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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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AN INVASION OF GULLS AT ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, DURING THE FALL OF 1978

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

Hunting Creek forms a boundary separating the southeastern corner of the city of Alexandria from the northeastern corner of Fairfax County, Virginia. At this point Hunting Creek flows into Hunting Creek Bay on the Potomac River just south of the Woodrow Wilson bridge on the Capital Beltway (I-95, formerly I-495) around the District of Columbia.

This intensely birded location has produced at least 15 species of gulls since the late 1940's. The usual species are Herring, *Larus argentatus*, and Ring-billed Gulls, *L. delawarensis* (all year though often absent in June); Great Black-backed Gull, *L. marinus* (July to April since the mid 1950's); Laughing Gull, *L. atricilla* (July to November); and Bonaparte's Gull, *L. philadelphia* (March to May and October through November). Occasionally, but not every winter, we have Glaucous, *L. hyperboreus*, and Iceland Gulls, *L. glaucoides*. Lesser Black-backed Gulls, *L. fuscus*, have become increasingly regular visitants in both fall and winter since the mid 1960's. A completely out-of-place Black-legged Kittiwake, *Rissa tridactyla*, appeared with Ring-bills in a northeasterly storm on 28 October 1956 (Abbott, 1956). An adult California Gull, *L. californicus*, was seen closely both flying and perched in good light on 22 February 1967 by the writer (Scott and Cutler, 1967). Two adult Franklin's Gulls, *L. pipixcan*, were seen, one on 12 and 13 June 1977 by David F. and J. M. Abbott (1978) and one on 21 July 1978 by David F. Abbott (Scott, 1978). A possible adult Western Gull, *L. occidentalis*, standing between two larger adult Great Black-backed Gulls was noted on 8 February 1975 by both Abbotts, and an immature Mew Gull, *L. canus*, was seen on 17 November 1974, also by both Abbotts (Ake and Scott, 1976). An adult winter-plumaged Black-headed Gull, *L. ridibundus*, was picked out of a flock of 50 or more Bonaparte's Gulls on 24 November 1974 by David F. and J. M. Abbott and Owen Fang (Ake and Scott, 1976). An earlier winter-plumaged Black-headed Gull, the first inland record for the state, had been seen a few miles south of Hunting Creek on the Potomac at Fort Hunt on 8 May 1971 (Abbott, 1971).

In the late summer and fall of 1978 a remarkable gull phenomenon occurred here. Starting in late July hundreds of gulls appeared in Hunting Creek Bay. A heavy migration southward of Ring-bills coming down the Potomac River mixed with hundreds of Laughing, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls coming up the Potomac from breeding areas on the coast. There appeared to be a constant movement of gulls into and out of the bay almost daily; yet by September the total number present on any given day exceeded 5000 birds, a truly phenomenal number for this location. At the northwestern corner of Hunting Creek Bay are about 120 old wood pilings, remnants of a marina which once flourished before the bay silted up, a situation caused by the "straightening" of Hunting Creek and the filling of the extensive marsh along the creek. At high tide the gulls and terns (predominantly Forster's Terns, *Sterna forsteri*) perch on the pilings which are about 4 meters apart, one on each. There are several observation points along the water edge next to the pilings through a screen of small trees and bushes. Since the observer is

looking at the pilings from the west to east, the morning of a sunny day is the poorest time. The bay is tidal, so the best observations are in the afternoon when the tide is high and the birds are on the pilings; at low tide they are all out on an extensive mud flat in the bay.

On 10 September 1978 David F. Abbott, Alice and Paris Coleman, Owen Fang, and the writer were scanning the gulls on the pilings. I spotted a Herring-type gull perched on a piling about 150 feet away which appeared slightly smaller and had a bill that appeared to be less thick and massive; it also seemed shorter in proportion to the head than nearby Herring Gulls. A more detailed examination through a 30x scope revealed that the iris was a gray-brown, not yellow as in adult Herrings, and the legs and feet were noticeably pinker than those on all the Herrings nearby. When it flew, only the outer three primaries had black on the upper surface; the outermost (10th) primary was half black with a white tip, the 9th primary was black only about a third of the way up from the white tip, and the 8th primary had just a small amount of black above the white tip. From below the primaries appeared translucent and grayish, not blackish as in Herring Gulls. We believe this bird was an adult Thayer's Gull, *L. thayeri*. The color photo in Plate 35 of the Audubon Society's new field guide (Bull and Farrand, 1977) is exactly like the gull we saw. This, or another one, was seen also on 16 September.

Later in the afternoon of 10 September Claudia Wilds joined David Abbott and the writer in looking for the Thayer's Gull at the pilings. Although we didn't relocate this bird, we had long looks at a small Herring-type gull which had a smaller, less massive bill than typical Herrings nearby but otherwise appeared to be an adult Herring in all respects (yellow bill with red spot at the gonys, pink legs, yellow iris, white windows in the black primaries, and a pale gray mantle). The gull did not show any of the Thayer's characteristics and was just slightly larger than a Ring-bill. This bird was probably the small nominate race of the Herring Gull, *L. a. argentatus*, which breeds in Iceland, the British Isles, and Western Europe.

