed Junco	634	162	467	422	297	591	641	372	400	1221	429	502	875	820	993
Tree Sparrow	1	5	1	1	...	...	1	...	12	19	...	7	13	...	...
Chipping Sparrow	11	15	2	1	11	3	5	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	2
Field Sparrow	53	228	85	128	27	136	63	72	18	267	29	123	129	23	699
White-crowned Sparrow	1	15	40	1	1	1	...	51	4	2	124	25	131	8	86
White-throated Sparrow	1587	3560	1526	1151	734	761	728	1569	400	1347	480	785	1146	157	1683
Pox Sparrow	19	157	31	10	10	1	9	3	...	...	7	5	2	2	15
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	449	734	32	275	48	16	41	50	1	18	1	14	26	6	250
Song Sparrow	596	1410	138	363	306	205	348	240	45	239	68	160	216	82	927
Lapland Longspur	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Bunting	4	26	...	...	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	155	162	135	141	118	105	99	108	76	96	71	80	80	62	99
Total Individuals	75,491	63,762	35,656	79,523	30,913	18,524	18,616	32,468	12,854	23,185	6691	10,947	9872	3068	16,367
Total Party-hours	200	177	100	148	60	93	85	87	59	180	57	93	105	26	55
Number of Observers	47	37	34	32	27	38	30	27	13	46	14	19	16	11	11

	16. Sweet Briar	17. Lynchburg	18. No. Shenandoah Valley	19. Shenandoah Park	20. Big Flat	21. Rockingham Co.	22. Augusta Co.	23. Waynesboro	24. Lexington	25. Peaks of Otter	26. Clifton Forge	27. Fincastle	28. Roanoke	29. Blacksburg	30. Tazewell	31. Glade Spring	32. Bristol	33. Nickelsville	34. Wise Co.
Date	12/31	12/17	12/17	12/18	12/26	12/17	12/31	12/17	12/26	12/20	12/18	12/18	12/17	12/22	12/17	12/31	12/31	12/23	12/22
Northern Oriole	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rusty Blackbird	...	5	505	...	...	3	96	57	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Brewer's Blackbird	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	11	22	130	5	...	2004	10,882	243	...	...	28	10	9	803	2	52	7460	...	1500
Brown-headed Cowbird	...	4	50,152	3	...	158	569	113	17	...	...	8	...	228	4	14	1	3	...
Blackbird sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	8200	2870	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	134	574	562	514	15	170	338	164	258	23	117	445	283	441	95	339	90	62	263
Evening Grosbeak	5	207	40	84	5	132	255	330	138	4	139	202	197	366	194	29	100	27	15
Purple Finch	116	567	87	96	23	66	153	105	192	11	9	219	87	185	10	35	36	21	33
House Finch	...	92	152	3	...	19	228	35	25	...	...	17	83	87	13	4	10	...	...
Common Noddy	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pine Siskin	...	48	25	3	...	8	2	2	17	...	...	6	14	1	7	...	...	27	1
American Goldfinch	30	257	712	755	11	158	430	91	279	6	64	365	157	331	54	110	80	79	105
Red Crossbill	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	39	...	...	...	7	...
White-winged Crossbill	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rufous-sided Towhee	10	22	2	3	1	...	1	3	2	...	12	12	17	18	12	30	8	10	25
Savannah Sparrow	2	3	1	...	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Grasshopper Sparrow	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dark-eyed Junco	120	1073	2243	1544	94	422	686	435	1016	298	392	1021	651	1082	108	261	69	253	535
Tree Sparrow	...	...	130	9	...	...	29	10	2	...	5	26	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
Chipping Sparrow	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1
Field Sparrow	11	148	168	61	1	23	68	32	129	10	28	174	37	233	46	234	21	56	188
White-crowned Sparrow	23	11	197	223	...	93	129	41	80	...	...	306	22	171	...	174	29	92	26
White-throated Sparrow	347	1478	531	980	51	310	524	234	851	45	398	824	822	243	92	563	102	47	215
Pox Sparrow	...	1	...	3	...	1	...	...	4	...	2	2	3	...	...	6	1	8	9
Lincoln's Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	...	17	4	1	...	...	1	3	1	...	2	3	...	1	2	5	2	6	5
Song Sparrow	29	195	217	120	5	60	68	90	116	17	27	189	181	271	157	303	33	74	290
Lapland Longspur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Bunting	...	...	15	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	52	92	100	82	36	74	69	77	77	42	59	85	84	84	71	76	58	68	69
Total Individuals	1822	15,072	504,065	14,848	434	12,666	36,950	12,472	7803	802	4415	11,090	9549	17,805	3930	12,780	12,580	11,433	11,222
Total Party-hours	17	148	199	139	17	58	72	68	47	17	60	76	147	126	65	75	54	31	85
Number of Observers	10	51	48	58	2	28	25	21	20	7	19	23	45	57	19	23	19	6	20

Egrets were seen at Back Bay, but overall the heron counts were reasonably normal.

A White-fronted Goose showed up on the Gordonsville count for the second year in a row, making only its third appearance on a state count. Four Mallard-Black Duck hybrids were recorded in Northern Shenandoah Valley, and Blue-winged Teal were found at Cape Charles, Charlottesville, and Wise, of all places. A European Wigeon appeared at Little Creek for only the fourth year this species has occurred on a Virginia Christmas count, and the Harlequin Duck at Cape Charles was only its third appearance on a state count. Aside from these, waterfowl seemed quite normal this year with the usual local exceptions inland where limited habitat makes many species unusual at any time. The best waterfowl counts on the Piedmont and in the mountains were found at Kerr Reservoir, Northern Shenandoah Valley, Fincastle, and Blacksburg.

The best vulture counts were at Northern Shenandoah Valley and Blacksburg, and the 976 Black Vultures at the former locality appear to be a record count for Virginia at any time. Goshawks were seen at Brooke and Shenandoah Park, and Rough-legs were found on four counts, including Northern Shenandoah Valley and Tazewell. Fort Belvoir totaled an impressive 56 Red-tailed and 19 Red-shouldered Hawks plus 2 Ospreys, and Golden Eagles were noted on three counts, one each at Cape Charles and Tazewell and an impressive 3 birds at Big Flat. Northern Shenandoah Valley also produced a rare inland Peregrine Falcon. There were a few excellent counts of shorebirds along the coast. Note especially the American Oystercatchers and Black-bellied Plovers at Chincoteague and the Western Sandpipers at Cape Charles. Other noteworthy records included a Spotted Sandpiper at Williamsburg, a Red Knot at Back Bay, and a stunning 54 Least Sandpipers at Hopewell. For the second year Marbled Godwits were missed at Cape Charles, and the 7 at Chincoteague were the only ones recorded this year.

Most of the unusual gulls seemed to be at Little Creek—an Iceland, a Lesser Black-backed, and a Little Gull—and a Black-legged Kittiwake was recorded at Cape Charles. The only terns this year were Forster's, and these were recorded on only three counts, though the one at Williamsburg was a bit unusual away from Chesapeake Bay or the coast. Little Creek also produced a large black and white alcid, probably a Razorbill, though the identification was not positive. The common owls did reasonably well this year (probably as a result of the good weather), a Long-eared Owl was found at Lynchburg, and a Short-eared—rare inland—was seen at Kerr Reservoir.

Extremely cold winter weather can have a devastating effect on populations of semihardy birds. The winter of 1976-77 provided such a situation with an extremely cold spell between 21 December and 9 February, but since the main force of this occurred after the Christmas bird counts, any effects would probably not be obvious until the following year's Christmas counts (i.e., this year). In Table 2 the figures for six species are given for the past four years. Three of these are species that have been followed off-and-on in these annual summaries since the "crash" of the late 1950's, culminating in the winter of 1960-61—Eastern Phoebe, Hermit Thrush, and Eastern Bluebird. The other species—Carolina Wren and Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets—are three that have recently reached record population levels, no doubt helped

by the six consecutive winters with above-normal temperatures that occurred just prior to the winter of 1976-77. Since coverage increased in each of the years represented in the table, it is certainly more accurate to compare the totals with respect to the party-hours—i.e., the totals per 100 party-hours—rather than comparing the totals alone.

The figures in Table 2 are quite revealing. Last year (1976-77) four of the six species declined, two severely (both kinglets). But the big declines showed up this year, with only the Eastern Bluebird holding up rather well, declining only 13% and actually up 8% when compared to 1975-76. The one-year declines of the other five species varied from 41% for the Carolina Wren to a whopping 75% for the Golden-crowned Kinglet. When compared to 1975-76, both kinglets declined 84% in the two years. Since abnormally cold weather occurred again this winter after the Christmas counts, it will be interesting to see if these declines continue next year. A graphic representation of the fluctuations in the winter populations of Eastern Bluebirds from 1945 to 1975 was recently given by Pierson (*Raven*, 48: 75-76, 1977).

Roanoke's Black-billed Magpie is still surviving after five years, and Common Ravens were down slightly to 117 birds versus 124 last year, but the number

TABLE 2. Christmas count totals for selected species for the past four years. The figures in parentheses are the totals per 100 party-hours. Total party-hours for each year were 2514 for 1974-75, 2657 for 1975-76, 2663 for 1976-77, and 3026 for 1977-78.

	<i>Eastern Phoebe</i>	<i>Carolina Wren</i>	<i>Hermit Thrush</i>	<i>Eastern Bluebird</i>	<i>Golden-c. Kinglet</i>	<i>Ruby-c. Kinglet</i>
1974-75	140 (5.6)	3476 (138)	507 (20)	1109 (44)	2080 (83)	1239 (49)
1975-76	156 (5.8)	3546 (133)	431 (16)	1306 (49)	2664 (100)	2108 (79)
1976-77	129 (4.8)	3045 (114)	502 (19)	1612 (61)	1723 (65)	1079 (41)
1977-78	55 (1.8)	1797 (59)	305 (10)	1595 (53)	495 (16)	400 (13)

of counts reporting them went up from 15 to 21, and five of the latter were Piedmont counts. Northern Shenandoah Valley had a record-shattering 311 Black-capped Chickadees, and for the third year numbers appeared at Peaks of Otter, Fincastle, and Roanoke, which are not within the historical wintering range of the species. Note also the 2 each at Tazewell and Wise County. Red-breasted Nuthatches were up considerably over last year with an impressive 376 at Lynchburg, a record state count; Kerr Reservoir reported a Long-billed Marsh Wren for the third year in a row; and Nickelsville was notable this year for an excellent count of 726 American Robins.

A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen at Hopewell, White-eyed Vireos appeared at Chincoteague and Back Bay, and Solitary Vireos were noted at Rockingham County, Waynesboro, and Roanoke. These were the fourth and fifth appearances of the White-eye on a Virginia Christmas count. Interesting warblers included Black-and-whites at Cape Charles and Fort Belvoir, a Bay-breasted at Little Creek, and Common Yellowthroats inland at Gordonsville, Kerr Reservoir, and Fincastle. The only previous Bay-breasted Warbler on a state count was at Warren in 1965. A Brewer's Blackbird at Augusta County was the first count report since 1973.

This was an exceptional winter for northern finches whereas they were in rather short supply last year. Record numbers of Evening Grosbeaks (3060) and Purple Finches (3449) were totaled, and both species were recorded on all 34 counts. But watch those party-hours! With respect to coverage, there were 101 Evening Grosbeaks per 100 party-hours this year whereas in 1968 only 1684 were counted; but because of lower coverage, this total worked out to 168 per 100 party-hours. The Purple Finch total at 114 per 100 party-hours seems a clear record, however. There were 1260 Pine Siskins, a good total but well down from the peak of 2019 in 1969. Of the rarer finches, Common Redpolls appeared at Little Creek, Northern Shenandoah Valley, and Shenandoah Park, Red Crossbills totaled 83 on seven counts, and 2 White-winged Crossbills were seen at Darlington Heights, the first appearance of the last species on a Virginia count since 1974.

After reaching a peak of 598 in 1973, the House Finch moderated in numbers for two years and then hit 943 in 1976 and finally 1481 on 25 counts this year. The 372 at Warren was apparently a record state count. It is hard to realize that this bird was first recorded on a Virginia Christmas count in 1966, only 11 years ago. Some impressive numbers of Savannah Sparrows were counted at Cape Charles, Hopewell, and Kerr Reservoir, and a Grasshopper Sparrow was seen at Shenandoah Park, only the second state count record in over 20 years. Chipping Sparrows were noted on eight counts west of the Fall Line, Lapland Longspurs were recorded only at Cape Charles, and inland records of the Snow Bunting were 15 at Northern Shenandoah Valley and one at Augusta County.

1. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 2 miles N of center of Chincoteague. Dec. 28. Forty-seven observers in 26 parties. Total party-hours, 200 (171 on foot, 24 by car, 5 by boat); total party-miles, 396 (118 on foot, 260 by car, 18 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.

2. CAPE CHARLES. Center 1.5 miles SE of Capeville P. O. Dec. 27. Thirty-seven observers in 23 parties. Total party-hours, 177 (141 on foot, 33 by car, 3 by boat); total party-miles, 373 (129 on foot, 224 by car, 20 by boat). Compiler: Henry Armistead. The editor changed the Ring-necked Pheasants reported to Japanese Green Pheasants.

3. LITTLE CREEK. Center 3.8 miles NE of Kempsville in Virginia Beach. Dec. 31. Thirty-four observers, 30 in 10 parties, 4 at feeders. Total party-hours, 100 (87 on foot, 13 by car) plus 20 at feeders; total party-miles, 378 (48 on foot, 330 by car). Compiler: Paul Sykes, Jr.

4. BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 1.5 miles E of Back Bay. Dec. 29. Thirty-two observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 148 (110 on foot, 28.5 by car, 9.5 by boat); total party-miles, 448 (70 on foot, 363 by car, 15 by boat). Compiler: Paul Sykes, Jr.

5. NEWPORT NEWS. Center SW corner of Langley Air Force Base. Dec. 17. Twenty-seven observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 60 (39 on foot, 21 by car); total party-miles, 315 (36 on foot, 279 by car). Compiler: W. P. Smith. Two Wood Thrushes and 1 Red-eyed Vireo removed for lack of details.

6. MATHEWS. Center 0.5 mile E of Beaverlett P.O. Jan. 1. Thirty-eight observers, 36 in 11 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 93 (58 on foot, 33 by car, 2 by boat) plus 3 at feeders; total party-miles, 348 (61 on foot, 272 by car, 15 by boat). Compiler: Mary Pulley. Pectoral Sandpiper deleted for lack of details.

7. WILLIAMSBURG. Center Colonial Williamsburg Information Center. Dec. 18. Thirty observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 85 (33 on foot, 50 by car, 2 by

boat); total party-miles, 450 (38 on foot, 406 by car, 6 by boat). Compiler: Bill Williams.

8. HOPEWELL. Center Curles Neck. Dec. 17. Twenty-seven observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 87 (72 on foot, 12 by car, 3 by boat); total party-miles, 274 (40 on foot, 219 by car, 15 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.

9. BROOKE. Center 3 miles ESE of Brooke. Dec. 20. Thirteen observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 59 (49 on foot, 10 by car); total party-miles, 149 (41 on foot, 108 by car). Compiler: E. T. McKnight.

10. FORT BELVOIR. Center Pohick Church. Jan. 2. Forty-six observers in 26 parties. Total party-hours, 180 (161.5 on foot, 18.5 by car); total party-miles, 420 (128 on foot, 292 by car). Compiler: Jackson Abbott.

11. GORDONSVILLE. Center junction rts. 15 and 33. Dec. 27. Fourteen observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 57 (39 on foot, 18 by car) plus 1 at feeders; total party-miles, 251 (40 on foot, 211 by car). Compiler: Helen Goldstick.

12. CHARLOTTESVILLE. Center near Ivy. Jan. 2. Nineteen observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 93 (79 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 300 (79 on foot, 221 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

13. WARREN. Center near Keene. Jan. 1. Sixteen observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 105 (92 on foot, 13 by car); total party-miles, 306 (105 on foot, 201 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

14. DARLINGTON HEIGHTS. Center Darlington Heights P.O. Dec. 28. Eleven observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 26 (19 on foot, 7 by car); total party-miles, 161 (12 on foot, 149 by car). Compiler: Vera Copple.

15. JOHN H. KERR RESERVOIR. Center E end of Kerr Dam. Jan. 2. Eleven observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 55 (42 on foot, 13 by car); total party-miles, 220 (25 on foot, 195 by car). Compiler: Paul McQuarry.

16. SWEET BRIAR. Center Sweet Briar College campus. Dec. 31. Ten observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 17 (on foot); total party-miles, 10 (on foot). Compiler: Gertrude Prior.

17. LYNCHBURG. Center Lynchburg College. Dec. 17. Fifty-one observers, 46 in 12 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 148 (106 on foot, 42 by car) plus 10 at feeders; total party-miles, 515 (78 on foot, 437 by car). Compiler: Myriam Moore.

18. NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY. Center junction Crooked Run and rt. 636. Dec. 17. Forty-eight observers in 22 parties. Total party-hours, 199 (82 on foot, 112 by car, 5 by canoe); total party-miles, 1299 (107 on foot, 1180 by car, 12 by canoe). Compiler: Rob Simpson.

19. SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK-LURAY. Center Hershberger Hill. Dec. 18. Fifty-eight observers, 55 in 19 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 139 (73 on foot, 60 by car, 6 by canoe) plus 6 at feeders; total party-miles, 720 (59 on foot, 648 by car, 13 by canoe). Compiler: Dennis Carter.

20. BIG FLAT MOUNTAIN. Center on Pasture Fence Mountain. Dec. 26. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 17 (16 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 58 (28 on foot, 30 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

21. ROCKINGHAM COUNTY. Center Ottobine. Dec. 17. Twenty-eight observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 58 (23 on foot, 35 by car); total party-miles, 323 (23 on foot, 300 by car). Compiler: Max Carpenter.