David picked out an immature gull standing on a piling about 100 feet away which at first glance looked like a first-year Ring-bill because its bill was pink with a black tip. However, it was much larger than nearby Ring-bills, nearly the size of a Herring Gull. Besides size, the other most distinctive feature was the color of its legs and feet which were gray with a greenish cast; all the other immature Ring-bills and Herring-type gulls present had pinkish legs. This "giant Ring-bill" had brown wings with black primaries, a dark gray back (darker gray than a Herring's), gray head streaked with brown, heavily mottled brown and gray breast, and large scallops or half-moon shaped patches on the sides. The belly was white and the tail was solid brownish black as in first-year Herring and California Gulls. The bill appeared to be longer in proportion to the head than in a Ring-bill, many immatures of which were close by for comparison. We identified this bird as a first-year California Gull, the second Virginia sight record.

On one of the farthest pilings we spotted an adult-plumaged black-backed gull with a mantle as black as its primaries but it had *orange* legs and was smaller than a Herring Gull. I had never seen a Lesser Black-backed Gull with legs this bright shade of orange; they are usually yellow or greenish yellow. However, Claudia Wilds said that she had seen them with this color legs before.

The gull's head was rounded from the bill over the crown, giving it a high forehead look rather than the more sloping forehead look of the most Lesser Black-backs I've seen. In flight the mantle and wings were solid sooty black with the primaries the same shade as the mantle and with a white trailing edge to the wings. Many of us saw this gull on the pilings through 30 September 1978. I feel this bird was probably the Scandinavian race of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, *L. f. fuscus*.

While we were studying this orange-legged gull, David Abbott found an immature Lesser Black-backed Gull perched on a piling only about 50 feet away. This bird had an all black bill, pink legs and feet, a sloping not rounded forehead, and black-and-white plumage as in an immature Great Black-back, not brownish as in a Herring Gull. Its size was a bit smaller than a Herring Gull; there were adult and immature Great Black-backs and Herrings nearby for direct comparison. Later the immature Lesser Black-back flew to a piling next to the one on which the orange-legged black-back was perched. Alike in size, they had different head profiles, that of the immature bird with a sloping forehead while the adult bird had a steep forehead and a round-headed look.

On 14 September 1978 David and I visited the pilings about 3:30 p.m. We soon found the orange-legged Lesser Black-backed Gull perched on a piling about 75 yards away next to ones occupied by Great Black-backs and Herrings. In a nearby row of pilings, a very small immature Ring-billed type of gull with a small, short, pink-based, black-tipped bill was perched on a piling about 30 yards away. There was an immature Ring-billed Gull perched on a piling on both sides of the smaller gull offering direct comparison. The smaller gull had brown greater coverts rather than gray as in the Ring-bills, more orange speckling on the head and neck than the brown speckling on the Ring-bills, and its bill was smaller and shorter in proportion to its head than those of the Ring-bills. The legs were grayish with a pink cast. When it flew, the small gull showed a thick, scraggly black band across the tip of the white tail, not thin and even as in immature Ring-bills. This indicated that it was a second-year Mew Gull. This, or another bird similar to it, was seen on the pilings on 30 September 1978.

About 1 p.m. on 16 September 1978 my wife and I visited the pilings. A brief scan of all the perched birds quickly found the small, orange-legged Lesser Black-backed Gull on its favorite piling. Among a row of adult Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls nearer to us, I picked out an adult Herring Gull with yellow legs! Without saying anything to my wife about the leg color, I pointed the bird out to her and asked what color she thought the legs were. She replied: "Yellow, the same shade as its bill." The bill was yellow with a red mark on the gonys. The adult Herrings on the adjacent two pilings offered direct comparison. The only noticeable difference between them was the yellow legs of the one bird and the pink legs of the other two. I surmised that this was an example of one of the yellow-legged races of the Herring Gull found in Europe, probably the Mediterranean one, *L. a. michahellis*. On 9 October 1978 David Abbott and I saw an adult Herring Gull with yellow legs on a piling about 100 feet away next to a piling with an adult pink-legged Herring Gull perched on it. However, this yellow-legged bird had a yellow bill with both a red and a black mark on the lower mandible at the gonys! The red mark was toward the tip of the bill, and both sides of the bill had the

red and black marks (possibly a hybrid between a Herring and a California Gull?).

On 30 September 1978 David and I stopped at the pilings at 6 p.m. The light was perfect. All the pilings were occupied by gulls and terns as usual. We found a subadult-plumaged Lesser Black-back-sized gull which had a dark gray mantle and wing coverts, jet black primaries and secondaries, and yellow legs. There were a few dark feathers behind the eye and on the ear coverts and nape. In flight it had a broad white band across the middle of the wings caused by white tips to the secondary coverts, a feature I had never seen before in any plumage of black-backed gulls in the eastern United States or in western Europe. The bill was yellow with a red smudge on the lower mandible at the gonys and was slight with no pronounced peak at the gonys. Its size and the color of the legs and mantle were right for the *graellsii* (British) race of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, but the broad white wing bar across both wings seemed to rule that bird out. Dwight (1925), in his *Gulls (Laridae) of the World*, described this distinctive white band in the dark wings as being unique to the juvenile and subadult plumages of the Slaty-backed Gull, *L. schistisagus*, which, however, has pink, not yellow, legs and has never been recorded in the Atlantic Ocean as far as I know.

About 5 p.m. on the bright sunny afternoon of 10 October 1978 I scanned the gulls on the pilings. I soon picked out a dark-backed, yellow-legged, adult-plumaged gull smaller than a Herring perched on one of the nearer pilings. I had a good 5-minute study of the bird in perfect light and in comparison with nearby Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls. This bird had a sooty gray mantle and black primaries which had white tips to the outer three or four. The bill was yellow with a black mark across both upper and lower mandibles at the gonys. The iris was yellow. There were a few grayish feathers on the nape, crown, and sides of the neck. This was the third different Lesser Black-backed Gull seen here within a month.

On the overcast morning of 12 November 1978 David and I were watching the gulls in Hunting Creek Bay from the south side (Belle Haven Picnic Area). I picked out a small, whitish gull with very dark underwings flying back and forth in the middle of the bay. I immediately thought of a Little Gull, *L. minutus*. It was about 150 to 200 yards out, but through my binoculars I could see that it was a subadult as there was a black patch behind the eyes and on the nape, and the mantle was gray with black feathers on the coverts. The latter were not solid all the way across to produce a distinct "M" as in an immature-plumaged bird, but there were enough to give the mantle a patchy black-and-gray look. The primaries were black, the bill was all dark, and the tail appeared to be all white. The flight was fast, and the wings were shorter and more rounded than those of the Forster's Terns (8) which were flying about nearby. David was able to pick the Little Gull up in his 30x scope and confirmed the characters mentioned. He said the underwings were very dark but appeared lighter near the body where the wing linings were longer, and the mantle and secondaries were gray above with black feathers scattered throughout. The gull landed on a floating log next to a Forster's Tern and was smaller than the tern in side-by-side comparison. This was the first Little Gull for Fairfax County, Virginia, and by far the most inland record for the state.

Encouraging signs that this gull invasion may continue for a while at least was indicated by the presence of a Glaucous and an Iceland Gull in January 1979, two different Lesser Black-backs in January and February 1979, and a subadult Thayer's Gull on 1 May 1979 (Scott, 1979).

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BILL AND BODY SIZE IN THREE SYNTOPIC WOODPECKERS

RICHARD N. CONNER

In many species of birds bill and body size are highly correlated with prey or food item size (Schoener, 1965; Hespenheide, 1966, 1975; Diamond, 1973). Because of bill size and structure, certain species are better able to exploit particular food resources than others (Schoener, 1965). Bills and bodies of Downy (*Picoides pubescens*), Hairy (*P. villosus*), and Pileated (*Dryocopus pileatus*) Woodpeckers provide an excellent example of a size gradation. Downy Woodpeckers are the smallest of the three woodpeckers and have the shortest and least massive bill (mean length of 18.0 mm, Massachusetts specimens; Schoener, 1965). Hairy Woodpeckers are larger in size and have a longer, more massive bill (mean length of 31.0 mm, Massachusetts specimens; Schoener, 1965) than Downy Woodpeckers. Pileated Woodpeckers are the largest of

the three species and have the longest and most massive bill (mean length upper culmen of 55.6 mm, northeastern U. S. specimens measured by the author at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University).

This paper evaluates foraging methods and food selection of Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers in relation to size and strength of their bills and bodies.

The study area consisted of 30 km² in the Ridge and Valley Province of southwestern Virginia. Oaks (*Quercus* spp.) and hickories (*Carya* spp.) covered 60 percent of the area. Stands of oaks and pines (*Pinus* spp.) covered another 20 percent.

Foraging behavior of Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers was measured from September 1972 through July 1976. Using 7x50 power binoculars I observed foraging methods used by woodpeckers (Table 1—revised from Kilham, 1965).

TABLE 1. *Woodpecker foraging methods and their mnemonic codes.*

Code	Description of Method
PP	Peer and poke, a surface gleaning technique without any disturbance to the substrate foraged on.
PECK	Pecking on the foraging substrate without any subcambial penetration.
SCAL	Scaling the bark off a tree in search of food items.
EXCA	Subcambial excavation in search of food items.
HAWK	Aerial forays to capture insects on the wing.
VEGF	Consumption of any vegetable material.
GRDF	Foraging on the ground for animal food items.

The foraging methods and their duration were verbally recorded on a tape recorder until the bird disappeared from sight. When possible, the depth each woodpecker penetrated trees when excavating and the type and size of food items were noted.

There were differences in foraging methods used by the three species. Downy Woodpeckers, the smallest species, used methods that disturbed the foraging substrate the least (Figure 1). They peered-and-poked most often (55%), a method that does not penetrate trees at all. Pecking, a method that penetrates the tree only slightly, was the next most frequently used behavior (41%). Excavation and scaling, methods that involve substantial penetration and disturbance of trees, were used less than 5% of the time. Hairy Woodpeckers used foraging methods that penetrated trees more frequently than did those selected by Downies. Hairies pecked most often (50%), peered-and-poked less than the Downies (25%), but excavated more than Downies (22%) (Figure 1). Pileated Woodpeckers used methods that penetrated deep into trees the most. The excavated 45% of the time, pecked 30%, and peered-and-poked only 12% (Figure 1).