22. AUGUSTA COUNTY. Center junction rts. 780 and 781. Dec. 31. Twenty-five observers, 24 in 9 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 72 (39 on foot, 33 by car) plus 4 at feeders; total party-miles, 428 (36 on foot, 392 by car). Compiler: John Mehner.

23. WAYNESBORO. Center Sherando. Dec. 17. Twenty-one observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 68 (47 on foot, 21 by car); total party-miles, 324 (36.5 on foot, 287.5 by car). Compiler: Ruth Snyder.

24. LEXINGTON. Center Big Spring Pond. Dec. 26. Twenty observers, 17 in 6 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 47 (26 on foot, 21 by car) plus 6 at feeders; total party-miles, 264 (26 on foot, 238 by car). Compilers: Bob Paxton and George Tolley.

25. PEAKS OF OTTER. Center Peaks of Otter Visitor Center. Dec. 20. Seven observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 17 (9 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 44 (37 on foot, 7 by car). Compiler: Almon English.

26. CLIFTON FORGE. Center junction rts. 42 and 60. Dec. 18. Nineteen observers, 15 in 9 parties, 4 at feeders. Total party-hours, 60 (21.5 on foot, 38.5 by car) plus 13 at feeders; total party-miles, 260 (27 on foot, 233 by car). Compiler: Allen LeHew. On Blackpoll Warbler and 7 Chipping Sparrows deleted for lack of details.

27. FINCASTLE. Center near junction rts. 220 and 619. Dec. 18. Twenty-three observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 76 (43 on foot, 33 by car); total party-miles, 322 (46 on foot, 276 by car). Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

28. ROANOKE. Center Oakland Blvd. and Williamson Rd. Dec. 17. Forty-five observers in 20 parties. Total party-hours, 147 (81 on foot, 56 by car, 10 by canoe); total party-miles, 538 (71 on foot, 460 by car, 7 by canoe). Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

29. BLACKSBURG. Center near Linkous Store. Dec. 22. Fifty-seven observers, 52 in 16 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 126 (90 on foot, 32 by car, 4 by canoe) plus 9 at feeders; total party-miles, 338 (76 on foot, 255 by car, 7 by canoe). Compiler: John Murray.

30. TAZEWELL. Center Fourway. Dec. 17. Nineteen observers, 17 in 7 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 65 (31 on foot, 34 by car) plus 9 at feeders; total party-miles, 385 (37 on foot, 348 by car). Compiler: S. Cromer.

31. GLADE SPRING. Center junction rts. 750 and 609. Dec. 31. Twenty-three observers, 22 in 8 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 75 (26 on foot, 49 by car) plus 4 at feeders; total party-miles, 510 (39 on foot, 471 by car). Compiler: Turner Clinard.

32. BRISTOL. Center junction rts. 647 and 654. Dec. 31. Nineteen observers, 17 in 6 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 54 (6 on foot, 44 by car, 4 by boat) plus 2 at feeders; total party-miles, 209 (11 on foot, 176 by car, 22 by boat). Compiler: Rockwell Bingham.

33. NICKELSVILLE. Center Nickelsville. Dec. 23. Six observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 31 (22 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles, 130 (16 on foot, 114 by car). Compiler: E. E. Scott.

34. WISE COUNTY. Center Dorchester. Dec. 22. Twenty observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 85 (44 on foot, 41 by car); total party-miles, 423 (48.5 on foot, 374.5 by car). Compiler: Richard Peake.

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RECENT SIGHTINGS OF EAGLES IN SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA

C. S. ADKISSON, R. N. CONNER, I. D. PRATHER, AND J. W. VIA

Relatively few eagles are seen in southwestern Virginia in any season. The few seen each year are normally reported by observers watching migrants along the Blue Ridge or along Peter's Mountain to the west. Thus, both Golden Eagles, *Aquila chrysaetos*, and Bald Eagles, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, usually immatures, have recently been seen moving along these ridges in the fall.

Other sightings of these birds have been reported in other areas, especially at southwestern Virginia impoundments (see, for example, *Raven*, 42: 23-25; *ibid.*, 43: 45-46; and *ibid.*, 44: 98; Roanoke Valley Bird Club members have seen Bald Eagles in winter at Carvin's Cove as well).

We report here our observations for the period 1973 through 1975. Mr. H. Caldwell encountered two different Golden Eagles in this period on his Craig County farm, 10 miles south of Newcastle. In the first instance, a large, mature Golden became caught in an animal trap, and was released unharmed, in November or December 1973. Mr. Caldwell believed the bird to have been larger than his next eagle, which we saw, and so may have been a female. The second Golden Eagle was also caught in one of Caldwell's traps on 20 February 1975. We learned of this event through the state game warden and went to the Caldwell farm, where we banded and released the bird on the 21st. From the size of the bird and the presence of white in the tail, we believed it to be an immature female. This second bird lost its left outer toe in the accident but flew apparently unimpaired in the direction of Poff's Mountain to the west.

On 12 December 1974 we were given a Golden Eagle which had been found wounded near a road along Poverty Creek in the Jefferson National Forest in western Montgomery County. The bird's injury consisted only of a single impact of a shotgun pellet in a muscle of the right wing, between the ulna and radius, and also an apparently broken ulna. This bird was maintained in captivity over the winter and was banded and released in good shape on 20 March 1975. From its plumage, measurements, and weight, we believe it was an adult male. We later were informed by Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Light, of Blacksburg, that they had seen three eagle-sized birds in Poverty Hollow on 10 or 11 December.

The most recent eagle recorded from this area was an immature Bald Eagle reported to the authorities in July 1975 by Mr. H. Caldwell of Craig County. The bird had been shot by an unknown individual and hung on a fence near the Caldwell farm. J. W. Via learned of the incident and was able to recover the head and a few feathers, now deposited with the Center for Systematic Collections at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

All the eagles reported herein became known to us through various incidents that were, or could have been, fatal to the birds. We think it likely that eagles, Golden Eagles especially, are more common in this mountainous terrain in winter than is apparent from occasional sightings. It is possible that Golden Eagles from the Canadian arctic regularly winter in the Southern Appalachians. Observers should be alert to this possibility and report any eagle sightings through their local bird clubs so that the records can be published.

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MIGRATING HAWKS IN BEDFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA

JAMES L. CARTER

On Tuesday morning, 21 September 1976, at 10:05 a.m. when returning to Lynchburg, Virginia, from our home on Smith Mountain Lake, my wife Jewel

R. Carter and I sighted a kettle of hawks forming at the intersection of Virginia routes 608 and 626, known locally as Whitehouse. We stopped, watched, and counted; we also counted other hawks approaching to join the kettle, the head of which ended in a cloud formation. Many of the hawks were flapping their wings as though they were in a hurry to join the others in the kettle.

We continued on route 626 for 10 miles until we reached route 43. Along this distance we stopped four times. Three stops were to watch and count kettles and the approaching hawks. At one point we observed hawks circling around a clump of trees located in the center of a field of some 30 acres. We counted 25 Broad-winged Hawks, *Buteo platypterus*; they were from 10 feet from the ground to treetop level. We suspected they must have roosted here and were just coming out of the trees. We watched them from about 300 feet away.

As we moved along route 24, we sighted another kettle; again we stopped to observe and count. At this point hawks were approaching on our left and right. All previous kettles were on our left and all of the hawks were approaching on our left, this being the side of the road toward the west and the Peaks of Otter. Along route 709 we began sighting hawks again, and at the intersection of route 811 and U. S. 460, directly over the New London Academy elementary school, we saw another kettle, the sixth thus far. During this exciting drive we had counted 670 hawks, almost all of which were Broad-wings. This route we have traveled at least twice a week for the past 8 years is on the Piedmont about 25 mles southwest of the Peaks of Otter, and this was the first time that we had sighted more than three hawks together here.

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MOUNTAIN PLOVER AT CHINCOTEAGUE

CLAUDIA P. WILDS

At about 8 a.m. on the morning of Saturday, 16 October 1976, F. Prescott Ward, then on Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge for his annual month of Peregrine Falcon banding, discovered a Mountain Plover, *Charadrius montanus*, on the east side of the Wash Flats, feeding with a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, *Tryngites subruficollis*, a regular fall visitor to this part of the refuge. When Ward noticed that I was in the vicinity engaged in one of my biweekly shorebird counts, he drove me up the flats in his Jeep, and we relocated the bird quite easily. Since the day was bright and sunny, we approached the plover from the east so as to have optimal light and were able to drive within 50 feet of it, where it was observed at length through 10x binoculars. Notes were taken on the spot.

Compared to the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, it was about an inch longer with substantially longer legs and a more erect Killdeer-like stance. Its most striking features were the uniformly unmottled pale grayish-brown color of the upper parts and the long flesh-colored legs. The feathers of the back, wing coverts, and scapulars were narrowly edged with buff, observable at close range. At rest the only black in the plumage that could be seen was at the tips of the primaries and tail. The eyes were broadly ringed with white; the face (except for the brownish lores), throat, belly, and under tail coverts were also white,

but the breast was strongly washed with grayish-brown, continuing down the flanks. The bill was black and rather slim.

The bird was difficult to flush, running in short spurts several times before flying. In flight the wings showed a narrow, sharp-edged white wing stripe in front of the broad, blackish trailing edge. The tail was narrowly bordered with white; though the rump and upper tail coverts were the same color as the back, the tip (last half-inch) of the tail was black. The low flight was distinctive: the wings were decurved throughout the alternate flapping and sailing.

When the bird finally flew far down the flats, we left to collect my camera with its 300-mm lens. On my return, I transferred to a refuge truck driven by Larry Malone, the Assistant Refuge Manager. We found the plover again (now alone) and took several color photographs at a distance of 10 to 15 yards after Malone had obtained satisfactory views of all field marks through a 20x scope at about 30 yards.

The Wash Flats at this time were characterized by a long, broad, shallow lagoon bordered on the east by about 50 yards of bare, firm mud flats, east of which were another 150 yards of short vegetation. Each time the Mountain Plover was sighted that morning, it was resting on the western part of the vegetation-covered flats about 75 yards from the water's edge.

On the following day, 17 October, Paul DuMont and others had a poor view of the plover in heavy rain but were able to note the wing and tail pattern in flight, especially the narrow, sharp-edged wing stripe and the unusual manner of flight.

A subsequent visit to the National Museum of Natural History permitted thorough inspection of the extensive collection of skins of all plover species. No species other than the Mountain Plover shares the particular combination of plumage pattern, leg color, body size, and proportionate bill size of the Chincoteague bird. The smaller, longer-winged Mongolian Plover, *Charadrius mongolus*, is similar though darker and grayer in winter plumage but has slate-gray legs. The female Wilson's Plover, *C. wilsonia*, also smaller, has, of course, a much heavier bill, a clearly defined breast band, a white collar, a broader, more diffuse wing stripe, and a quite different facial pattern. The Caspian Plover, *C. asiaticus*, lacks the brownish lores, the well-defined wing stripe, and the black in the tail and the tips of the secondaries. A skeptical suggestion that the bird might be a pale member of the *fulva* race of the Lesser Golden Plover, *Pluvialis dominica*, could not be supported by any of the dozens of specimens of this race in the collection in any respect except in general plover appearance.

This was the first reported sight record for this species in Virginia.

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IMITATION OF NONAVIAN SOUNDS BY MOCKINGBIRDS

RICHARD N. CONNER

Mockingbirds, *Mimus polyglottos*, have long been noted for their ability to accurately imitate the songs and call notes of other birds. Howard (*Evolution*, 28: 428-438, 1974) concluded that interspecific imitation of territorial songs

by male Mockingbirds enables them to exclude conspecific competitors from their territories, and that males with larger repertoires have an advantage in acquiring territories and attracting mates.

As a result of the ability to learn to imitate other species of birds, Mockingbirds occasionally incorporate nonavian sounds in their repertoires. Laskey (*Auk*, 61: 211-219, 1944) reported that a hand-raised Mockingbird learned to imitate a washing machine "squeak." One Mockingbird, in Blacksburg, Virginia, learned to imitate the "squeak" from a child's tricycle. When imitated by the bird, the "squeak" was repeated 4 to 7 times.

A second Mockingbird learned to imitate an even more unusual sound. At the end of the spring quarter of 1976 at VPI & SU, Blacksburg, Virginia, many students were using typewriters to type papers for classes. A Mockingbird in the area began to imitate the sounds made by typewriters. The bird would give a short rendition of typing followed by the sound of the carriage being pushed back to the other side. The bird would repeat this sequence several times before going on to a different song imitation. Several weeks after the quarter and the typing had ended, the Mockingbird stopped imitating typewriters.

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SPRAGUE'S PIPIT AT CHINCOTEAGUE

KENNETH H. BASS

On 28 September 1976 about 12 noon, my birding companion, Frances Kobetic, and I were on the Wash Flats of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia. We were on the north end of the east side of the flats, approximately 7 miles north of the beach information center. The purpose of our hike was to observe the Buff-breasted Sandpipers, *Tryngites subruficollis*, seen here earlier in the month. We were moving in for a closer look at 12 of these birds when a bird flew up about 15 feet in front of us from the 8- to 12-inch high grass. I immediately recognized the bird as a pipit.

I caught a glimpse of white edging on each side of the tail as the bird flew from the grass and observed its flight pattern of rapid wing beats with intermittent pauses as it gained altitude. It rose about 20 to 30 feet from the ground, flying into the wind. It then dropped down into taller grass about 50 feet from us. I thought it was strange that the bird was alone and landing in tall grass, and this aroused my curiosity. Water Pipits, *Anthus spinoletta*, are usually seen in flocks and in more open areas such as plowed fields, golf courses, and airports. This bird was in tall, thick grass. We began stalking it.

As we approached the area where it landed, we could not find the bird until it flew from the tall grass about 10 feet in front of us. This time it flew higher into the wind at about a 45° angle, gained altitude of about 50 feet, circled, and flying with the wind, landed approximately 150 feet away in the tall grass. As the bird flew higher, it gave two single-syllable, high-pitched, thin call notes, spaced about 4 seconds apart. Now we were running to the spot so we wouldn't

lose it in the grass. As we approached closer, it flew into the wind and landed about 70 feet in front of us in the same short grass area it was in originally. As we came closer to the spot, we could see the bird clearly about 40 to 50 feet from us with our 10 x 50 binoculars. We could see the distinct brown streaking on the back, the thin pipit bill, the light-colored legs and feet, and the characteristic "pipit walk." It was then I knew it was definitely not a Water Pipit, since this has dark legs and an unstreaked back. As we neared the bird I studied the field marks and realized it did not have yellowish legs as Peterson's *Guide* states for a Sprague's Pipit, *A. spragueii*. I then thought it might be a European species of pipit and began making mental notes of the bird's field marks to be checked in my European field guides upon returning home. I asked my partner to write the field marks down as she observed them, as I wanted to keep my eye on the bird.

I am familiar with the Water Pipit, having observed my first flock of 8 birds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York, on 17 November 1962. I have seen Water Pipits in other localities since then, with the latest observations being of a flock of 18 birds in a plowed field at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Delaware, on 26 April 1976.

This bird was the same size as a Water Pipit. The bill was long and thin, seemingly lighter at the base of the lower mandible than at the tip. The buffy-colored breast was finely streaked with brown, more heavily on the sides under the forewings than on the front. The throat was whitish and unstreaked. The wings blended in with the brownish-tan streaking on the back, and each wing had two faint, inconspicuous wing bars. The legs were definitely flesh-colored. By now we could approach 15 feet from the bird, too close to use our binoculars. At this point it would become nervous, and another step would cause it to take flight. Even though it would fly into taller grass out of sight, it seemed to be getting use to our presence since it would only fly for a short distance. The bird could be "herded" out of the taller grass into the shorter grass for easier observation.

The white edging on each side of the tail was most conspicuous when the bird landed as it would flutter its wings and spread its tail before alighting. No white in the very narrow tail could be determined when the bird was walking. The longer we followed him, the more reluctant he became to take flight.

We observed the bird for what seemed like 30 minutes, but it was most probably more like an hour, so involved were we in the observation. We checked Robbins' *Birds of North America* when we returned to our car. Our identification was now confirmed. The guide stated that the Sprague's Pipit has flesh-colored legs. The bird we stalked was definitely this species.

I suspect that strong southwesterly winds blowing the night of 27 September and into the morning of the 28th possibly caused this bird to be separated from a migrating flock and to end up at the locality of our sighting. I note that up to 12 Sprague's Pipits wintered at Rocky Mount, North Carolina, between 5 January and 9 March 1975 (*American Birds*, 29: 678, 1975).

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BANDING RESULTS AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH IN 1976

F. R. SCOTT

For the fourteenth consecutive year the VSO Research Committee sponsored a project to band migrating land birds at the Kiptopeke Beach Field Station during the fall of 1976. This station, located in southern Northampton County, Virginia, was open continuously from 4 September to 31 October 1976 except for the three-day period of 15-17 September. The operation of the station was essentially similar to that of previous years in that up to 45 mist nets were run as weather and personnel permitted.

As compared with 1975, more new birds were banded (12,132 of 99 species versus 9870 of 95 species in 1975) in fewer net-hours of operation (17,982 net-hours versus 20,328). As a consequence, netting efficiency improved to 67 new birds per 100 net-hours from 49 the previous year. Other numerical totals for the season included 834 repeats, 16 different returns from previous years, and 11 foreign retraps of birds originally banded elsewhere. The most recent previous reports on this station's operation have been published in *The Raven* in the last two years (*Raven*, 46: 65-67, 1975; *ibid.*, 47: 70-72, 1976).