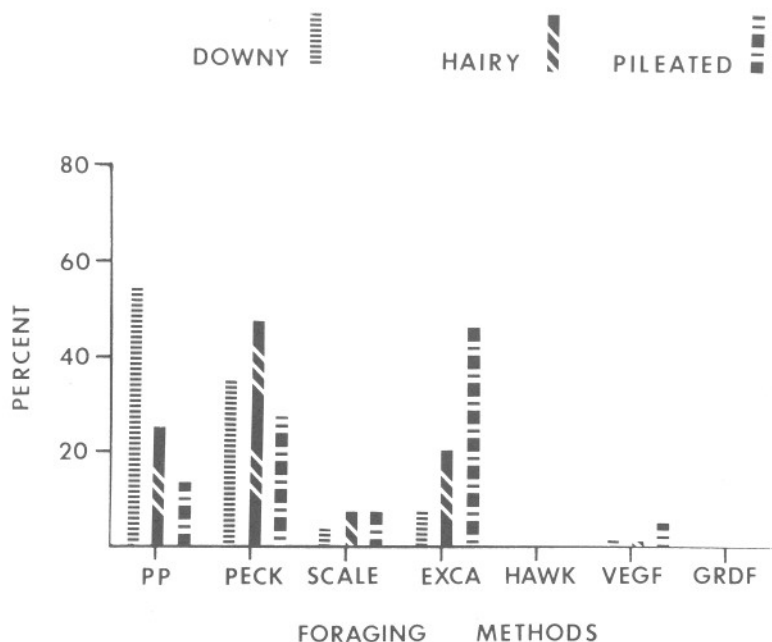


FIGURE 1. Frequency of foraging methods used by Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers (see Table 1 for mnemonic code). Sample sizes: 139 separate observations of Downy Woodpeckers—271 min, 121 Hairy Woodpeckers—260 min, 116 Pileated Woodpeckers—982 min.

Depths trees were penetrated when the woodpeckers excavated were also related to size and strength of their bills and bodies. The small Downy Woodpeckers typically excavated 0.5 to 2 cm into trees, while Hairy Woodpeckers excavated 3 to 5 cm and Pileated Woodpeckers 6 to 9 cm. The larger and stronger the bill and body, the greater the capability to excavate into trees.

My field observations and those of others (Beal, 1911; Martin *et al.*, 1951) suggest that Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers overlap extensively in the types and sizes of food items eaten. I observed the three species extract and eat similarly sized beetle larvae (unidentified), termites (Isoptera), and carpenter ants (*Camponotus* spp.). In the winter, carpenter ants were the Pileated Woodpecker's most important food item. The woodpecker typically excavated a series of deep (5-8 cm), elongated (6-15 cm) trenches into both live and dead trees in pursuit of pupae and adults. Hoyt (1957) noted that carpenter ants were the Pileated Woodpecker's chief food item during the winter in New York, as did Conway (1957) in Missouri. Although Hairy Woodpeckers occasionally excavated into carpenter ant galleries, they and Downy Woodpeckers obtained most carpenter ants from the surface of trees or from recent foraging excavations of Pileated Woodpeckers (Conner, 1977).

Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers all ate poison ivy (*Rhus* spp.) berries, dogwood fruits, and grapes (*Vitis* spp.) during the postbreeding season. Pileated Woodpeckers also appeared to eat tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

flowers that had fallen on the ground. Since there were ants on the flowers, the flower pieces may have been consumed unintentionally. Pileated Woodpeckers frequently fed on the fruits of cucumber trees (*Magnolia acuminata*). They would hang upside down on twigs of the tree in order to peck out and eat the fruits. Kilham (1976) observed Pileated Woodpeckers in Georgia eat fruits of camphor trees (*Cinnamom camphora*) from a similar position.

Although bill and body size have been shown to be highly correlated with prey or food item size (Schoener, 1965; Hespeneheide, 1966; Diamond, 1973), bill sizes of Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers may not be related as much to size of prey as to the extent that the woodpeckers penetrate trees when foraging. Carpenter ant galleries typically lie in the center of trees of substantial size (12+ cm diameter at breast height). Pileated Woodpeckers are able to feed regularly on these ants because the length and strength of their bill and size of their body are sufficient to make the extensive excavations (even through living oak) necessary to feed on this resource. Downy Woodpeckers have the smallest and least massive bill and body size and are thus limited in their ability to penetrate trees when excavating for food. Hairy Woodpeckers fall in between the Downy and Pileated Woodpeckers in bill and body size and strength and in the capability to penetrate trees when foraging.

In summary, I suggest that size and strength of the bills and bodies of Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers may be related more to the depth to which each species penetrates trees when foraging rather than to prey or food size as has been suggested in other species.

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BANDING RESULTS AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH IN 1978

F. R. SCOTT

The fall of 1978 marked the sixteenth year of operation of the Kiptopeke Beach Field Station, sponsored by the Virginia Society of Ornithology and located in southern Northampton County, Virginia, overlooking the Chesapeake Bay about 2 miles north of Wise Point. Up to 45 mist nets were used to trap migrating land birds, which were then banded and released. The station was open continuously from 28 August through 28 October. Details of the operation have been described earlier (see, for example, Byrd and Smith, 1968, and Scott, 1967).

The basic numerical results are shown in Table 1 with comparable data from the preceding three years. The decline in new birds banded was a direct result of the mild weather, and there were no large flights of small birds until mid October. In addition to the figures given in Table 1, there were four returns of birds banded in previous years, 436 repeats of birds banded here earlier in the fall, and 15 retraps of birds banded elsewhere.

TABLE 1. *Comparative statistics of four years of banding at Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia. The last four-year summary appeared 5 years ago (Scott, 1975) and the summary for 1977 last year (Scott, 1979a).*

	1975	1976	1977	1978
New birds banded	9,870	12,132	12,312	8,917
Total species	95	99	95	96
Total net-hours	20,328	17,982	22,691	23,839
Trapping efficiency, new birds/100 net-hr. .	49	67	54	37
Days of operation	58	55	77	62

Table 2 gives the banding totals of selected species for 1978 compared with those of the previous three years. The most commonly trapped birds in 1978 were Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Redstart, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Sharp-shinned Hawk. In comparing the variations in species totals between the four years shown in the table, one must be wary about extrapolating these changes to the entire wild populations. For example, although the Sharp-shinned Hawk may well have increased between 1975 and 1978, a more probable reason for the increased numbers banded was the increased use of larger-mesh nets. Nevertheless, the declines in Winter Wrens and both kinglets between 1976 and 1977 were also corroborated by Christmas bird count data (Scott, 1978 and 1979b).

TABLE 2. *Four-year totals of new birds banded at Kiptopeke Beach for selected species. An asterisk (*) indicates a record seasonal total.*

<i>Species</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1977</i>	<i>1978</i>
Sharp-shinned Hawk	87	143	288*	281
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	25	27	26	20
Traill's Flycatcher	58	46	50	37
Least Flycatcher	23	29	15	18
Red-breasted Nuthatch	35	42	44	4
Brown Creeper	92	65	53	24
House Wren	145	211	125	77
Winter Wren	80	102*	17	23
Gray Catbird	311	425	1154*	365
Hermit Thrush	74	151	114	229
Swainson's Thrush	347	176	217	73
Gray-cheeked Thrush	214	153	268	107
Veery	225	453	276	177
Golden-crowned Kinglet	179	572*	22	19
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	696*	650	210	134
White-eyed Vireo	22	31	34	15
Solitary Vireo	9	19*	4	5
Red-eyed Vireo	118	329	90	105
Black-and-white Warbler	196	211	242	191
Tennessee Warbler	46	73	42	16
Nashville Warbler	20	25	14	9
Northern Parula Warbler	81	70	82	47
Magnolia Warbler	193	154	182	56
Cape May Warbler	76	37	66	22
Black-throated Blue Warbler	478	370	272	178
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2509	3090	4078	4038
Bay-breasted Warbler	78*	26	30	8
Blackpoll Warbler	169	54	130	20
Palm Warbler	76	138	82	86
Ovenbird	250	294	225	153
Northern Waterthrush	72	97	189*	66
Mourning Warbler	6	12*	2	4
Common Yellowthroat	634	920	664	318
American Redstart	1320	1892	1863	1098

The best 1978 flight day during August and September was 5 September when 243 birds were trapped, 104 of these being American Redstarts. Mid and late October were much better, however, with such totals as 617 on the 15th, 1027 on the 16th, and 899 on the 21st. As usual, Yellow-rumped Warblers made up the bulk of these late flights (with 929 on the 16th!), although the 15th also produced 154 Gray Catbirds. Other interesting daily totals were 66 Hermit Thrushes on 21 October, 30 Common Yellowthroats on both 10 and 20 September, and 89 White-throated Sparrow on 18 October. All in all, it was not a good year for peak numbers of most species. Unusual here and apparently a first record for the area was a Black-capped Chickadee banded and released on 13 October by Walter Smith. Also of interest was a Golden-winged Warbler on 4 September and 5 Blue-winged Warblers between 31 August and 5 September.

Three of the returns from previous years consisted of 2 Carolina Chickadees and a Brown Thrasher, all banded in 1976 or 1977. The fourth return deserves a bit more comment. Band no. 1260-96148 was placed on an AHY (i.e., an adult) White-eyed Vireo on 10 September 1972 by F. R. Scott and retrapped on both 17 and 21 September 1978 by Jane P. Church. This same bird had also returned in 1973, 1974, 1976, and 1977 and was at least 7 years old in the fall of 1978. This was the second 7-year-old White-eyed Vireo found here. The first record occurred when band no. 118-65619 was placed on any AHY bird on 13 September 1968 by Mitchell A. Byrd and last retrapped on 15 September 1974, also by Jane P. Church. We are not aware of any other age records of the White-eyed Vireo equaling or surpassing these. Thirteen of the 15 birds banded elsewhere and retrapped at this station were HY (i.e., young of the year) Sharp-shinned Hawks which had been banded within a few miles of Kiptopeke Beach either the same day as retrapped or up to 5 days earlier. The other two were also HY Sharp-shinns which had been banded at Cape May Point, New Jersey, one 3 days earlier and the other 5 days earlier.