The five most common birds banded this season were Yellow-rumped Warbler, 3090; American Redstart, 1892; Common Yellowthroat, 920; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 650; and Golden-crowned Kinglet, 572. The Golden-crown total was a record high for this station, the previous high being 342 in 1974. Other record totals (compared with the previous ones) included 143 Sharp-shinned Hawks (versus 87 in 1975), 102 Winter Wrens (versus 80 in 1975); 19 Solitary Vireos (versus 16 in 1974), and 21 Pine Warblers (versus 18 in 1971). This was the third successive year in which unusually high numbers of Ruby-crowns were trapped. Other species in higher numbers than in 1975 included House Wren, 211 (versus 145 in 1975); Gray Catbird, 425 (311); Hermit Thrush, 151 (74); Veery, 453 (225); Red-eyed Vireo, 329 (118); and Palm Warbler, 138 (76). Lower than in 1975 were Brown Creeper, 65 (versus 92 in 1975); Swainson's Thrush, 176 (347); Gray-checked Thrush, 153 (214); Cape May Warbler, 37 (76); Bay-breasted Warbler, 26 (78); and Blackpoll Warbler, 54 (169). Unusual birds trapped here included Bewick's Wrens on 23 and 24 October, 4 Golden-winged Warblers between 6 and 20 September, and a Clay-colored Sparrow on 22 September.

Eleven cold fronts were recorded passing through the area while the station was in operation, and of these, ten produced moderate to excellent flights of birds. Two flights—on 9 September and 5 October—were apparently not associated with frontal passages. The best flights totaled 578 banded birds on 6 September, 1008 on 11 October, and 828 on 12 October. Most of the September flights were dominated as usual by American Redstarts and those after 9 October by Yellow-rumped Warblers.

The 16 returns from previous years included 12 judged to be permanent residents (2 Carolina Chickadees, 1 Tufted Titmouse, 8 Carolina Wrens, and 1 Mockingbird), two summer residents (White-eyed Vireos), and two winter residents (White-throated Sparrows). The oldest of these, a Carolina Wren and a White-eyed Vireo, had been banded in 1972, both as adults (AHY). The foreign retraps included 7 immature (HY) Sharp-shinned Hawks that had been banded near Cape May, New Jersey, by W. S. Clark and others from one to six

days before their recaptures at Kiptopeke. One, in fact, was banded at Cape May at 4 p.m. on 10 October and recaptured here the next day about 12:30 p.m. Other direct recoveries were a HY Gray Catbird banded at Island Beach, New Jersey, on 4 September 1976 by W. K. Merritt and retrapped here on 15 October by Sydney Mitchell; a HY Veery banded at Block Island, Rhode Island, on 14 September 1976 by Mrs. F. D. Lapham and retrapped here on 22 September by Dorothy Mitchell; and a HY Black-throated Blue Warbler also banded at Block Island by Mrs. Lapham on 11 October 1976 and recovered here on 27 October by W. P. Smith. The final foreign bird, a Gray-cheeked Thrush banded as an AHY near Manorville, Long Island, New York, on 29 September 1970 by G. S. Raynor, was recaptured here by W. P. Smith on 5 October 1976. This bird was at least 7 years old and was probably the oldest bird of this species on record. John H. Kennard, who has summarized longevity records of American birds (*Bird-Banding*, 46, 55-73, 1975), omitted birds less than 4 years old and did not list any age records for this species.

Age ratios of the birds banded followed the general pattern of previous years with HY ("hatching year") birds outnumbering AHY ("after hatching year") birds by nine to one or more. For example, for all warbler species in which ten or more were banded, HY birds totaled 90 to 100% with the following three exceptions: Black-and-white Warbler, 89%; Northern Waterthrush, 84%; and Common Yellowthroat, 87%. The few exceptions to the general pattern deserve some mention. An unusually small proportion of HY birds for several species occurred on the flight on 9 September. The species affected, with percent of HY birds on that date, included Swainson's Thrush (88%), Veery (31%), Red-eyed Vireo (84%), Black-and-white Warbler (71%), Ovenbird (73%), Northern Waterthrush (33%), and American Redstart (61%). The Veeries, in fact, had low proportions of HY birds for the whole five-day period of 7 to 11 September. This reduced the overall fall age ratio for this species to 63% HY from 87% in 1975. Interestingly, a similar one-day decrease in the proportion of HY birds occurred almost exactly two years before (8 September 1974) and involved most of the same species.

Licensed banders in charge of the station for varying periods of time were Mr. and Mrs. Roger Foy, C. W. Hacker, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F. S. Schaeffer, F. R. Scott, and W. P. Smith. Over 125 other banders and assistants played a vital role in the station operation, and their help was greatly appreciated. Permission to use the land for the field station was kindly given by Robert Hillman, of Amagansett, New York, agent for Kiptopeke Terminal Property, and by John Maddox, of Virginia Beach. Walter P. Smith did the initial editing and tabulation of the field records.

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

CHRISTMAS COUNT CHANGES. By direction of the VSO Board, the summary material on each Christmas count in this issue has been abbreviated in an economy move. The editor regrets that each participant's name can not be listed this year. Those desiring more details on a specific count can probably

get them from *American Birds* or the count compiler. As usual, all counts follow the rules issued by *American Birds*. They are restricted to a 15-mile-diameter circle, and the count center is given for each one.

SCOTERS WEST OF THE BLUE RIDGE. There were several reports of scoters west of the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1977. Three White-winged Scoters seen by Bill Opengari at Carvin's Cove, Botetourt County, on 29 January were the only report of this species. Surf Scoters, however, were found in four different locations. Three females were present at a lake on route 795 near Fishersville, Augusta County, on 7 November and carefully studied by Mozelle Henkel and Ruth Snyder, and one immature male on Shenandoah Lake, Rockingham County, on 14-30 November and one female on Elkhorn Lake, Augusta County, on 14 November were identified by Leonard Teuber, Kathleen Finnegan, Richard and Mary Smith, and other members of the Rockingham Bird Club. Three additional Surfs were observed on 12 December by Richard H. Peake on Wise Reservoir in Wise County; one of these appeared to be an immature or molting male and the other two seemed to be immature or molting females. This was the first record for Wise County. Three female Black Scoters appeared in Rockingham County at Shenandoah Lake, 9-30 November, and were seen by Leonard Teuber, Kathleen Finnegan, and others. This appears to be the first record of Black Scoters west of the Blue Ridge.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER AT CHINCOTEAGUE. Leading a group of students at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on 22 May 1977, Robert C. Simpson observed an adult Long-tailed Jaeger fly directly overhead from Tom's Cove out over the ocean. About the size of a Laughing Gull, the bird had very long and pointed central tail feathers extending about 6 to 9 inches beyond the other tail feathers. Other characters observed included a black cap separated from the gray back by a distinct white collar, a yellow smudge behind the eye and below the black cap, and immaculately white throat, breast, and belly. None of the observers could discern a white flash in the wings, and the primaries were darker than the rest of the wing. Others viewing this bird were Gina Gardner, John Glover, Cathy Hunt, Henry Hunt, and Cliff Hupp. This is the second record of this species for Virginia (see *Raven*, 47: 54-55, 1976).

TREE SWALLOWS NESTING IN MADISON COUNTY. Tree Swallows have apparently been nesting on a farm near Brightwood, Madison County, Virginia, from 1971 through 1977. Colonel John W. Skelton, who owns the farm, has recorded one or two pairs nesting in bluebird boxes each year, and one pair has occasionally had two broods. Eggs were recorded as early as 17 April 1973 and as late as 19 June 1972, and the latest fledging took place 19 July 1972 from an apparent second brood. These nestings were also observed by Milam B. Cater on 27 May 1976, John B. Bazuin, Jr., on 20 May 1977, and the Charlottesville-Albemarle Bird Club on 10 June 1977. This seems to be the first recorded nesting of this species in Piedmont Virginia.

CAPE MAY WARBLER IN SUMMER. On 30 June 1977 Laura Burrows observed a singing male Cape May Warbler at her home in Blacksburg, Virginia. On 4 July Myron Shear observed one—possibly the same bird—at his home nearby. Prior to these observations, there were no records in Montgomery County between 27 May and 29 August, according to John W. Murray.

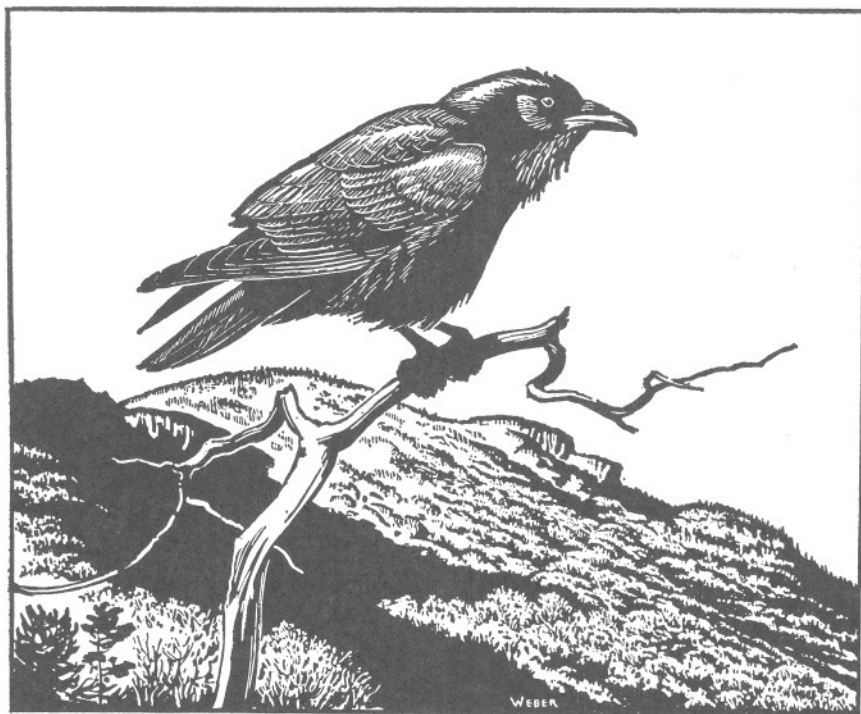
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CONTENTS

The Highland County Foray of June 1975	43
By Richard H. Peake	
Distraction Display by Male Canada Warbler	62
By Thomas A. Pierson	
Le Conte's Sparrow in Botetourt County	63
By Jerry W. Via	
Review	63
News and Notes	64

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 \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$125.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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THE HIGHLAND COUNTY FORAY OF JUNE 1975

R. H. PEAKE

The 1975 breeding-bird foray in Highland County, Virginia, began the afternoon of 17 June and ended in the early afternoon of 22 June. The eighth of a series of VSO forays designed to make intensive studies of the breeding birds of Virginia, this foray had 32 registered participants, who were all grateful for the excellent advance work done by YuLee Lerner.

The foray confined itself to Highland County, and the majority of the participants stayed at the Montvalee Motel headquarters in Monterey or at Maple Crest Campground to the southwest. A few groups camped at Locust Spring for one or two nights. The weather was excellent, for the most part sunny with a few afternoon showers. Almost all of the county was covered by three or more groups, but the Laurel Fork drainage west of Back Creek and north of rt. 250 received fairly intensive coverage: 14 lists were turned in for the Locust Spring area alone.

With the work done by Brooks (1935), Murray (1954), Scott (1952), and Stevens (1965, 1966, 1976), this foray should provide a foundation for future ornithological work in Highland County. Of particular interest was the addition during the foray of two species—Bobolink and Purple Finch—to the list of Virginia's breeding birds. Of the species singled out for special attention in the foray prospectus, the group failed to find Saw-whet Owl (a bird was heard calling just across the West Virginia line on Alleghany Mountain), Swainson's Thrush, and Henslow's Sparrow. Two expected species—Black-billed Cuckoo (an unidentified cuckoo on Lantz Mountain may have been of this species) and Summer Tanager—were not found. Moreover, no one located a Swamp Sparrow, a species which Stevens (1965, 1976) has reported from Buck Run in the Laurel Fork area.

The mountains and rivers in Highland County flow generally from northeast to southwest. From east to west the major ridges are Shenandoah Mountain (2800 to 3800 feet), Bullpasture Mountain (2800 to 3200 feet), Jack Mountain (3200 to 4300 feet), Monterey Mountain (3500 to 3900 feet), Lantz Mountain (3200 to 3800 feet), and Alleghany Mountain (3800 to 4500 feet). Route 250 runs through the center of the county from east to west and provides a convenient dividing line between the northern and southern portions of the county.

Highland County, Virginia, is part of the folded Appalachians—the Ridge and Valley Province—lying next to West Virginia along the southeast side of the Alleghany Crest. The county is aptly named, for it is one of the highest in the state. Only the lower reaches of Cowpasture and Bullpasture Rivers are lower than 2000 feet (610 meters) above sea level. Most major valleys lie between 2000 and 3000 feet (610-915 m), giving an average relief on the order of 1500 feet (450 m). The highest point in the county is 4546 feet (1386 m) on the state line 5.5 miles (ca. 9 km) northwest of Hightown. Most of the land is in slopes, often quite steep and heavily forested, but narrow floodplains have developed along the larger streams. These typically are cleared for farming and grazing, as are some of the less steeply sloping uplands.

Nearly all the rocks in the county are Paleozoic sedimentary rocks—shales, sandstones, and limestones—ranging in age from latest Cambrian (ca. 500

million years old) to earliest Mississippian (ca. 340 million years old). Exceptions are the small igneous intrusions of Triassic age (ca. 200 million years old) such as Trimble Knob, less than a mile southwest of Monterey, and Sounding Knob, about 5 miles (ca. 8 km) south of Monterey. Resistant sandstones make up the major ridges, while valleys are cut in softer shales or limestones. A predominantly trellised drainage pattern results from this control of erosion by differential resistance of folded beds.

The southern three-quarters of the county drains southwestward via Back Creek and the Jackson, Bullpasture, and Cowpasture Rivers, all tributaries of the James River. The northernmost quarter of the county is drained by the South Branch of the Potomac River and its tributaries.

The author wishes to thank Dr. Philip Shelton of Clinch Valley College for his help in preparing the material herein on the geology of Highland County.

For the purposes of the annotated list below, elevations less than 2300 feet are thought of as low, those between 2300 and 3300 feet as medium, and those over 3300 as high. For the most part, elevation appears less important to bird distribution in Highland County than it does in the Mount Rogers or Burkes Garden regions (Scott, 1966, 1973, 1975). Possibly the greater relief in those areas causes elevation to play a more prominent role in bird distribution.

Like previous foray field work, that in Highland County was conducted in small groups, usually two to four observers, covering as much of the study area as possible. Different parties covered routes on successive days to compensate for changing weather conditions and observers' varying abilities. The species total was 129, only two less than the 1974 Mount Rogers foray.

The following observers appear in the annotated list by last name only: Jorn and Robert Ake, Robert T. and Sarah Barbee, Barbara Barton, John and Thelma Dalmás, Bruce Davenport, Tony Decker, Ernest and Mabel Edwards, Gisela Grimm, James Gum, Virginia Hank, Ruth Higbie, David Hughes, Barry Kinzie, Irene Larner, Paul McQuarry, Lucille and Norwood Middleton, Dorothy Mitchell, Sally Nelson, John Pancake, Connie Pancake-Cofield, Richard Peake, Zelda Silverman, F. R. Scott, Charles Stevens, Leonard Teuber, and Margaret Toth.

Great Blue Heron. Two reports from the lowlands of the Cowpasture Valley north of Williamsville: Gum and Larner listed two flying together on 21 June and Gum and Peake saw another 22 June.

Green Heron. Eleven reports, resident on streams and ponds at middle and low elevations. Edwards *et al.* reported a single bird at the beaver pond on Back Creek at rt. 250 on 18 June (3000 feet). Most numerous in the Bullpasture and Cowpasture drainage south of rt. 250, where a high of 6 birds was listed by Gum and Peake on 22 June.

Wood Duck. Three reports from the northwestern and four from the southeastern sections of the county constitute all the records for this species, whose distribution seems more affected by the availability of habitat than by elevation. A high of three was reported from the Cowpasture and Bullpasture drainages, where Mitchell, Silsby, Toth, *et al.* found a pair with one young on 19 June. Two seen by Peake and Stevens on beaver ponds above Back Creek (3300 feet) provide the only high-elevation record. Surprisingly, this species was absent from beaver ponds on Slabcamp and Bearwallow Runs in the Laurel Fork drainage where Stevens (1966) had found them previously.

Turkey Vulture. Common throughout, most common in eastern and southern Highland County, where counts of 11 or more birds were numerous. Decker *et al.* listed a high of 30 on 18 June north of McDowell. On 17 June Peake noted an immature at the foot of Shenandoah Mountain on rt. 616.

Black Vulture. Four reports, all from southern Highland County. Gum, Middleton, *et al.* noted one south of Monterey on 19 June; Peake and Scott a bird at Shaws Fork the same day; and the Dalmases a bird in the Mills Gap area on 21 June as well as one north of Williamsville on 22 June.

Sharp-shinned Hawk. This species may be somewhat less scarce than the two reports indicate. Working in the southern Bullpasture and Cowpasture Valleys on 22 June, the Dalmases found a single bird while Gum and Peake saw 4. In 1962, moreover, Stevens found a pair at Tamarack Ridge (Stevens, 1965) though none was found at high elevations during the foray.

Cooper's Hawk. Five records, all of single birds in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the county; Middleton, Peake, and Scott (17 June) as well as Grimm, Hank, *et al.* (20 June) found a bird at Locust Spring. Kinzie *et al.* saw another north of Monterey. Two other reports, both of single birds, were from the Bullpasture and Cowpasture Valleys; Teuber *et al.* (19 June) and the Dalmases (22 June).

Red-tailed Hawk. Nine scattered reports of this species from all sections of the study area indicate a small but evenly distributed population. No group reported more than two birds.

Red-shouldered Hawk. A small population of this species exists in the high country north of rt. 250 and west of Back Creek and Straight Fork. All but two of the six reports (Kinzie *et al.*, Tamarack Ridge, 21 June, and Stevens, Alleghany Mountain—rt. 601—18 June) are from Locust Spring, where Stevens found a bird on 19 June, Middleton 2 on 18 June, and Ake and Hughes 2 on 21 June.