Age ratios of most transient species followed the general pattern revealed in prior years. That is, HY birds comprised 90% or more of the birds trapped. There were several exceptions to this, however, most notable being the Yellow-rumped Warbler which was only 86% HY this year versus 93% in 1977 and 95% in 1976.

The licensed banders who manned the station this year were James Carter, Jane P. Church, C. W. Hacker, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F. R. Scott, and Walter P. Smith, and they were ably assisted by nearly 90 other persons. Robert E. Hillman, of Amagansett, New York, agent for Kiptopeke Terminal Property, and John Maddox, of Virginia Beach, again kindly issued permission for the use of the land for the field station. The initial editing and tabulation of the daily field records was again done by Walter P. Smith.

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1979b. Virginia Christmas bird counts—1978-79 season. *Raven*, 50: 19-33.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

ANOTHER PIEDMONT RAVEN NEST

CHARLES E. STEVENS

On 27 May 1979 while botanizing along Tye River in the southern tip of Nelson County, Virginia, I came upon a group of 3 Common Raven "nestlings," *Corvus corax*, just out of a stick nest situated on a small cliff. On this wooded location a low ridge known as Turner Mountain terminates at the river. Alerted by a loudly scolding parent, I found the young birds walking about the shaded north-facing ledge in the vicinity of the nest. From the trampled moss and bare areas it was apparent that they had been climbing on these ledges for some days.

On my close approach the birds took off downslope through the woods in what may have been their maiden flight, accompanied by the raucous calls of the distressed parent.

At an altitude of 880 feet this site is located near route 654, 3 miles south of Arrington and 6.5 miles north of the Amherst-Appomattox line at the James River. It is encouraging to see this spread of ravens from the mountains into the Piedmont, a situation which has been apparent in northcentral Virginia since the 1950's.

615 Preston Place, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

SUMMER OCCURRENCES OF THE VEERY IN ARLINGTON

ROBERT J. WATSON

In June 1978 I heard a Veery, *Catharus fuscescens*, singing in a small wooded area near my home in Arlington, Virginia. This is the valley of Donaldson Run, which enters the Potomac River about 2 miles upstream from the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The upper part of the valley, where the bird was heard, is privately owned; the lower part is within the Potomac Overlook Regional Park, one of an excellent series of small stream-valley parks feeding into the George Washington Parkway, which provides a degree of protection to the wooded shores of the Potomac above Washington.

A single bird was heard singing on 20 June 1978, again on 22 June, and then intermittently through 17 July. On 9 July two birds were singing simultaneously in different parts of the same valley.

In 1979 I again heard a Veery singing in the same general location, first on 20 June, then at frequent intervals through 10 July. (Earlier birds singing in the same area, between 8 and 16 May 1979 were presumably migrants.) In neither year, however, did I find any nests or see any evidence of nesting, and none of the birds seemed particularly responsive to squeaking.

Apparently only one summer observation for the Veery in this area has been placed on record; this was a bird found along Pohick Creek near Lorton, southeastern Fairfax County, Virginia, on 3 July 1953 (*Raven*, 25: 97-98, 1954). The species nests commonly, if locally, however, in Rock Creek Park on the north

bank of the Potomac in the District of Columbia (*Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*, 1958). The birds that I heard may have been males that had finished breeding there and wandered south across the river. But there seems no reason why the Veery should not eventually be found nesting on the Virginia side. The location where I saw and heard the birds looked like ideal Veery habitat: a damp, well-wooded valley bottom with an abundance of tangled undergrowth.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

HENSLOW'S SPARROWS IN ALLEGHANY COUNTY

BILL J. OPENGARI

While doing a Breeding Bird Survey route on 25 June 1978 along route 18 south of Covington, Virginia, I made one of the stops at route 607. The road was bordered on both sides by open fields. The field on the north side of the road had not been cultivated or pastured and was overgrown with waist-high grasses, milkweeds, daisies, and some clover and lespedeza.

During the duration of the 3-minute stop, I observed Eastern Meadowlarks, *Sturnella magna*, Red-winged Blackbirds, *Agelaius phoeniceus*, Grasshopper Sparrows, *Ammodramus savannarum*, Chipping Sparrows, *Spizella passerina*, Field Sparrows, *S. pusilla*, and Song Sparrows, *Melospiza melodia*. As I was about to leave, I noticed a dark sparrow perched on a milkweed some distance out in the field. The bird made no sound and was perched with its back to me for a brief moment before dropping to the ground. I had seen no field marks and assumed the bird was a Grasshopper Sparrow, and so I drove off.

It was not until 8 July that doubt about the dark sparrow, and the beauty of the meadow, lured me back to the location. As I stopped the car beside the field and was getting out, I immediately heard a song, a simple two-note *tic-sic*, that was repeated over and over coming from the middle of the field. I recognized the song as that of the Henslow's Sparrow, *Ammodramus henslowii*, and located the bird singing from the same clump of milkweeds where I had seen the bird on 25 June. The sparrow had a short tail, a large head, dark plumage, and the whole body of the bird vibrated as it endlessly repeated its two-note song. The next day my wife and I returned to the field and observed two Henslow's Sparrows, one singing. On 11 July John Pancake and Barry Kinzie accompanied me to the site and observed one Henslow's Sparrow singing.