Broad-winged Hawk. Though the most common hawk in the county during the breeding season, the Broad-winged Hawk appeared uncommon. It was seen most often in the southern portions of the study area, although several reports were turned in from Locust Spring and Tamarack Ridge. The high count of 5 was made by Decker and Larner in the southeastern portion of the county on 20 June.

American Kestrel. There were seven reports, with a high of three by Decker *et al.* on 18 June from the Doe Hill region. This species was not reported from the northwestern highlands.

Ruffed Grouse. Probably more numerous than the seven reports indicate, but evidently Sounding Knob is the only place in the county where grouse are common. At this location Kinzie *et al.* reported a bird on 18 June; Gum *et al.*, 5 on 20 June; and Stevens the foray high of 10 on 21 June. Four other reports were all from the northwestern portion of the county, but this may simply reflect the greater amount of hiking done there. Gum and the Middletons found an adult with 4 young on Sounding Knob at 4107 feet (20 June).

Bobwhite. Although reported from all parts of the county where suitable habitat occurred, the Bobwhite appeared common only in the Bullpasture and Cowpasture drainages: north of rt. 250 a high of 14 was reported by Peake and Scott on 19 June; south of 250 a high of 18 by Gum and Peake on 22 June.

Turkey. Observers turned in five reports of Turkeys, the majority from the

northwestern section of the county. On Sounding Knob, to the south, Gum *et al.* found a bird on 20 June and Stevens 2 on 21 June. Evidence of breeding was found in Bearwallow Run by the Akes and Hughes, who found a hen with 16 poults on 21 June. Turkeys were not found at low elevations nor east of Jack Mountain. Foray records suggest that this species is less common than Stevens (1965) has suggested.

Killdeer. The reports of Killdeer were somewhat inconsistent, but this species appeared most common east of Jack Mountain, especially in the area between rt. 250 and Doe Hill, where Decker *et al.* found 10 on 18 June. However, the high count of 21 was made by the Dalmases along rt. 600 on 21 June. Killdeer were also reported frequently south of Blue Grass.

American Woodcock. There were only three reports of woodcock, two from high elevations. Teuber noted one in his headlights on rt. 220 the night of 18 June as he drove from Monterey to Maple Crest Campground. Peake and Stevens noted a high of 3 at Bearcamp Knob on 20 June, and Stevens found another at Sounding Knob on 21 June.

Mourning Dove. Surprisingly, doves were reported infrequently except from the Bullpasture and Cowpasture drainages south of rt. 250 with a high of 7 recorded by Gum on 21 June. Decker *et al.* noted 6 in the Doe Hill region on 18 June. The only dove listed west of Jack Mountain was one noted by the Dalmases along rt. 600 on 21 June.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Ten reports. West of Jack Mountain, cuckoos attracted the attention of observers four times: single birds from Locust Spring (Buck Run, Akes and Hughes, 21 June), Red Oak Knob (Edwards, 18 June), Alleghany Mountain (McQuarry, 18 June), and Tamarack Ridge (Decker and Peake, 21 June). Decker and Lerner recorded a high of 3 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 20 June.

Screech Owl. Despite efforts to find owls, observers reported only 9 Screech Owls. One report came from high elevations: Middleton *et al.* found one at Locust Spring on 18 June. The Dalmases noted one on Jack Mountain on 21 June at the upper range of the middle elevations.

Great Horned Owl. The only report was of 2 birds heard on Back Creek north of rt. 250 on 20 June by Peake and Stevens, but in view of the suitable habitat available, it seems probable that this species is somewhat more numerous than this record might suggest.

Barred Owl. Except for a bird reported from Maple Crest Campground by McQuarry, the five reports all were of birds found in the northwestern highlands: 2 at Bearcamp Knob (Peake and Stevens, 20 June) and several reports from Locust Spring (1 on 18 June, Middletons and Nelson; 2 on 21 June, the Akes and Hughes). Probably the species is more common than these records indicate.

Long-eared Owl. Four birds, one of which was well seen, were recorded between Back Creek and Bearcamp Knob by Peake and Stevens on 20 June.

Saw-whet Owl. Attempts to call Saw-whet Owls met with no success, although one bird was heard calling from adjacent West Virginia by Peake, Kinzie, *et al.* on the night of 19 June, when a group listened for owls on Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601).

Whip-poor-will. Scattered reports from agricultural country at all elevations suggest that this species is fairly common at low and middle elevations and

uncommon at high elevations. Scott counted 11 between Monterey and Blue Grass on 17 June and Gum 12 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 21 June. At high elevations Kinzie found a bird on Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601) on 19 June and Peake and Stevens listed four on Back Creek north of rt. 250.

Chimney Swift. No reports came from high elevations, but elsewhere swifts were found by many groups, especially east of Jack Mountain, where a high count of 16 was made by Mitchell *et al.* on 19 June.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Eighteen reports, none listing more than 4 individuals, indicate an evenly distributed population somewhat less common at high elevations than elsewhere.

Belted Kingfisher. Of the 16 reports, only two listed as many as 2 birds. The northeastern section of the county provided no records, but observers found kingfishers scattered throughout the remainder of the study area.

Common Flicker. Flickers appeared evenly distributed over the area, though slightly less common at high elevations. The high count of 17 was made south of Monterey by Middleton and Teuber on 21 June, and three lists with 10 or more birds were turned in by groups working the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Kinzie *et al.* saw an adult enter a nest cavity and heard the nestlings near Blue Grass 19 June. Middleton and Teuber saw a flicker leave a cavity in a gatepost on rt. 606 on 21 June.

Pileated Woodpecker. There were 18 reports of this species, but only three groups listed more than one bird. Mitchell *et al.* found 5 birds in the Cowpasture drainage south of rt. 250 on 19 June. Gum and Peake noted a bobtailed young bird able to fly along rt. 612 on 22 June. Other reports were widely scattered and from all elevations.

Red-bellied Woodpecker. Three reports. Peake and Scott found one near Doe Hill on 19 June; Middleton and Teuber a bird south of Monterey on 21 June; and the Dalmases another along rt. 600 on 21 June. These few records probably accurately reflect the scarcity of this species, although its absence from seemingly suitable habitat in the southeastern portion of the county is difficult to explain.

Red-headed Woodpecker. Single birds were reported by six groups from widely scattered locations, all in relatively open, agricultural habitats. None was found at high elevations or in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages south of rt. 250. Three birds were found southwest of Monterey, two of them along rt. 600. Peake and Scott noted one between Blue Grass and Monterey on 18 June and at Shaws Fork on 19 June. Decker *et al.* listed a bird near Doe Hill on 18 June.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Five separate observations of sapsuckers were made in the same area along rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain. McQuarry found 2 on 18 June, Kinzie one on 19 and 20 June, Decker and Peake one on 21 June, and the Akes and Hughes 2 on 21 June. These records suggest a pair of sapsuckers attempting to nest. Foray records indicate that this species is less common than Stevens (1965) had thought; certainly it seemed less common during 1975 than he described for 1964.

Hairy Woodpecker. This species was found at all elevations but was not reported from the northeastern portion of the county. The high count of 3 was made in Bearwallow Run by Kinzie *et al.* on 21 June. The 18 reports were

concentrated in the northwestern highlands, the area southwest of Monterey, and rts. 678 and 614 south of rt. 250 in southeastern Highland County.

Downy Woodpecker. Though reported from all elevations and throughout the county, this species was much more common south of rt. 250 than north of it. High counts of 6 were made by Middleton and Teuber south of Monterey on 21 June and by Gum and Peake on 22 June along rts. 678 and 614. Grimm, Hank, Higbie, and Teuber saw a Downy carrying food southeast of McDowell on 19 June.

Eastern Kingbird. Absent from the high elevations, kingbirds were common in farming areas at low and middle elevations. Teuber and Middleton listed 14 south of Monterey on 21 June, and Peake and Scott found 11 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages north of rt. 250 on 19 June, where they located a nest in a pine on rt. 614 and observed an adult feeding young in the nest. On rt. 607 the Middletons and Teuber saw one carrying food on 21 June.

Great Crested Flycatcher. Common throughout the region at all elevations. Notable counts ranged from 12 at Tamarack Ridge (Decker and Peake, 21 June), 14 south of Monterey (Middletons and Teuber, 21 June), and 11 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages south of rt. 250 (Gum and Peake, 22 June) to a high of 16 north of rt. 250 in these drainages (Peake and Scott, 19 June). Grimm *et al.* found a pair with young in a nesthole on rt. 615 (19 June); the Akes and Hughes discovered another nest in Buck Run (21 June).

Eastern Phoebe. At high elevations, phoebes were common; at middle and low elevations, abundant. This species was reported repeatedly from Locust Spring and noted on Alleghany Mountain, Bearcamp Knob, and Sounding Knob. High counts were 34 south of Monterey, 16 along rt. 600, and 27 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Hank, Higbie, *et al.* found a phoebe with 3 fledglings southeast of McDowell. Middleton, Nelson *et al.* saw adults chasing each other in what seemed a territorial display at one location and courtship behavior at another (19 June).

Acadian Flycatcher. Only 11 lists included this species, but the locations where these flycatchers were found varied from the high elevations—Locust Spring (3800 feet) and Bearcamp Knob—to the low elevations (Bullpasture and Cowpasture drainages). Others were found southwest of Monterey, but east of Jack Mountain only one bird was found north of rt. 250. A high count of 11 by Gum and Peake on 19 June (rts. 678 and 614) indicates that this species may be somewhat more common than foray results suggest. Teuber *et al.* noted a bird carrying food southeast of McDowell on 19 June.

Alder Flycatcher. At the head of Bearwallow Run above where Peake and Scott found Willow Flycatchers (3480 feet) Ake, Hughes, and McQuarry saw a small flycatcher on 20-21 June and heard it give a three-note *Empidonax* song. McQuarry felt that the song in no way resembled the *fitz-brew* song of Willow Flycatchers that he had heard.

Willow Flycatcher. Six reports, three of them from the Locust Spring area, suggest a scattered and very local population. It is noteworthy that this species was found in Bearwallow Run (3480 feet) below where Ake *et al.* discovered a singing Alder Flycatcher. Possibly the Willow Flycatcher is replacing the Alder in Highland County. Two Willow Flycatchers were found in more typical lowland alder thickets in boggy spots: Peake found a bird south of Monterey (19 June), and he and Scott found another in the Doe Hill area at an elevation

of 2200 feet (19 June). Stevens (1965) had previously found this species at 3650 feet in Buck Run and in Bearwallow Run.

Least Flycatcher. Sixteen reports, most of them from the high elevations in the northwestern portion of the county, indicate a substantial but local population. The Dalmases found a bird along rt. 600 on 21 June, yet only 2 were recorded east of Lantz Mountain: Peake saw and heard a bird on Bullpasture Mountain (2700 feet) and another on rt. 615 (17 June) in an apple tree near a farmhouse. The population density at some locations was rather high: Peake and Scott recorded 25 singing males at the head of Bearwallow Run on 18 June.

Eastern Wood Pewee. Pewees were fairly common throughout the county at all elevations, counts of 4 or more being regular. The high count of 16 was made by Middleton and Teuber south of Monterey on 21 June.

Horned Lark. There were 11 reports of larks from widely separated areas. Six were from pastures on Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601) on 18 and 19 June. Larks were also noted on rt. 642 near Blue Grass, and Gum and Middleton made a high count of 7 on rt. 600. Only 3 birds were reported east of Lantz Mountain: Peake listed a bird on rt. 614 on 17 June; Decker *et al.* another north of McDowell on 18 June; and Peake and Scott noted a bird near Doe Hill on 19 June. Near Blue Grass Kinzie *et al.* saw 3 immatures, and Gum *et al.* noted an adult with 2 immatures (20 June).

Tree Swallow. Six reports, all west of Lantz Mountain, point to a small and local population centered in the northwestern highlands. Three groups reported a bird near the beaver ponds on Back Creek at rt. 250 on 18 June, and McQuarry noted 2 there on 19 June. Stevens found a bird in Slabcamp Run on 19 June, and Decker and Peake listed another at Tamarack Ridge on 21 June.

Rough-winged Swallow. Observers turned in five reports of this species, all from middle and low elevations and all but one from north of rt. 250. Three reports were from the region between Blue Grass and Hightown, where Gum, the Middletons, *et al.* made a high count of 9 on 19 June. Decker *et al.* found 5 near Doe Hill on 18 June, and Peake noted 2 on rt. 614 south of rt. 250 on 17 June. At a quarry on rt. 640 north of Hightown, Peake and Scott observed Rough-wings entering two holes in the face of the highwall on 18 June; on 19 June, Gum, Kinzie, Middleton, and Pancake made similar observations at this site.

Barn Swallow. Abundant in farmlands everywhere in the county except the high elevations, where the species is common in suitable habitat. Edwards noted a high of 10 along rt. 250 west of Hightown on 18 June. For middle and low elevations counts above 20 were regularly made. Middleton and Teuber listed 48 south of Monterey and the Dalmases the same number on rt. 600 on 21 June. On 20 June Decker and Lerner made the high count of 58 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Near Mustoe Peake saw adults feeding young out of the nest (19 June), and Middleton and Teuber saw an adult feeding 3 young in the same general area on 21 June.

Cliff Swallow. A small, local population apparently centers around Blue Grass to the north and Trimble to the south. Peake and Scott found 2 birds on rt. 642 on 18 June, and two groups found 6 in that area on 19 June, when Gum, Kinzie, Middleton, and Pancake found 2 nests in a shed with an adult on nest. Peake noted 6 birds in the Trimble region 19 June, and Middleton and Teuber counted a high of 15 there 21 June. Near Mustoe on 19 June Peake

observed 4 immatures, 3 newly fledged, with adults. All Cliff Swallows were found on farms in association with Barn Swallows.

Purple Martin. Three reports, all from south of rt. 250, indicate a very local population. Decker *et al.* found 5 on rt. 600 on 18 June, and the Dalmases recorded 4 at Forks of the Waters 21 June. At the southeastern end of the county, Gum and Peake noted 2 near Patna (22 June).

Blue Jay. Though fairly common at all elevations, this species was reported less often than would be expected. On 18 June Peake and Scott made a high count of 10 in Bearwallow Run, and counts of 7 or more were frequent. Apparently jays are least abundant in the northeastern corner of the county, as there were only two reports from the area.

Common Raven. Ravens were reported regularly from all parts of the study area. West of Lantz Mountain the high count of 6 was made by Middleton *et al.* on 18 June; south of Monterey a high of 10 was noted (Gum *et al.*, 19 June). East of Jack Mountain, Gum and Peake listed 9 on 22 June. Even if one allows for the fact that ravens cover much territory, foray records suggest this species is thriving in Highland County.

Common Crow. Crows were regularly reported from the middle and low elevations and frequently from the high, where a high count of 12 was made on 18 June. Counts of over 20 birds were not unusual elsewhere. Decker and Larner made the high count of 59 south of rt. 250 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 20 June, when they noted 2 young birds. Middleton *et al.* watched adult crows feeding 4 fledglings near Blue Grass on 19 June.

Black-capped Chickadee. One of the more frequently reported species and evidently the resident chickadee species for Highland County, this bird appeared on practically all lists made in the high elevations and was frequently reported from middle and low elevations. At the middle elevations, the Middletons made a high count of 20 south of Monterey on 22 June. For high elevations, a count of 23 was made by Peake and Scott in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. Decker and Larner discovered a pair with 6 young in a nest box at the biological station on rt. 616, and Peake observed an adult carrying food to young in a nest in a fencepost near rt. 220 north of Mills Gap on 19 June.

Carolina Chickadee. Two records of singing males (Peake, 17 June; Teuber *et al.*, 19 June) come from rt. 616 south of the biological station. Decker and Larner heard another well down the Cowpasture Valley on 20 June. Future observers should check carefully to detect Carolina Chickadees in the southeastern portion of the foray area. Stevens (1965) reported that he had no records for this species in Highland County.

Tufted Titmouse. Evidently the titmouse is not common west of Lantz Mountain, but fairly common to the east. Except for a count of 5 on rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain by McQuarry (18 June), only scattered individuals were reported from the high elevations in the western portion of the county. The Dalmases (21 June) found 7 on rt. 600, but no other group listed titmice there. East of Lantz Mountain counts of 5 or more birds were usual, with a high of 33 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages (Gum and Peake, 22 June).

White-breasted Nuthatch. This species seemed scarce to uncommon everywhere in the study area except the southern portions of the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where Grimm, Teuber, *et al.* made a high count of 11 on 19 June. Small numbers were regularly reported by groups working in the high elevations, but elsewhere reports were irregular.

Red-breasted Nuthatch. Most surprisingly, there was only one report of this species, a bird heard by Grimm and Hank on Red Oak Knob on 18 June. A diligent search of many spruce stands in the highlands by many groups yielded no other records. Previous observers—Brooks (1935), Murray (1954), Scott (1952), and Stevens (1965)—have found this species at various places in the northwestern highlands, but it may not now be as common as when Brooks found it “wherever there is good sized” spruce on the ridge of Alleghany Mountain.

Brown Creeper. Two reports, both of singing males in the northwestern highlands: Peake and Scott found a bird in Bearwallow Run (3550 feet) on 18 June, and Peake and Stevens found another on the slope of Bearcamp Knob (3600 feet) on 20 June. Both birds were in northern hardwoods. In 1970 Stevens and Watson heard a singing male at Bearcamp Knob (Stevens, 1976), and Stevens also found 2 singing males near the head of Shaws Fork (2550 feet) in white pine, hemlocks, and mixed hardwoods. No foray group worked this area in the eastern part of the county.

House Wren. Though scarce at high elevations, the House Wren seemed fairly common in towns and open country elsewhere. Stevens listed a bird on rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain (18 June), and single birds were found at the beaver dams on Back Creek at rt. 250 by separate groups on 18 and 19 June. North of Hightown 4 singing males were listed on 18 June; and Decker *et al.* counted a high of 16 along rt. 600 on 18 June. On 19 June Peake and Scott watched an adult feeding young in the nest northeast of McDowell.

Winter Wren. Four reports indicate a population limited to high elevations. At Sounding Knob two groups (Kinzie *et al.* and Stevens) each found 4 on 18 and 21 June. Stevens also found a bird in Slabcamp Run. Another bird was noted by the Dalmases on rt. 250 where it crosses Alleghany Mountain on 21 June. In view of Stevens' (1965) inability to find this species in Highland County a decade earlier, these reports are of great interest.

Bewick's Wren. Six reports suggest a small, very local population. McQuarry listed a high of 5 from rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain (18 June), and Gum and Lerner noted 4 in the southern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 21 June. Peake and Scott found a bird in the Doe Hill area on 19 June. Distribution of this species seems related to the availability of rock piles and rock walls. Gum and Lerner noted several immatures on rt. 616. Stevens (1976) had previously noted a bird on Snowy Mountain.

Carolina Wren. This species was not reported from high elevations and appeared uncommon at middle elevations. It was fairly common in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where two groups listed a high of 10.

Mockingbird. Not reported northwest of Monterey, Mockingbirds were found in southwestern Highland County by Decker *et al.* (18 June) and Peake (19 June). The other five records were all from the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Only the Dalmases (22 June) listed more than a single individual.

Gray Catbird. Frequently reported from all elevations and all parts of the study area. Counts of 10 or more were common with a high of 33 recorded by Decker *et al.* southwest of Monterey on 18 June.

Brown Thrasher. Reported frequently from all the foray area except the northwestern highlands, where it was recorded in Bearwallow Run, at Tamarack Ridge, and on Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601). Elsewhere counts of 5 or more

were common with a high count of 16 by Peake and Scott in the Doe Hill region on 19 June. Thrashers were found by all three groups studying Sounding Knob, with a high of 6 there. Decker and Larner observed one carrying nesting material southeast of McDowell (20 June).

American Robin. Almost all groups reported robins, which were common in the northwestern highlands and abundant elsewhere. At Locust Spring a high count of 10 was made in Bearwallow Run. Elsewhere counts of 10 or more were usual with a high count of 71 by Decker *et al.* southwest of Monterey on 18 June. North of McDowell, Decker *et al.* found a pair at a nest and another bird carrying nesting material. Several groups noted immature birds.

Wood Thrush. Widely reported but far less common than the preceding species. At Locust Spring a high of 25 was noted on 18 June. At middle and low elevations counts of 5 or more were frequent.

Hermit Thrush. Limited to the spruce areas around Locust Spring, single birds were found by Stevens in Slabcamp Run on 19 June; by Ake and Hughes (21 June) in Buck and Bearwallow Runs; and by Scott *et al.* (17 June) at the Locust Spring campground. Barry Kinzie listed 3 at Locust Spring on 20 June, and Peake and Scott heard 3 at the head of Bearwallow Run besides another calling just across the line in West Virginia on 18 June. The population may well have increased since Stevens (1965 and 1966) mentioned it a decade earlier.

Veery. Veeries were abundant in the northwestern highlands but scarce elsewhere. All groups found this species at Locust Spring, where Peake and Scott listed a high of 49 in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. Stevens and the Barbees counted 29 on Alleghany Mountain, while Peake and Stevens noted 31 between Back Creek and Red Oak Knob on 20 June. Elsewhere two groups listed 3 Veeries at Sounding Knob on 18 and 20 June. The Dalmases found 2 on rt. 84 across Alleghany Mountain. On 17 June 2 singing males were heard on rt. 250 where it crosses Bullpasture Mountain (2700 feet), and Decker *et al.* discovered 3 on rt. 614 across Bullpasture Mountain (2900 feet) on 18 June. Stevens (1965) has published an account of a nest with eggs found on Alleghany Mountain on 10 July 1964.

Eastern Bluebird. There were few reports of bluebirds from high elevations. Three reports came from rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain with a high of 5 recorded by McQuarry on 18 June. On Bullpasture Mountain where rt. 250 crosses it (2700 feet) 3 were found on 17 June. Elsewhere bluebirds were regularly noted; counts of 10 or more were frequent with a high of 44 in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages north of rt. 250 (Peake and Scott, 19 June). Hank, Teuber, *et al.* observed a pair with 2 fledglings (19 June); Decker and Larner noted an adult carrying food southeast of McDowell (20 June). Decker *et al.* saw a bluebird carrying nesting material; another carrying food to 4 young in the nest; a third with 2 young in the nest; and an immature fledgling (18 June). Middleton *et al.* saw a fledgling on rt. 630 and a juvenile near Blue Grass (19 June). On Alleghany Mountain Gum and the Middletons found a nest with 5 eggs in a fence post as well as 4 newly fledged young with adults nearby on rt. 601 (20 June).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Two gnatcatchers were reported from high elevations. A single bird was listed by Peake and Scott (Lantz Mountain, 3400 feet, 18 June) as well as by Peake and Stevens (Bearcamp Knob, 20 June). On 17 June Peake noted one on Shenandoah Mountain (3000 feet), and reports from

lower middle elevations were frequent. High counts of 7 were made by the Dalmases southwest of Monterey (21 June) and by Gum and Peake in the southern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages (22 June). Stevens (1965) has given an account of a bird on nest near Williamsville on 17 May 1959, but he had found none in western Highland County.

Golden-crowned Kinglet. Sixteen records from Locust Spring, Bearcamp Knob, Tamarack Ridge, and Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601) suggest that kinglets are limited to the northwestern highlands, as previous reports (Scott, 1952; Stevens, 1965) had indicated. Almost all groups found this species in the Locust Spring area. Peake and Scott counted a high of 10 in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. Counts of 5 were made by Kinzie along rt. 601 and by Decker and Peake at Tamarack Ridge (21 June). In Buck Run (3600 feet) McQuarry observed a female kinglet feeding a juvenile cowbird several times while a male kinglet foraged nearby (21 June).

Cedar Waxwing. Though most abundant in the northwestern highlands, waxwings were reported in large numbers from all parts of the area. High counts ranged from 38 in Bearwallow Run and 19 in the Blue Grass area to 14 in the southern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Kinzie *et al.* observed a nest 30 feet high in a tree in a yard in Blue Grass and noted an adult waxwing nearby. Evidently waxwings were not well into their breeding period.

Loggerhead Shrike. Gum and Larner found 3 shrikes in the Cowpasture drainage on 21 June, and Gum and Peake noted 3 farther south on 22 June. There were no other reports.

Starling. From all parts of the study area except Locust Spring, Starlings were frequently reported. They were regularly recorded by groups working middle and low elevations. In the northwestern highlands a high count of 13 was made at Tamarack Ridge on 21 June. Elsewhere counts of 20 or more were common and counts of 50 or more not unusual. There was one count of 110 (Blue Grass) and another of 111 (southern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages).

White-eyed Vireo. Only six groups reported White-eyes. Except for two records—one on rt. 600 and one on rt. 640 west of Monterey, 21 June (the Dalmases)—all reports came from east of Jack Mountain. In the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages south of rt. 250 Teuber *et al.* found a bird on 19 June, Gum 2 on 21 June, and Gum and Peake 3 on 22 June. North of rt. 250 Decker *et al.* noted 4 on 18 June, and Peake and Scott found a bird at 2650 feet in the Doe Hill area on 19 June.

Yellow-throated Vireo. On the basis of 15 reports, the Yellow-throated Vireo seemed surprisingly uncommon at all elevations. More reports came from middle and low elevations, but few counts of over 2 individuals were made anywhere. However, the Middletons and Teuber noted 12 southwest of Monterey on 21 June, and Teuber *et al.* counted 8 southeast of McDowell on 18 June. Only three reports came from high elevations: Middleton *et al.* found a bird at Locust Spring (18 June), Peake and Stevens another on Bearcamp Knob (20 June), and Kinzie *et al.* 2 at Sounding Knob (18 June).

Solitary Vireos. Though definitely most common at high elevations, this species was reported five times from middle and low elevations, where there appears to be a widely scattered population throughout the county except, perhaps, for its northeastern portion. Other than 2 found north of Monterey by the Pancakes and Barton on 20 June, all reports from middle and low eleva-

tions were of single birds. Every group that worked the Locust Spring area reported this species, a high of 7 being noted by four groups.

Red-eyed Vireo. Common throughout the study area, this vireo's population seemed definitely to vary according to the amount of forested land available, it being most common in the northwestern highlands and the southeastern lowlands, where Gum and Peake counted 34 on 22 June. In Bearwallow Run Peake and Scott listed 109 on 18 June. The Pancakes *et al.* found a nest about 10 feet high in a small maple on rt. 642 east of Blue Grass; it contained 2 young vireos and 1 young cowbird.

Warbling Vireo. The only report of this species was of a pair heard and watched closely by Gum and Peake on the Cowpasture River near Patna, 22 June.

Black-and-white Warbler. Twenty-one reports from almost all sections of the county revealed a thinly spread population varying from uncommon to fairly common. Six groups reported this species east of Jack Mountain with several high counts of 5. Counts of 4 or more were common in the northwestern highlands, and Kinzie *et al.* found 9 on Sounding Knob (18 June). On Shenandoah Mountain (2900 feet) Peake observed an adult carrying food (17 June).

Worm-eating Warbler. Twelve reports, all but four from east of Jack Mountain and none west of Back Creek, point to a small population primarily at middle elevations. There was one record from the high elevations: Stevens and Davenport found a bird at Sounding Knob on 21 June. At 2900 feet on Shenandoah Mountain Peake noted one on 17 June, and Decker *et al.* listed another on rt. 619 over Bullpasture Mountain (2900 feet) on 18 June. Middleton and Teuber located one southwest of Monterey, and two groups recorded 3 north of Monterey (21 June). In the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, Peake and Scott counted 4 north of rt. 250 (19 June), and Gum and Peake noted 4 to the south (22 June).

Golden-winged Warbler. Though this species was absent from the Laurel Fork drainage, 21 reports scattered throughout the remainder of the county revealed this species to be uncommon but locally more numerous where suitable habitat occurred. Kinzie *et al.* counted 7 at Sounding Knob, and Edwards recorded 4 at the beaver ponds on Back Creek at rt. 250 (18 June). North and southwest of Monterey high counts of 8 were made. East of Jack Mountain a high of 7 was reported from the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Nine groups found the species in this area, where Decker and Larner saw a male and female carrying food on 20 June.

Blue-winged Warbler. Many reports of a nesting pair on rt. 616 south of the biological station: Peake found a singing male on 17 June, and a singing male—presumably the same bird—was noted in the identical location by many other observers daily during the foray. Irene Larner watched a pair of Blue-wings there and saw them carrying food to nestlings in a thicket, from which she could hear young birds calling (22 June). She and others discussed the sightings with persons at the Columbia Union College Biological Station, who later informed Larner that several young fledged.

Nashville Warbler. At Locust Spring Gum *et al.* found a singing Nashville Warbler on 18 June. A singing male, evidently the same bird, was noted on territory in the same area on 19, 20, and 21 June.

Northern Parula Warbler. Of the 22 groups that reported parulas, 11 were

working in the low elevations of the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainage south of rt. 250, where Gum and Peake made a high count of 32 on 22 June. Elsewhere this species was most common along Back Creek and the Jackson River. Two groups noted it in the Doe Hill area. At a higher elevation Peake and Scott listed a bird in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. On 19 June Gum watched young in a nest in a hemlock on rt. 629. Stevens (1966) has found a singing bird as high as 3700 feet in spruce at the head of Buck Run.

Yellow Warbler. Though single birds were reported from Back Creek north of rt. 250, the Yellow Warbler was absent from high elevations and most common in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where Peake and Scott made a high count of 19 north of rt. 250 on 19 June. Counts of 10 or more birds were common in the southern half of the county. The Pancakes *et al.* found a Yellow Warbler feeding a young cowbird on 19 June north of Hightown.

Magnolia Warbler. Of the 19 reports of this species, only two came from outside the northwestern highlands and none east of Monterey. Paul McQuarry found a bird at Maple Crest Campground and Gum and Middleton another along rt. 600 on 19 June. Peake and Stevens noted 9 between Back Creek and Bearcamp Knob on 20 June. Stevens and the Barbees made a high count of 20 in the Slabcamp Run area on 19 June. Very few groups failed to report this species from the Locust Spring area, counts of 8 or more being common. Several groups also noted 2 or more at both Tamarack Ridge and Alleghany Mountain.

Black-throated Blue Warbler. Except for a bird found southeast of McDowell (Gum and Peake, 22 June), all records of this species came from the northern part of the county, and the greatest portion of these from the northwestern highlands. Decker *et al.* noted 2 at 2900 feet on Jack Mountain and another on rt. 631 north of Monterey. On Sounding Knob Stevens and Davenport noted a high of 6 (21 June). All groups reported Black-throated Blues in the Locust Spring area, where two groups listed highs of 9. It was also found at Back Creek and Tamarack Ridge. Decker *et al.* saw an adult with food at Locust Spring on 18 June, and the Akes and Hughes found a male feeding 2 young in Buck Run on 21 June.

Black-throated Green Warbler. Almost all groups noted this species at Locust Spring and on rt. 601. Peake and Scott recorded a high of 15 in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. All three groups working Sounding Knob reported 5 or more birds, and Kinzie *et al.* noted 3 at Tamarack Ridge. Elsewhere there were scattered reports of single birds: one north of Monterey (Gum *et al.*, 19 June), two found by different groups southwest of Monterey, and one southeast of McDowell (Mitchell, Silverman, Toth, 20 June). On 20 June Gum and the Middletons saw a female carrying food on Sounding Knob.

Cerulean Warbler. Four of the six reports were from the southern half of the county: highs of 3 southeast of McDowell on 22 June and 4 southwest of Monterey on 21 June were noted by the Dalmases. In the northern half of the county, Peake and Scott found a bird near Doe Hill at 2300 feet on 19 June as well as 2 singing males in Bearwallow Run on 18 June, the latter being the only records from high elevations.

Blackburnian Warbler. Frequently recorded in the northwestern highlands, Blackburnians were noted only once east of Monterey Mountain: Peake found a bird on Shenandoah Mountain (2900 feet) on 17 June. Of the 17 other reports, 8 were from the Locust Spring area, where Grimm *et al.* made a high

count of 9 on 20 June. This species was also reported on Alleghany Mountain, Tamarack Ridge, and Bearcamp Knob. North of Monterey the Middletons listed 2 on 22 June, and southwest of there the Dalmases noted another on 21 June.

Yellow-throated Warbler. One report: the Dalmases discovered 2 Yellow-throated Warblers at Mills Gap on 21 June in sycamores along Back Creek. Other habitat in the southern half of the county appeared suitable for this species, yet none was found elsewhere.

Chestnut-sided Warbler. At high elevations from Sounding Knob west this species was common, but it was uncommon to the east. Decker *et al.* noted 5 northeast of Monterey on 18 June, Decker and Larner counted 3 southeast of McDowell on 20 June, and Peake listed 2 on Bullpasture Mountain (2700 feet) on 17 June. Southwest of Monterey the Dalmases counted 11 at middle elevations. At high elevations from Sounding Knob west counts of 10 or more were common, and Stevens and the Barbees listed a high of 27 on Alleghany Mountain on 18 June. Gum and the Middletons observed two adults chasing each other on Sounding Knob, evidently displaying territorial behavior.

Pine Warbler. Not reported west of Jack Mountain and found primarily in the lowlands of the Cowpasture drainage: southeast of McDowell four groups noted this species with a high count of 4 by Gum and Peake on 22 June. Peake and Scott found it in the Potomac drainage near Palo Alto and counted 5 singing males from there south to rt. 250 along rt. 614 (19 June). The highest elevation at which the species was found was 2900 feet on Shenandoah Mountain, where Peake heard and saw a singing male on 17 June.

Prairie Warbler. Twelve groups reported Prairie Warblers from middle and low elevations; eight of these were from the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages south of rt. 250, where counts of 5 to 7 were frequent. Three reports came from the area southwest of Monterey and one from north of Monterey.

Ovenbird. Fairly common throughout the area, but more common at high elevations west of Jack Mountain: counts of 5 or more were common at low and middle elevations. Gum and the Middletons listed a high of 19 at Sounding Knob on 20 June. Peake and Stevens found a nest with 5 eggs at Bearcamp Knob, and the Pancakes *et al.* saw an Ovenbird carrying food at Sounding Knob (4000 feet) on 22 June.

Northern Waterthrush. On 21 June Ake, Hughes and McQuarry heard a waterthrush singing a typical song of this species several times at the head of Mullenax Run (3460 feet) in a swampy bottom among rhododendrons and pines. In answer to a taped song of the species, the bird chipped but would not approach. Stevens (1966) has noted this species at 3550 feet in Slabcamp Run on 12 June 1965.

Louisiana Waterthrush. Eighteen reports, seven of them from the area southeast of McDowell, where Gum and Peake made a high count of 9 on 22 June. Elsewhere counts ranged from 1 to 3 at Locust Spring (Bearwallow, Buck, and Slabcamp Runs), Back Creek, north of Monterey, and north of McDowell.

Kentucky Warbler. Four reports, all from middle and low elevations: Gum *et al.* found a bird north of Monterey on 19 June; Decker *et al.* 2 north of McDowell on 18 June; Peake and Scott a bird near Doe Hill on 19 June; and Gum and Peake another southeast of McDowell on 22 June.

Mourning Warbler. Four reports, two from Alleghany Mountain and two

from the Locust Spring area. At the first location Stevens noted a high of 3 on 18 June. On 19 June Stevens discovered 2 in Slabcamp Run, and Kinzie *et al.* listed 2 in Bearwallow Run on 21 June. All were found in blackberry tangles and brush, including a bird found at 4510 feet on Bald Knob by McQuarry.