The location is in the southeastern corner of Alleghany County about 10 miles from Craig and Botetourt Counties. The field is about 0.5 mile from the intersection of routes 18 and 616 near Jordan Mines.

Route 1, Box 491, Daleville, Virginia 24083

NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

MARbled GODWIT IN SPRING. A Marbled Godwit seen at Craney Island, Portsmouth, on 30 March 1979 by Townley Wolfe was one of our few recent spring records of this species in Virginia.

UPLAND SANDPIPER NESTING. Randall E. Shank discovered an Upland Sandpiper nest on his farm near Broadway, Augusta County, Virginia, on 17 May 1979. The nest, which was photographed, contained 4 eggs which had hatched by 26 May. The first 3 birds of the spring had been seen here on 10 April 1979, and the peak count of the summer was 12 on 1 August, a number which may have included some transient birds. Also in Augusta County Leonard Teuber had 2 Upland Sandpipers doing a broken-wing act near Fishersville on 5 June 1979. This was the first actual nest discovered in Virginia in many years.

LONG-EARED OWL ROOST. On 10 March 1979 Jackson M. and David F. Abbott counted a minimum of 8 Long-eared Owls in a white pine stand 3 miles northeast of Boyce, Clarke County, Virginia. Others who visited this roost site during the winter apparently found no more than 3 birds.

WOODPECKER SURVEY IN 1979. According to Mitchell A. Byrd, the survey of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Virginia is producing some interesting results. Through the 1979 nesting season 46 sites with cavity trees had been located in southeastern Virginia, three new ones in 1979. Only eight of these sites showed any activity in 1979, however, and active nests were located at five sites, four in Sussex County and one in the City of Virginia Beach. All five of these nests, which were followed through the breeding season, were successful, four producing two fledglings each and one producing a single young bird.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER ON COAST. Somewhat belatedly, Gisela Grimm reported seeing a singing Olive-sided Flycatcher on Assateague Island, Virginia, with Virginia Hank on 5 June 1976. This may have been the same bird previously reported here on 1 June 1976 by L. K. Malone and B. W. Keelan.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD. Elizabeth Shantz and six members of her family observed a brilliantly colored adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Park View, Harrisonburg, Virginia, on 17 February 1979.

DICKCISSEL AT WHITE STONE. Maynard A. Nichols found a male Dickcissel near White Stone, Lancaster County, Virginia, on 5 May 1979. His only previous record of this species in this area was on 2 May 1975.

The Raven

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 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—1979-80 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

As in the past two seasons, 34 Christmas bird counts were submitted to *The Raven*, and in spite of soaring gasoline prices participation increased to a record 714 different observers, up 2% from the previous record of 698 in the 1977-78 season. Since many observers participated in more than one count, however, there were 949 names totaled on all 34 counts. Five counts listed over 50 observers each with Northern Shenandoah Valley taking all prizes with a remarkable 77. Clearly Virginians have not lost their enthusiasm for this holiday madness.

Coverage also increased 2% from last year's 3168 party-hours to 3222, a new high for the state. Following a warm fall and early winter (except for October), observers were spurred on by exceptionally good weather during the count period (little rain and no snow) and produced 208 different species plus one color phase (Blue Goose) and one additional subspecies (Ipswich Sparrow). This compares with 215 last year and the all-time record of 220 species in the 1973-74 season. Two birds were new to the cumulative list of all species reported on Virginia Christmas counts—Thayer's Gull and Yellow-throated Warbler—bringing this list up to a total of 279.

Remarkably, all 34 counts this year were the same as the ones submitted last year, though Catherine Furnace changed its name to a more easily recognized Chancellorsville. Three additional counts were submitted to *American Birds* but not to *The Raven*—Calmes Neck, Danville, and Wachapreague—and as usual a number of counts in adjacent jurisdictions overlapped into Virginia. These were Crisfield, Point Lookout, and Seneca, Maryland; Washington, D. C.; and Cumberland Gap, Kentucky. Two counts printed here—Darlington Heights and Sweet Briar—were apparently not submitted to *American Birds*. This summary, of course, is restricted to those counts printed here.

Eight of the ten Coastal Plain counts exceeded 100 species each with the laurels as usual going to Cape Charles with 168. Lynchburg took the honors on the Piedmont with 89 species, while in the mountain and valley area Northern Shenandoah Valley came up with a remarkable 110 species, another record breaker.

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 on the western edge of Chesapeake Bay. Counts 11-17 were on the Piedmont, and 18-34 were from the Blue Ridge westward. Abbreviated details on each count are given at the end of this summary. The initial tabulation of these counts was again prepared by Walter P. Smith.