Common Yellowthroat. Surprisingly uncommon, though reported from all parts of the study area. Highs ranged from 5 in Slabcamp Run (Stevens, 18 June) to 8 east of Jack Mountain (two groups). Peake watched an adult feeding young in the nest south of Trimble on 19 June.

Yellow-breasted Chat. Of 17 reports, 11 came from the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where Gum and Peake made a high count of 13 on 22 June south of rt. 250. Six other records were from points scattered throughout the county, although the only bird reported in the northwestern corner was noted above Back Creek north of rt. 250 by Peake and Stevens on 20 June. Decker *et al.* observed a chat carrying food north of McDowell on 18 June.

Hooded Warbler. Fourteen reports, none of more than 3 birds, suggested that this species was uncommon throughout the study area, though perhaps less uncommon east of Jack Mountain, where three groups reported counts of 3. The species was reported almost as frequently from high elevations as from the middle and low. It was recorded on Red Oak Knob, Tamarack Ridge, Alleghany Mountain, and at Locust Spring. Middle elevations north of Monterey, north of McDowell, on Bullpasture Mountain (2700 feet), and on Shenandoah Mountain (2900 feet) also provided four records.

Canada Warbler. Eighteen reports, all but four from Locust Spring or Alleghany Mountain, indicated a population concentrated in the high elevations west of Jack Mountain. Only two records from middle elevations were turned in: the Dalmases listed a bird southwest of Monterey, while Gum and Larner noted a bird southeast of McDowell (21 June), the latter being the only report of a bird east of Sounding Knob, where Stevens and Davenport found an individual on 21 June. Twelve of the reports of this species came from the Locust Spring area; Grimm, Hank, Higbie, and Teuber made a high count of 14 there and observed 2 adults feeding young on 20 June.

American Redstart. Fifteen reports from all parts of the county reveal a thinly spread population at all elevations; the Dalmases made a high count of 6 on 21 June. Redstarts were noted at Sounding Knob, Bearcamp Knob, and Locust Spring. Five reports came from the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where a high of 4 was listed on 19 June.

House Sparrow. Of 25 reports, only two were from high elevations: the Edwards *et al.* found 2 on rt. 250 west of Hightown and Kinzie *et al.* 2 at Sounding Knob (18 June). North of McDowell Peake and Scott listed 70 on 19 June, but counts of less than 15 were usual. Gum and Peake saw a House Sparrow carrying nesting material southeast of McDowell on 22 June, and Peake saw a male carrying food to a nest at a farmhouse north of Mills Gap on 19 June.

Bobolink. There were reports from two stations: one was on rt. 640 north of Hightown at rt. 641; the other was on rt. 614 just south of rt. 619. Peake and Scott found a singing male at the first station on 18 June and another singing male at the second (2100 feet) on 19 June. Many observers subsequently saw Bobolinks at the station north of Hightown, and some searched for a nest. McQuarry was successful on 19 June. He found 3 males "singing

on territory in a hayfield" beside rt. 641; he flushed a female from each male's territory. One female flushed from a nest containing 2 eggs of the appropriate size and color. This constitutes the first breeding record of the Bobolink for Virginia.

Eastern Meadowlark. There were only two reports of meadowlarks from the northwestern portion of the county: Edwards found a bird on rt. 250 west of Hightown and McQuarry 2 on Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601). Elsewhere the species was very common. The Dalmases counted 71 southwest of Monterey on 21 June, but the greater number of reports (13 of 26) came from east of Jack Mountain, where Peake and Scott listed 75 north of McDowell on 19 June.

Red-winged Blackbird. Abundant throughout the county, except at high elevations, where it was common. At Locust Spring Kinzie *et al.* counted a high of 6 in Buck Run on 21 June. Counts of 20 or more were common at middle and low elevations, the high count of 281 being made southwest of Monterey by the Dalmases on 21 June. On rt. 615 Teuber *et al.* found a Redwing nest in cattails on 19 June.

Orchard Oriole. Of the six reports, all but one came from east of Jack Mountain and only one from the northern half of the county. No group recorded more than two individuals. Middleton and Teuber found a bird south of Monterey on 21 June, and Peake and Scott noted a singing bird near Doe Hill (2800 feet) on 19 June. The other reports were from the southern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages, where Decker and Larner saw an adult carrying nesting material on 20 of June.

Northern Oriole. The pattern of Northern Oriole distribution resembles that of the Orchard: absent from the high elevations and most common east of Jack Mountain. However, Northern Orioles were more numerous at middle elevations. In Monterey 3 were found by Gum on 17 June, and McQuarry noted 3 at Maple Crest Campground (19 June). Southwest of Monterey the Dalmases counted 7 on 21 June, and two groups each listed 7 in the Doe Hill region. Five reports came from southeast of McDowell, where Mitchell *et al.* had a high of 6. North of McDowell on rt. 629 Decker and Larner discovered 2 pairs with young in the nest. Kinzie *et al.* observed another pair driving a crow away from a fledgling.

Common Grackle. Except at high elevations, grackles were common throughout the county. West of Hightown Edwards noted one on rt. 250 and another at Red Oak Knob. Two groups found grackles at Locust Spring, where Kinzie *et al.* had a high of 6. At middle and low elevations counts of 10 or more were common, and four groups recorded 50 or more, the high of 80 being recorded by Peake and Scott in the northern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages. Decker *et al.* saw a grackle carrying food north of McDowell.

Brown-headed Cowbird. Reports from all elevations indicate that cowbirds are very common in the southern and northeastern parts of the county, where counts of over 20 were frequent, but somewhat less common in the northwestern highlands, where only two reports listed over 15 birds. Gum and Middleton made a high count of 46 southwest of Monterey on 20 June. Middleton *et al.* found a young cowbird in a vireo nest (see above); McQuarry saw a juvenile cowbird fed by a kinglet (see above); and the Pancakes *et al.* observed a Yellow Warbler feeding a young cowbird (see above).

Scarlet Tanager. Widely reported from all elevations throughout the study

area: five counts of 10 or more were turned in from five different areas. Peake and Scott made a high count of 18 in Bearwallow Run on 18 June, yet Gum and Peake counted 16 in the low elevations of the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 22 June.

Cardinal. Two reports came from high elevations: Kinzie *et al.* found a bird at Tamarack Ridge and another at Red Oak Knob (3700 feet) on 20 June. At middle and low elevations the species ranged from uncommon to fairly common. There were six counts of 10 or more birds, four from east of Jack Mountain and two from north of Monterey. The high count of 16 was made in the Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages by Gum and Peake on 22 June.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Of the 19 groups reporting this species, 13 were from high elevations and eight of these from Locust Spring, where Peake and Scott noted a high of 18 on 18 June in Bearwallow Run. Highs of 12 at Sounding Knob and 14 at Tamarack Ridge indicate a substantial population at high elevations. Surprisingly, none was reported from the northeastern part of the study area, although three reports came from the southeastern section, where Decker and Lerner counted a high of 5.

Blue Grosbeak. The only report of this species came from Peake and Scott, who saw and heard a male near Palo Alto in the Potomac drainage. The bird flew from a field to a pine woods across the road, where it was closely observed.

Indigo Bunting. Though common throughout the area, the Indigo Bunting was especially numerous east of Jack Mountain, where Peake and Scott noted a high of 69 on 19 June. Of 50 reports, 17 were from high elevations, with a high of 19 in Bearwallow Run on 18 June. In the Cowpasture Valley, Decker and Lerner noted a bunting feeding a young bird on 20 June; Gum and Lerner found a nest on rt. 616 on 21 June; and Gum and Peake saw an adult carrying nesting material on 22 June. On 19 June the Pancakes *et al.* saw a bunting carrying food near Blue Grass.

Purple Finch. There were 16 reports of Purple Finches, all from the northwestern highlands. On 20 June a high count of 8 was made by Grimm, Hank, and the Middletons in the Locust Spring area. At the beaver ponds on Back Creek at rt. 250 McQuarry observed a pair of finches copulating in a pine tree on 19 June. With Kinzie he later discovered a nest on 20 June, the first for this species in Virginia. Purple Finches were also found on Alleghany Mountain and Tamarack Ridge.

American Goldfinch. Common at high elevations and abundant elsewhere, goldfinches were recorded on 55 lists. Of the 21 reports from high elevations, the largest count of 45 was made by McQuarry on rt. 601. Counts of 20 or more were common elsewhere, the high count of 110 being made by Middleton and Teuber southwest of Monterey. Fifty of these were in one flock, an indication that goldfinches were not well into their breeding period.

Red Crossbill. The only report was of 4 birds, 2 adults and 2 immatures, found feeding in the top of a large spruce at Tamarack Ridge by Decker and Peake on 21 June. The observers identified male and female adults by their plumages and well-developed bills. The two other birds, which resembled the female, had short, uncrossed bills. Through evidently a family group, these birds might have nested anywhere in the general area. Crossbills have been found at several other places in Highland County (Shaws Fork, Alleghany Mountain)

according to Stevens (1965, 1976). This present record seems to constitute the first direct evidence of breeding in Highland County.

Rufous-sided Towhee. Towhees appeared on 63 lists from all elevations, including all lists from the Locust Spring vicinity. Nine counts noted 21 or more, the high count of 36 being made at Sounding Knob by Gum *et al.* on 20 June. Near Blue Grass Kinzie *et al.* observed a towhee make two trips carrying nesting material.

Savannah Sparrow. Eight reports from all elevations and all parts of the county except the Trimble region indicate a small but well-established population. Decker and Larner reported a bird from the Bullpasture drainage and another from the Cowpasture drainage south of rt. 250 (20 June), and Decker *et al.* found 2 north of McDowell on 18 June. However, the species seems more common west of Monterey Mountain. Gum *et al.* noted 4 south of Monterey on 20 June, while Kinzie *et al.* discovered a bird northwest of Monterey on 19 June. At high elevations, Peake and Stevens found 2 on Red Oak Knob (20 June), and Decker and Peake listed a bird at Tamarack Ridge on 21 June. On 19 June Kinzie made a high count of 7 on rt. 601 on Alleghany Mountain. These records, together with Ake's (1976) first discovery of a nest of this species on Alleghany Mountain, point to a definite breeding population.

Grasshopper Sparrow. Of 11 reports, only two recorded more than 2 birds and only one more than 3. In the northeastern portion of the study area, however, Peake and Scott counted a high of 13 on 19 June. The single high-elevation record was of a bird found on Alleghany Mountain by McQuarry on 18 June. Elsewhere Peake noted a bird in the Mills Gap vicinity on 19 June; three groups located birds near Blue Grass; Gum *et al.* found a bird north of Monterey on rt. 220; McQuarry listed 2 at Maple Crest Campground; and two groups listed single birds southeast of McDowell.

Vesper Sparrow. Of thirteen records, six came from east of Jack Mountain, where Decker noted 4 north of McDowell on 18 June. Gum and Middleton listed 7 southwest of Monterey and the Pancakes a bird north of there (20 June). High-elevation records consisted of 2 birds at Tamarack Ridge (Decker and Peake, 21 June) and four reports from Alleghany Mountain (rt. 601), where McQuarry obtained a high count of 13 on 18 June. Gum and the Middletons saw 2 adults carrying food there on 20 June.

Dark-eyed Junco. Of 30 reports, all but four came from high elevations, and these four came from middle elevations: Middleton found 5 north of Monterey on 22 June; the Pancakes 2 in the vicinity of Blue Grass on 20 June; the Dalmas 11 on rt. 600 on 21 June; and Peake 6 at the top of Bullpasture Mountain (2700 feet) on 17 June. All groups working in the Locust Spring area reported juncos, and McQuarry listed a high of 45 on Alleghany Mountain. Other reports came from Tamarack Ridge, Back Creek, Sounding Knob, and Shenandoah Mountain. Six nests containing 1-3 eggs were found at Locust Spring in the foray period by Stevens, and Ake and Hughes discovered 3 other nests there on 21 June. At Tamarack Ridge Decker and Peake found a nest with 4 eggs on 21 June.

Chipping Sparrow. Twenty-six of 60 lists were from high elevations. Counts over 10 were frequent at all elevations, but the species was somewhat more common east of Jack Mountain, where Peake and Scott made a high count of 43 in the northern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages on 19 June. Edwards *et al.* observed an adult feeding 2 young in the nest west of Hightown (18

June); Middleton *et al.* saw an adult carrying food at Locust Spring on 17 June; Grimm, Hank, *et al.* saw a pair feeding young there on 20 June; and Gum saw an adult feeding a young bird in Monterey on 17 June.

Field Sparrow. This species was frequently reported from all elevations with 14 of 45 records from high elevations. Counts of 10 or more were common. On 19 June Peake and Scott made a high count of 38 in the northern Bullpasture-Cowpasture drainages.

White-throated Sparrow. Toth *et al.* reported a bird well seen on 18 June in a flock of sparrows on rt. 600 southwest of Monterey. Probably this bird was a late migrant.

Song Sparrow. Common throughout much of the county, the Song Sparrow seemed abundant in the northeastern portion of the study area, where Peake and Scott counted a high of 76 on 19 June. Elsewhere there were no counts more than 20 and few over 10. Fifteen of 45 reports came from high elevations, and these indicate that the species was somewhat less numerous there. There were no reports from Sounding Knob.

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DISTRACTION DISPLAY BY MALE CANADA WARBLER

THOMAS A. PIERSON

While hiking along a trail on the Jefferson National Forest in southwestern Virginia on 21 June 1975, I noticed a male Canada Warbler, *Wilsonia canadensis*, fluttering its wings and hobbling along the ground on a raised bank to the left of the trail. After displaying briefly, it flew up into the understory vegetation, primarily rhododendron, *Rhododendron maximum*, and began chipping loudly. The bird, through its vocalizations and flying back and forth across the trail, made itself very conspicuous to me; thus positive identification was easily made.

I kept walking along the trail and observing the bird as it continued its loud chipping. The warbler was last seen about 10 feet away to the right of the trail on a branch about 3 feet above the ground. Through my binoculars I could see that it was carrying a caterpillar or grub in its mandibles. Suddenly, the bird ceased its vocalizations and disappeared from sight. Apparently the bird had gone to the nest to feed nestlings. About 60 feet farther along the trail I once again heard the loud chipping, this time coming from a female Canada Warbler, presumably the mate of the displaying male. She did not come down to the trail as the male did but remained in the tops of the rhododendron about 20 feet above the ground.

This observation is noteworthy for two reasons. First, although this phenomenon has been reported for the other *Wilsonia* (Grimes, 1936; Harrison, 1951), to my knowledge this is the first reported instance of this behavior by the Canada Warbler. Second, most accounts of distraction displays by warblers report a display given by the "sitting bird," or incubating female, after she was flushed from the nest (Graber and Graber, 1951; May, 1936; Potter, 1936; Grimes, 1936). Reported instances of distraction displays by male warblers are considerably less common. Cruickshank (1936) reported a distraction display by a male Black-throated Green Warbler, *Dendroica virens*, and Rutter (1936) described the same phenomenon for a male Yellow Warbler, *Dendroica petechia*.

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LE CONTE'S SPARROW IN BOTETOURT COUNTY

JERRY W. VIA

On Saturday, 13 November 1976, I observed a Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramos leconteii*, in Botetourt County near Amsterdam, Virginia. The bird was feeding in a thicket of honeysuckle and sumac. The thicket was confined to a strip of right-of-way along either side of Virginia route 673, a gravel road which divides a large cornfield. The bird was observed either in the thicket or feeding at the edge of the road during later sightings. It was first observed at close range (30 feet) for approximately three minutes.

The buff-orange eyestripe and face pattern were the first identifying features. The white stripe through the center of the crown was also diagnostic. The breast was buffy and unmarked except for the fine streaking on the sides which extended across the upper part of the breast in a vest-like fashion. At least two birds were believed to be present, since the bird observed Sunday morning by Bill Opengari, Jane Opengari, Norwood Middleton, and myself lacked the breast streaking of the Saturday bird. Later on Sunday, Jane Opengari observed two Le Conte's Sparrows in the same field of vision. The bird or birds were sighted seven different times between 13 and 18 November and were observed at close range by approximately 14 birders. These sightings comprise a county record for the Botetourt County list.

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REVIEW

The View from Hawk Mountain. By Michael Harwood. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1973, 191 pages. Price, \$6.95.

Certainly the many VSO members who have been to Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, or who have watched hawk migration along Virginia ridges will enjoy Michael Harwood's account of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. But it would be difficult to imagine any *Raven* reader who would not enjoy *The View from Hawk Mountain*, which gives a history of the sanctuary and an explanation of the work there as well as vivid descriptions of hawking from the most famous of hawk lookouts.

Beginning with a typical day at North Lookout, the author tells of the long wait on a day when the Broadwings came late, after four in the afternoon. Before the kettles of Buteos develop, however, the watchers manage to find excitement with a Bald Eagle. Then come the Broadwings, more than a thousand in less than 15 minutes.

Next Harwood writes of the slaughter of hawks on the mountain during the twenties and early thirties as well as the foundation of the sanctuary through the efforts of Richard Pough, Rosalie Edge, and the Emergency Conservation Committee in 1934. For sanctuary manager, Mrs. Edge hired Maurice Broun, who presided over the development of Hawk Mountain from its beginning to its first days of fame in the late forties. At first the hawk shooters were hostile to the sanctuary, but gradually Broun and the success of the sanctuary won most of them over.

Until 1967, when Alex Nagy replaced Broun and South Lookout was opened to help take care of the throngs of watchers now coming to the sanctuary, hawk counting was done primarily at North Lookout. Now there are Owl's Head and other spots along the ridge where hawkers wait for the hawks to come. If they are lucky, they may see thousands of Broadwings, a Rough-legged Hawk, a Goshawk, or an eagle.

If you can't make the trip to Hawk Mountain for awhile or if it's a long time before hawk migration on the Blue Ridge or the Alleghanies, Harwood's book will help keep your spirits aloft.

Richard H. Peake

NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

TREE SWALLOW NEST IN AUGUSTA COUNTY. On 30 May 1977 Mozelle Henkel observed a pair of Tree Swallows going in and out of a blue-bird nest box near a farm pond on route 795 near Fishersville, Virginia. The box was on a fence post in a large field, and it was not opened for inspection on this date. On 4 and 11 June 1977 the adults and 4 young were photographed by Si Larner, and all of the birds were observed by YuLee Larner, Ruth Snyder, and many members of the Augusta Bird Club. The nest was made of grass and lined by white chicken feathers. The 4 large, noisy, well-feathered young were still in the nest on 18 June and apparently fledged soon thereafter. This is the first known successful nesting record for the Tree Swallow in Augusta County.

BROWN CREEPER NEST AT LOW ELEVATION. On 15 June 1977 Dr. and Mrs. John W. Murray watched a pair of Brown Creepers repeatedly visiting a dead pine tree at a place where a large slab of bark was partly separated from the trunk. What appeared to be a nest was visible in the gap. The site was in Poverty Hollow in Montgomery County, Virginia, at an elevation of 2100 feet. On 19 June the nest was gone but was found caught in a sapling about 2 meters above the ground and about 1 to 2 meters below the nest site. The only nests found previously in this area were at 3100 to 3200 feet in adjacent Giles County (*Raven*, 36: 59-60, 1965; *ibid.*, 45: 31, 1974).

The Raven

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CONTENTS

Franklin's Gull in Alexandria, Virginia	67
By Jackson M. and David F. Abbott	
Varied Thrush in Albemarle County, Virginia	68
By A. Bruce Davenport	
Prairie Warbler Searches Spittlebug Mass	69
By Robert Lochmiller	
In Memoriam: Charles Overton Handley	69
The 1978 VSO Annual Meeting	70
By Robert J. Watson	
Officers and Committees of the VSO, 1978-1979	74
News and Notes	75
Index to Volume 49 — 1978	76

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 \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$125.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

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FRANKLIN'S GULL IN ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

JACKSON M. AND DAVID F. ABBOTT

About 9 a.m. on 12 June 1977 the senior author was looking over several hundred gulls sitting on pilings in Hunting Creek Bay on the Potomac River at the southeast corner of Alexandria, Virginia. There were about 75 subadult Ring-billed Gulls, *Larus delawarensis*, and over 150 Laughing Gulls, *L. atricilla*, in various plumages; at least 50% were adults in breeding plumage. This number of Laughing Gulls is very unusual for Alexandria in early June; normally they are near their breeding grounds near the coast and don't begin to show up in numbers until early July. A severe storm on 6 June apparently flooded their nesting sites and caused them to wander.

Some gulls flew up from the pilings as others coming in from the river milled around looking for perches. One of these flying by at eye level about 50 yards away was a Franklin's Gull, *L. pipixcan*. What made it immediately distinctive was the white line separating the dark gray upper primaries from their black outer ends and the white tips to the primaries. The bird was noticeably smaller than the Laughing Gulls, and its wings were proportionately shorter and broader. The black hood was incomplete, but the white eye rings were noticeable and the face and forehead were white, which indicated the bird was an adult changing from winter to breeding plumage. As the gull circled around the pilings its loud *pee-lo* call was clearly discerned from the *ah-ha* calls of the Laughings. The Franklin's Gull wheeled higher and higher with Laughings and Ring-bills and went out of sight north up the Potomac River.

I returned to the pilings with the junior author about 10 a.m. and found only about 80 gulls. The tide was ebbing and the gulls were dispersing to exposed mud flats. David remained at the pilings for the rest of the day, and as the tide began coming in again about 4 p.m., the gulls began returning. By 6 p.m. over 350 gulls were on the pilings or milling about in the air over the bay. One Herring Gull, *L. argentatus*, and one Ring-billed Gull in adult breeding plumage were seen as well as about 150 Laughing Gulls, of which about 50 were breeding-plumaged adults. About 6:15 David saw the Franklin's Gull flying low towards one of the outer pilings, where it landed. He had a several-minutes look at it through a 20x telescope and noted the incomplete hood, white forehead and cheeks, large white eye ring (larger than those on nearby adult Laughing Gulls), and smaller body size than a Laughing Gull. In direct comparison with the bill of a neighboring Laughing Gull, that of the Franklin's was slimmer and shorter and was black with some red at the base. The mantle was dark gray but lighter than an adult Laughing's. The folded primaries were black and showed white, drop-shaped spots on each primary tip. The tail was immaculately white.

The bird soon took flight offering excellent views. Through 7x35 binoculars the black area at the ends of the primaries appeared smaller than the white area formed by the white tips and the white band that separated the black from the gray on the primaries. This band was very noticeable when the bird was flying away from the viewer, giving the wings a separated effect, appearing as if the tips were cut off and flying beside the wing. The bird joined a flock of gulls soaring in the air, and even at that distance of several hundred yards, the Franklin's Gull was obvious.

At 7 a.m. on 13 June David saw the Franklin's Gull again briefly flying with some Laughings around the pilings. It did not perch and flew on out of sight up the river. Many persons, including the authors, looked for it throughout the rest of the day and on 14 and 15 June, but without success.

This is apparently the fourth record of this species for Virginia. Ellison A. Smyth, Jr. (*Auk*, 19: 74-75, 1902) secured a female in fall plumage at Blacksburg on 22 October 1898, and single birds were seen at Norfolk on 11 November 1960 by Mrs. Colgate W. Darden, Lavinia Newell, and Floy C. Burford and on 30 August 1963 by Burford (*Raven*, 34: 52, 1963).

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VARIED THRUSH IN ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

A. BRUCE DAVENPORT

Sunday, 16 January 1977, was a cold, blustery day with temperatures in the teens and a 4-inch snow on the ground. About midday I received a telephone call from Dr. Michael Stelling who told me that he and his wife Carol has seen an unusual robin-like bird feeding in their yard. With the aid of Robbins' *Birds of North America* they had identified it as a Varied Thrush, *Ixoreus naevius*. Stelling had taken several photographs of the bird through the window before calling me. But when we arrived, the bird was not there.

The Stelling's home is in Glenaire, about 6 miles west of Charlottesville in Albemarle County. It is located in a fine bird habitat, being surrounded by a second-growth mixed woods of Virginia pine, red cedar, and a few hardwoods in the hollow behind the house. The Stellings had put out bird feeders and bird food of every description, and the usual winter birds were there in abundance.

We returned later in the afternoon, and soon from inside the house we all had excellent views of the thrush. It was feeding on the snow beneath a red cedar, and there were robins nearby. We were about 75 feet from the bird and watched it with binoculars and a 20x spotting scope for about 5 to 10 minutes.

Although the bird was robin-like, it was immediately apparent that it was not a robin. The two most striking marks to me were the dark band across its rusty breast and the crisp, light line above the eye. The light markings on the wing were evident also. The sun was low and behind us, but even though the bird was in partial shade, it was obviously a male Varied Thrush. None of us had ever seen this species before, but the view we had was convincing. We used both Robbins and Peterson's *Field Guide to the Western Birds* for reference, and the photos, which were filed with the VSO Research Committee, were unmistakable.

I could not tell what the bird was feeding on when I saw it, but earlier it had been picking at persimmons which had fallen into the snow.

January 16 was the only day the bird was seen.

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PRAIRIE WARBLER SEARCHES SPITTLEBUG MASS

ROBERT LOCHMILLER

On 24 May 1977 a Prairie Warbler, *Dendroica discolor*, was observed searching a spittlebug (family Ceropidae) mass located on a young white pine, *Pinus strobus*. Spittlebugs are nymphs which produce and become surrounded by a spittlelike mass. It could not be determined if the warbler actually consumed the nymphs located within the mass. The incident occurred along a clearcut on the Jefferson National Forest in Montgomery County, Virginia.

Feeding from a "spittlebug mass" for the nymphs appears to be a learned behavior, much like the reports of some birds feeding from spider webs. Burt et al. (1976) observed a Cedar Waxwing, *Bombycilla cedrorum*, removing insects intrapped in spider webs in the top of a dead tree. Waide and Hailman (1977) observed members of the families Trochilidae, Fringillidae, Troglodytidae, and Vireonidae feeding from spider webs. In addition, Waide and Hailman (1977) also observed a Yellow-rumped Warbler, *Dendroica coronata*, feeding upon insects on a spider web. Burt et al. (1976) suggest that opportunities for web-feeding might be rare.

Insects of the order Homoptera are common in the diet of wood warblers. However, no reference to Cercopidae nymphs within the diets could be found (Bent, 1963). The possibility exists for warblers to learn such a behavior as demonstrated by this observation, and this may be a common feeding habit in areas where large numbers of spittlebugs occur.

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IN MEMORIAM: CHARLES OVERTON HANDLEY

Charles Overton Handley, a charter member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, died on 10 June 1977. He was born at Lewisburg, West Virginia, on 2 November 1897. After graduating from Washington and Lee University in 1922, he taught there for two years, then joined the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey (now the Fish and Wildlife Service), working with Herbert Stoddard, the well-known expert on the Bobwhite. From 1929 to 1935 he served as superintendent of game propagation for the Virginia Commission of Game and

Inland Fisheries. He was one of the organizers of the VSO in 1929 and was elected Vice President, holding this position for six years. It was he who suggested the raven as the symbol of the society.

In 1935 Mr. Handley moved to Virginia Polytechnic Institute as Chief of the Virginia Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, the first organization of its kind in the nation. While there he established the Blacksburg Christmas bird count, beginning in 1935, one of the few in the state at that time. He was President of the VSO from 1935 to 1937 and served on the society's Executive Committee from 1939 to 1942. In 1947 he moved to West Virginia, where he became Chief of the Game Division of the West Virginia Conservation Commission and then Director of Research of the Department of Natural Resources. He retired in 1965 and lived in Lewisburg until his death.

Mr. Handley was the author of *Birds of the Great Kanawha Valley* and, with Henry S. Mosby, of *The Wild Turkey in Virginia*. Besides the VSO, he was a member of the American Ornithologists' Union, the National Audubon Society, the Brooks Bird Club, the International Association of Game and Fish Commissioners, and a charter member of the Wildlife Society. He was the recipient of a Nash Award for conservation and in 1966 was named Conservationist of the Year by the West Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. In 1971 a public hunting and fishing area in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, was renamed in his honor. Wherever he lived, the study of birds and their distribution and welfare were his primary interest. His home was always a clearing house for local ornithological news and information. He is survived by his wife, the former Nelle S. Hall, and three sons, including Charles O. Handley, Jr., Curator of Mammals at the Smithsonian Institution.

Robert J. Watson

THE 1978 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON

The 1978 meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology opened on Friday evening, 19 May, in John Millington Hall at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The opening feature was a workshop on local chapter activities, presided over by Mrs. Myriam Moore, chairman of the Local Chapters Committee. Mrs. Thelma Dalmas and Mr. Edwin Kinser, of the Lynchburg and Clinch Valley Chapters, respectively, described successful activities aimed at encouraging school children to study birds. Mr. Jerry Via demonstrated a sample of a set of tape and slide "miniprograms" worked out by the Local Chapters Committee, which are available to all chapters. Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell urged birders to make more use of local parks, explaining how the Hampton Roads Bird Club had "adopted" the Newport News City Park. Mrs. Ruth Beck presented a local guide to bird finding prepared by the Williamsburg Bird Club; she urged the society to work toward a complete guide for the state. Mrs. YuLee Larner, chairman of the Records Committee, submitted a "quiz" based on information gleaned from her extensive reading of *The Raven* as part of her work of revising the *Check-list of the Birds of*

Virginia. Concluding the workshop, Mrs. Moore urged everyone to attend the fiftieth anniversary meeting of the VSO next year in Lynchburg.

The annual business meeting was opened at 8:45 p.m. by Dr. J. J. Murray, Jr., President of the VSO. A welcome was extended by Mr. Dennis Baker, President of the Richmond Audubon Society (co-host for the meeting along with the Williamsburg Bird Club). Mrs. Larner summarized the status of the revised *Check-list*. Mr. Bill Williams described the field trips planned for the weekend.

Dr. Murray announced that Dr. Byrd had been forced to give up the editorship of the newsletter and that Mrs. Moore was taking his place. A round of applause was tendered to both Dr. Byrd and Mrs. Moore. Dr. Murray then recognized Mr. Kinser and the members of his school bird club, who were also greeted with enthusiastic applause.

Mr. Watson described a disturbing situation at the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, where the Fish and Wildlife Service appears to have plans for construction on Assateague Island that seem to be incompatible with the purposes of a refuge. A hearing is being held in June at Chincoteague, and Mr. Watson urged VSO members to attend if possible.

Mr. Williams, the Treasurer, gave a brief financial report indicating that the society now has 550 members.

For the Nominating Committee, Dr. Richard Peake, the chairman, presented the following slate of nominees:

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

Vice President: Robert L. Ake, Norfolk

Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington

Treasurer: Mrs. Thelma Dalmas, Lynchburg

Board of Directors, Class of 1980:

Bill Williams (to fill Mrs. Dalmas' unexpired term)

Board of Directors, Class of 1981:

Edwin C. Kinser, Tazewell

Barry L. Kinzie, Troutville

Mrs. Julie M. Russell, Waynesboro

There were no nominations from the floor, and a motion to accept the above slate unanimously was approved.

There being no further business, Dr. Murray declared the formal meeting closed. Dr. Peake then introduced Dr. Philip C. Shelton, of Clinch Valley College, who presented an illustrated lecture based on his research on seabirds on tropical islands in the Pacific Ocean.

The field trips on Saturday morning, 20 May, ranged from Hog Island to Craney Island and various points inbetween.

In the absence of the Vice President, Mr. Robert J. Watson, Secretary of the VSO, presided at the Saturday afternoon session, held in Millington Hall. Gary L. Miller, a graduate student at the College of William and Mary, opened the program with a talk on "Population and Habitat Utilization of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker." A survey of known breeding sites of this species was made in six counties of southeastern Virginia, the largest number of sites being in Sussex County. The bird's specialized nest requirements (in old pines that

have reached a certain age) make its survival uncertain. The principal threat is clearcutting by large lumber companies which results in the destruction of all the pines in an area. Unless better methods of management can be devised, the best that can be hoped for, according to Mr. Miller, is the preservation of two or three "showcase" populations in Virginia.

Mr. Jerry W. Via, of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, described "Birds of Hog Island State Waterfowl Refuge," summarizing the results of a survey in 1973-74 of the refuge and of an adjacent wooded tract owned by the Virginia Electric and Power Company. The total area surveyed covered 5½ square miles and included a variety of habitats. The year-long survey recorded 197 species in the area, with 62 probably breeding.

Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, of the College of William and Mary, gave an overview of the Endangered Species Program in Virginia. Studies of endangered species are being undertaken by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries using Federal money made available under the 1973 Endangered Species Act. Species being studied include the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Delmarva Fox Squirrel, Brown Pelican, Peregrine Falcon, Indiana Bat, and particularly the Bald Eagle. The breeding population of the eagle in the Chesapeake Bay area dropped from an estimated 250 pairs in 1936 to 80-90 by 1970. At the same time, the productivity of nests declined, apparently because of pesticide residues. Productivity showed an upward trend in 1977, perhaps because of the disappearance of older breeding birds infected with pesticides; however, the 1978 breeding season is expected to be disastrous, largely owing to severe and destructive weather.

Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell, of Newport News, showed slides of some of the 70,000 birds of 150 species that she and her husband have banded in the last 17 years. Among these were individuals of the Clay-colored Sparrow, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Painted Bunting, and albinos of the Red-headed Woodpecker and White-throated Sparrow.

Dr. Sherwin M. Beck explained a method worked out by his wife, Ruth A. Beck, and him for using LORAN-C equipment to pinpoint the location of Bald Eagle nests and reach them on foot. A LORAN receiver and a small programmable calculator were used to compute distances and bearings to selected nests. The technique was shown to be accurate to within 200 feet or less.

Mr. Dan C. Smith, of VPI&SU, illustrated "The Development of Behavior in a Brood of Hand-reared Barn Owls." Three owl hatchlings were hand-reared at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and their development recorded on movie film. Physical development was closely monitored, and the appearance of various types of behavior was recorded according to the age of the birds.

Mr. Gary L. Miller returned to the program to present the findings of an analysis of 15,181 banding recoveries of the Evening Grosbeak in North America between 1922 and 1975. The species was first discovered in northern Michigan but has since extended its breeding range eastward. The first Virginia record was in 1940; the first large flight into the state occurred in the winter of 1945-1946. For unexplained reasons, recoveries have dropped sharply since 1965. Banding recoveries indicate a general pattern of northeast-southwest movement.

The nesting of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher on Mount Rogers was described by Dr. Philip C. Shelton, of Clinch Valley College. Dr. Shelton found a singing

male of this species on Mount Rogers in August 1973 but did not see the bird there again until 16 July 1977, when a singing male was observed feeding young. Both the young birds were subsequently found dead. The nearest known nesting site for the species is in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, some 450 miles to the northeast.

"Methods of Trapping and Banding American Woodcock" was the subject of Robert L. Patterson, Jr., of VPISU. The speaker had sought to capture individuals of the species so they could be marked and subsequently identified. His method was based upon stereotypic courtship behavior, in which the singing male flies up and then returns to the starting point. Identification of these starting points enables the observer to trap the birds with mist nets. Females were caught on the ground by using trained dogs and long-handled nets. In midsummer the bird congregate in fields and may be similarly netted with the aid of powerful flashlights.

The afternoon program concluded with a movie, "At the Crossroads: The story of America's Endangered Species."

The annual banquet was held in the William and Mary Commons with Dr. Murray presiding. Dr. Murray announced that the annual VSO Conservation Award had been voted to the Virginia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy in recognition of the work of the Conservancy in preserving the barrier islands of the Virginia Eastern Shore. Mr. Robert J. Watson accepted the award in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Virginia Chapter. In acknowledging the award, Mr. Watson stressed that the acquisition of the Virginia barrier islands by the Conservancy had required a nationwide effort directed by the national office of the Conservancy.

Mrs. Julie Russell, of the Resolutions Committee, submitted resolutions expressing thanks to the host clubs and to all others responsible for a successful meeting. These resolutions were carried by acclamation.

Dr. Curt Adkisson, of VPISU, introduced the main speaker, Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, who presented "Another Penguin Summer," an Audubon wildlife film taken by him in the Falkland Islands. The film recorded the behavior of penguins—behavior so entertaining that, as the speaker remarked, it became almost impossible not to anthropomorphize the birds. The atmosphere of high amusement was sustained by another movie, "Caution: Birding May Be Hazardous to Your Health," produced by certain individuals in the VSO who had already, in previous years, demonstrated a talent for bringing out the lighter side of bird study. To conclude the evening, Mrs. Moore called the roll of local chapters and asked members of each chapter who were in the audience to stand and be recognized. The meeting then adjourned.

The field trips on Sunday morning, 21 May, covered the same ground as the preceding day. A proper mood was established at the outset by an obliging Gray-cheeked Thrush, which posed conveniently just outside the window of the breakfast room in the William and Mary Commons, giving observers an opportunity for an extraordinarily close and careful look.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

RED-NECKED GREBE FLIGHT. One to two Red-necked Grebes appeared along the Virginia shore of the Potomac River between Arlington and Mount Vernon from 18 February to 1 March 1977 (J. M. Abbott, P. J. Baicick, O. E. Fang, *et al.*). No Virginia records were reported after 1 March, though birds were seen on the Maryland part of the river up to 14 March. Elsewhere in Virginia the only other spring report was of three birds at Kerr Reservoir from 17 to 26 February (P. E. McQuarry, Caroline Eastman, R. M. Carter, *et al.*).

CORMORANT INLAND IN SUMMER. Robert J. Watson observed an immature Double-crested Cormorant on Lake Merriweather, near Goshen Pass, Rockbridge County, on 2 July 1977. There are few if any other summer records from the Virginia mountains. This record was given in error in *American Birds* (31: 1139) as 21 July 1977.

BLACK-CROWNS NESTING IN VALLEY. In 1977 two heronries were reported on the west side of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River about 0.5 mile northwest of New Market, Shenandoah County, Virginia. One was "very old," according to a neighboring farmer, the site being in litigation and posted for many years with the heirs being out of the state. Mrs. Richard Funkhouser, of Timberville, spoke to the farmer, who told her that the new site was an extension of the older one that was about 10 miles away. Richard and Mary Smith visited and photographed the new site on 16 May 1977. The three nests were high in mature oaks. Five adult Black-crowned Night Herons were present, and young could be heard vocalizing in the nests; however, due to the height of the nests, pictures of the young were not possible. The farmer stated that "several" young were present all summer, and the entire group left about 1 October 1977. The oaks were severely damaged during the 1978 Easter ice storm. The herons returned 10 April 1978, milled around for one day, and were not seen again. Black-crowned Night Herons were observed by Randall E. Shank flying toward the New Market area, but no nests were found in 1978. This constitutes the only confirmed breeding record in Virginia west of the Blue Ridge.

HARLEQUIN DUCKS AGAIN. Harlequin Ducks appeared around the artificial islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel between Kiptopeke and Virginia Beach, Virginia, for the tenth consecutive winter. First noted (one female) on 2 November 1976 by Richard Kelly, they increased to a maximum of seven on 15 January 1977 (Mozelle Henkel *et al.*) and 26 February (Virginia Hank and others) and were last seen here (two pairs) on 26 March (D. F. Abbott and O. E. Fang). At Wallops Island two were present from 12 March to 10 April 1977 and one from 8 to 15 May (C. R. Vaughn), an extremely late occurrence.

INDEX TO VOLUME 49 — 1978

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. 20-27).

- Abbott, Jackson M. and David F., Franklin's Gull in Alexandria, Virginia, 67-68
Adkisson, C. S., R. N. Conner, I. D. Prather, and J. W. Via, Recent sightings of eagles in southwestern Virginia, 32-33
Bass, Kenneth H., Sprague's Pipit at Chincoteague, 36-37
Beck, Sherwin M., annual meeting paper, 72
Bittern, American, Montgomery Co., 15
Blackbird, Brewer's Augusta Co. in winter, 29
Blackbird, Red-winged, Highland Co., 58
Bluebird, Eastern, winter fluctuations, 28, 29; Highland Co., 52
Bobolink, nesting in Highland Co., 43, 57-58
Bobwhite, Highland Co., 45
Bunting, Indigo, Highland Co., 59
Bunting, Snow, winter, 30
Byrd, Mitchell A., annual meeting paper, 72
Cardinal, Highland Co., 59
Carter, James L., Migrating hawks in Bedford County, Virginia, 33-34
Catbird, Gray, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 51
Chat, Yellow-breasted, Highland Co., 57
Chickadee, Black-capped, winter, 29; Highland Co., 50
Chickadee, Carolina, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 50
Christmas bird counts, 19-32
Conner, Richard N., Belted Kingfisher flies through a tunnel, 12; Imitation of nonavian sounds by Mockingbirds, 35-36; see Adkisson, C. S.
Coot, American, Botetourt Co. in June, 11
Cormorant, Double-crested, inland in summer, 75
Cowbird, Brown-headed, Highland Co., 58
Creepers, Brown, Kiptopeke, 38, Highland Co., 51; nesting in Montgomery Co., 64
Crossbill, Red, winter, 30; Highland Co., 59-60
Crossbill, White-winged, Darlington Heights, 30
Crow, Common, Highland Co., 50
Cuckoo, Yellow-billed, Highland Co., 46
Davenport, A. Bruce, Varied Thrush in Albemarle County, Virginia, 68
Dove, Mourning, Highland Co., 46
Duck, Harlequin, winter, 28; 1976-77 records, 75
Duck, Wood, Highland Co., 44
Eagle, Bald, Craig Co., 33; breeding population, 72
Eagle, Golden, winter, 28; recent records, 32-33
Egret, Cattle, Botetourt Co. in June, 11; winter, 19, 28
Egret, Snowy, Salem, 11
Eike, James W., Cassin's Kingbird near Clifton, Virginia, 12-13
Falcon, Peregrine, inland in winter, 28
Finch, House, winter, 30
Finch, Purple, winter, 30; nesting in Highland Co., 43, 59
Flicker, Common, Highland Co., 47
Flycatcher, Acadian, Highland Co., 48
Flycatcher, Alder, Highland Co., 48

- Flycatcher, Great Crested, Highland Co., 48
Flycatcher, Least, Highland Co., 49
Flycatcher, Willow, Highland Co., 48-49
Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied, nesting on Mt. Rogers, 72-73
Gallinule, Common, Botetourt Co., 10-11
Gallinule, Purple, Botetourt Co., 11
Gannet, Little Creek in winter, 19
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray, Hopewell in winter, 29; Highland Co., 52-53
Godwit, Marbled, winter, 28
Goldfinch, American, Highland Co., 59
Goose, White-fronted, Gordonsville, 28
Goshawk, winter, 28
Grackle, Common, Highland Co., 58
Grebe, Horned, winter, 19
Grebe, Red-necked, spring 1977 flight, 75
Grosbeak, Blue, Highland Co., 59
Grosbeak, Evening, winter, 30; analysis of band recoveries, 72
Grosbeak, Rose-breasted, Highland Co., 59
Grouse, Ruffed, Highland Co., 45
Gull, Franklin's, Alexandria, 67-68
Gull, Herring, Alexandria, 67
Gull, Iceland, winter, 28
Gull, Laughing, Alexandria, 67
Gull, Lesser Black-backed, winter, 28
Gull, Little, winter, 28
Gull, Ring-billed, Alexandria, 67
Handley, Charles Overton, obituary, 69-70
Harwood, Michael, book reviewed, 63-64
Hawk, Broad-winged, migrants in Bedford Co., 33-34; Highland Co., 45
Hawk, Cooper's, Highland Co., 45
Hawk, Red-shouldered, winter, 28; Highland Co., 45
Hawk, Red-tailed, winter, 28; Highland Co., 45
Hawk, Rough-legged, winter, 28
Hawk, Sharp-shinned, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 45
Heron, Black-crowned Night, Botetourt Co. in June, 11; nesting in Shenandoah Co., 75
Heron, Great Blue, blue and white morphs in Botetourt Co. in June, 11; Highland Co., 44
Heron, Great White, Botetourt Co. in June, 11
Heron, Green, Botetourt Co., 11; winter, 19; Highland Co., 44
Hummingbird, Ruby-throated, Highland Co., 47
Hybrid, Mallard-Black Duck, 28
Jaeger, Long-tailed, Chincoteague, 40
Jay, Blue, Highland Co., 50
Junco, Dark-eyed, Highland Co., 60
Kestrel, American, Highland Co., 45
Killdeer, Highland Co., 46
Kingbird, Cassin's, near Clifton, 12-13
Kingbird, Eastern, Highland Co., 48
Kingfisher, Belted, flying through tunnel, 12; Highland Co., 47
Kinglet, Golden-crowned, winter fluctuations, 28, 29; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 53; feeding young cowbird, 53
Kinglet, Ruby-crowned, winter fluctuations, 28, 29; Kiptopeke, 38
Kittiwake, Black-legged, winter, 28

- Knot, Red, winter, 28
Lark, Horned, Highland Co., 49
Larner, YuLee, and F. R. Scott, News and notes, 39-40, 64, 75
Lochmiller, Robert, Prairie Warbler searches spittlebug mass, 69
Longspur, Lapland, Cape Charles, 30
Magpie, Black-billed, Roanoke, 29
Mallard-Black Duck hybrid, winter, 28
Martin, Purple, Highland Co., 50
McKinley, Daniel, The Carolina Parakeet in the Virginias: a review, 3-10
Meadowlark, Eastern, Highland Co., 58
Middleton, Norwood C., Snowy Egret strays across the Blue Ridge, 11-12
Miller, Gary L., annual meeting papers, 71, 72
Mitchell, Dorothy L., annual meeting paper, 72
Mockingbird, imitating nonavian sounds, 35-36; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 51
Nuthatch, Red-breasted, winter, 29; Highland Co., 51
Nuthatch, White-breasted, Highland Co., 50
Opengari, Bill, High wings bring southern visitors to Daleville, 10-11
Oriole, Northern, Highland Co., 58
Oriole, Orchard, Highland Co., 58
Osprey, winter, 28
Ovenbird, Kiptopeke, 39; Highland Co., 56
Owl, Barn, development of behavior, 72
Owl, Barred, Highland Co., 46
Owl, Great Horned, Highland Co., 46
Owl, Long-eared, winter, 28; Highland Co., 46
Owl, Saw-whet, in W. Va. adjacent to Highland Co., 46
Owl, Screech, Highland Co., 46
Owl, Short-eared, inland in winter, 28
Oystercatcher, American, high winter count, 28
Parakeet, Carolina, in Va. and W. Va., 3-10
Patterson, Robert L., Jr., annual meeting paper, 73
Peake, Richard H., Northern Shrike in Nelson County, Virginia, 13; The Highland County foray of June 1975, 43-61; review, 63-64
Peake, Richard H., and James G. Holt, A second Savannah Sparrow breeding record for Virginia, 13-15
Pewee, Eastern Wood, Highland Co., 49
Phoebe, Eastern, winter fluctuations, 28, 29; Highland Co., 48
Pierson, Thomas A., Distraction display by male Canada Warbler, 62-63
Pipit, Sprague's, Chincoteague, 36-37
Plover, Black-bellied, winter, 28
Plover, Mountain, Chincoteague, 34-35
Prather, I. D., see Adkisson, C. S.
Raven, Common, winter, 29; Highland Co., 50
Razorbill, possible winter record, 28
Redpoll, Common, winter, 30
Redstart, American, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 57
Review, 63-64
Robin, American, winter, 29; Highland Co., 52
Sandpiper, Baird's, spring records, 15
Sandpiper, Buff-breasted, Chincoteague, 34, 36
Sandpiper, Least, high winter count near Hopewell, 28
Sandpiper, Spotted, winter, 28
Sandpiper, Western, winter, 28

- Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied, Highland Co., 47
Scoter, Black, Rockingham Co., 40
Scoter, Surf, inland, 40
Scoter, White-winged, Botetourt Co., 40
Scott, F. R., News and notes, 15; Virginia Christmas bird counts—1977-78 season, 19-32; Banding results at Kiptopeke Beach in 1976, 38-39; see Larner, YuLee
Shelton, Philip C., annual meeting paper, 72-73
Shrike, Loggerhead, Highland Co., 53
Shrike, Northern, Nelson Co., 13
Siskin, Pine, winter, 30
Smith, Dan C., annual meeting paper, 72
Sparrow, Chipping, winter, 30; Highland Co., 60-61
Sparrow, Clay-colored, Kiptopeke, 38
Sparrow, Field, Highland Co., 61
Sparrow, Grasshopper, winter, 30; Highland Co., 60
Sparrow, House, Highland Co., 57
Sparrow, Le Conte's, Botetourt Co., 63
Sparrow, Savannah, breeding in Tazewell, 13-14; winter, 30; Highland Co., 60
Sparrow, Song, Highland Co., 61
Sparrow, Vesper, Highland Co., 60
Sparrow, White-throated, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co. in June, 61
Starling, Highland Co., 53
Swallow, Barn, Highland Co., 49
Swallow, Cliff, Highland Co., 49-50
Swallow, Rough-winged, Highland Co., 49
Swallow, Tree, nesting in James City Co., 15; nesting in Madison Co., 40; Highland Co., 49; nesting in Augusta Co., 64
Swift, Chimney, Highland Co., 47
Tanager, Scarlet, Highland Co., 58-59
Teal, Blue-winged, winter, 28
Tern, Forster's, winter, 28
Thrasher, Brown, Highland Co., 51-52
Thrush, Gray-cheeked, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; age record, 39
Thrush, Hermit, winter fluctuations, 28, 29; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 52
Thrush, Swainson's, Kiptopeke, 38, 39
Thrush, Varied, Albemarle Co., 68
Thrush, Wood, Highland Co., 52
Titmouse, Tufted, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 50
Towhee, Rufous-sided, Highland Co., 60
Turkey, Highland Co., 45-46
Veery, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 52
Via, J. W., Le Conte's Sparrow in Botetourt County, 63; annual meeting paper, 72; see Adkisson, C. S.
Vireo, Red-eyed, Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 54; parasitized by cowbird, 54
Vireo, Solitary, winter, 29; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 53-54
Vireo, Warbling, Highland Co., 54
Vireo, White-eyed, winter, 29; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 53
Vireo, Yellow-throated, Highland Co., 53
Virginia Society of Ornithology, Christmas bird counts, 19-32; Kiptopeke Beach banding report, 38-39; Highland Co. foray report, 43-61; annual meeting report, 70-73; officers and committees, 74
Vulture, Black, high winter count, 28; Highland Co., 45
Vulture, Turkey, Highland Co., 45

- Vultures, winter, 28
Warbler, Bay-breasted, Little Creek in winter, 29; Kiptopeke, 38
Warbler, Black-and-white, winter, 29; Kiptopeke, 39; Highland Co., 54
Warbler, Blackburnian, Highland Co., 55-56
Warbler, Blackpoll, Kiptopeke, 38
Warbler, Black-throated Blue, Kiptopeke, 39; Highland Co., 55
Warbler, Black-throated Green, Highland Co., 55
Warbler, Blue-winged, Highland Co., 54
Warbler, Canada, Highland Co., 57; distraction display, 62
Warbler, Cape May, Kiptopeke, 38; Blacksburg in summer, 40
Warbler, Cerulean, Highland Co., 55
Warbler, Chestnut-sided, Highland Co., 56
Warbler, Golden-winged, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 54
Warbler, Hooded, Highland Co., 57
Warbler, Kentucky, Highland Co., 56
Warbler, Magnolia, Highland Co., 55
Warbler, Mourning, Highland Co., 56-57
Warbler, Nashville, Highland Co., 54
Warbler, Northern Parula, Highland Co., 54-55
Warbler, Palm, Kiptopeke, 38
Warbler, Pine, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 56
Warbler, Prairie, Highland Co., 56; searches spittlebug mass, 69
Warbler, Worm-eating, Highland Co., 54
Warbler, Yellow, Highland Co., 55; feeding young cowbird, 55
Warbler, Yellow-rumped, Kiptopeke, 38
Warbler, Yellow-throated, Highland Co., 56
Waterthrush, Louisiana, Highland Co., 56
Waterthrush, Northern, Kiptopeke, 39; Highland Co., 56
Watson, Robert J., In memoriam: Charles Overton Handley, 69-70; The 1978 VSO annual meeting, 70-73
Waxwing, Cedar, Highland Co., 53
Whip-poor-will, Highland Co., 46-47
Wigeon, European, winter, 28
Wilds, Claudia P., Mountain Plover at Chincoteague, 34-35
Woodcock, American, Highland Co., 46; methods of trapping, 73
Woodpecker, Downy, Highland Co., 48
Woodpecker, Hairy, Highland Co., 47-48
Woodpecker, Pileated, Highland Co., 47
Woodpecker, Red-bellied, Highland Co., 47
Woodpecker, Red-cockaded, population and habitat, 71
Woodpecker, Red-headed, Highland Co., 47
Wren, Bewick's, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 51
Wren, Carolina, population changes, 28, 29; Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 51
Wren, House, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 51
Wren, Long-billed Marsh, Kerr Reservoir in winter, 29
Wren, Winter, Kiptopeke, 38; Highland Co., 51
Yellowthroat, Common, inland in winter, 29; Kiptopeke, 38, 39; Highland Co., 57