Loons were fairly normal near the coast, but Commons were also found at Lynchburg and on five mountain and valley counts. Unusual was a Red-necked Grebe at Warren, present at this Piedmont locality since late November. A White Pelican at Back Bay was only a second record of this species for a

TABLE 1 (following 8 pages). *The 1979-80 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The underlined figures indicate an unusual species or an unusual number of individuals for that particular count.*

	1. Chinocheague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Chancellorsville	12. Gordonsville	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Darlington Heights
Date	12/29	12/30	12/26	12/28	12/15	12/30	12/16	12/15	12/18	12/22	12/16	12/16	12/23	12/30	12/19
Common Loon	192	75	9	248	7	59	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red-throated Loon	44	52	13	164	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red-necked Grebe	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Horned Grebe	121	141	17	10	389	134	19	1	4	2	...	...	...	...	...
Pied-billed Grebe	44	72	71	47	51	9	28	5	4	6	20	1	10	4	...
White Pelican	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gannet	19	16	1250	665	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Cormorant	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Double-crested Cormorant	9	40	743	111	88	78	22	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Blue Heron	104	141	84	70	40	45	44	55	53	54	7	3	5	5	1
Green Heron	3	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Little Blue Heron	10	12	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cattle Egret	...	...	...	23	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Egret	96	31	17	72	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snowy Egret	30	7	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Louisiana Heron	20	26	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-crowned Night Heron	48	72	26	140	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Bittern	4	6	...	11	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Glossy Ibis	...	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hute Swan	41	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Whistling Swan	441	295	7	3960	3	464	98	...	84	...	4	...	...	...	...
Canada Goose	3345	3374	15	1132	25	168	3244	9483	900	748	...	2849	467	491	...
Brant	4751	2154	612	43	325	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose	21,128	364	15	14,000	...	...	6	40	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose (blue form)	15	2	...	3	...	...	...	200	...	...	...	3	...	...	...
Mallard	1159	643	666	1500	326	289	883	4363	225	1921	258	89	319	336	...
Black Duck	3754	1179	127	1990	22	36	262	366	415	1018	16	2	43	4	...
Gadwall	157	101	4	8760	49	...	9	20	...	...	...	8	...	...	...
Pintail	2256	130	...	4230	...	8	856	217	2	13	1	...	...	3	...
Green-winged Teal	1624	61	20	716	9	...	10	27	...	47	...	...	...	4	...
Blue-winged Teal	1	1	...	1	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
American Wigeon	269	533	192	6100	974	25	67	77	...	...	1	...	14	7	...
Northern Shoveler	762	21	23	101	5	...	1	...	...	21	...	...	...	...	...
Wood Duck	4	10	10	4	...	2	2	409	1	1	1	...	2	5	...
Redhead	...	7	...	762	25	49	3	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...
Ring-necked Duck	7	63	8	...	42	...	121	...	...	143	6	84	20	12	...
Canvasback	2	3	168	3	250	177	412	...	...	498	2	...	...	3	...
Greater Scaup	5	25	9	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Scaup	...	49	5	200	222	12	5	2	80	270	3	3	9	1	...
Scaup sp.	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Goldeneye	95	325	62	16	435	261	87	1	30	30	1	1	...	...	...
Bufflehead	489	3037	123	4	1226	1130	75	5	12	144	53	15	1	2	...
Oldsquaw	533	322	84	69	650	363	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Eider	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White-winged Scoter	41	48	21	27	17	22	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Surf Scoter	967	7669	150	888	139	1471	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black Scoter	274	747	96	308	39	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruddy Duck	73	14	70	81	466	1016	866	10	82	103	95	...	1	2	...
Hooded Merganser	238	150	290	32	14	5	76	63	32	48	...	17	5	6	3
Common Merganser	1	...	...	...	...	...	5	34	120	1016	...	...	...	...	...
Red-breasted Merganser	165	421	16	39	20	64	12	...	...	10	...	...	...	...	...
Turkey Vulture	208	268	...	30	7	26	78	31	17	1	43	55	91	152	68
Black Vulture	4	29	...	40	...	15	136	13	11	...	7	26	29	49	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	16	21	4	10	7	7	6	11	...	8	...	1	4	4	1
Cooper's Hawk	1	2	1	2	...	1	...	3	2	1	1	...	...	3	...
Accipiter sp.	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Red-tailed Hawk	37	43	26	33	20	9	32	41	14	30	2	15	28	32	17
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	8	2	10	1	5	1	9	16	10	6	1	3	3	1
Rough-legged Hawk	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

16. Sweet Briar	17. Lynchburg	18. No. Shenandoah Valley	19. Shenandoah Park	20. Big Flat Mtn.	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.
12/22	12/15	12/15	12/16	12/27	12/15	12/29	12/15	12/22	12/18	12/16	12/16	12/15	12/15	12/15	12/31	12/29	12/29	12/22
...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	2	...	1
...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
1	8	16	2	...	...	...	3	2	1	...	2	17	5	2	...	20	...	3
...
...
2	4	53	8	...	...	7	5	9	...	...	4	7	11	4	4	14	8	...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...
...	...	3	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
...	...	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	11	780	225	1	108	95	61	73	...	...	130	100	546	33	78	130	31	2
...	14	173	41	...	2	...	...	24	...	...	4	160	176	6	31	...	5	1
...	...	7	...	...	11	10	...	7	...	...	3	12	27	7	11	...	...	...
...	...	7	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	7	...	...	9	1	1	...	...	...	9	...	...	...	8	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	1	3	...	...	142	2	...	...	...	...	...	3	32	...	2	1	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	3	9	2	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	2	23	3	...	...	2	...	...
...	13	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	1	...	...
...	22	1	...	...	17	...	...	1	...	...	49	1	8	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	8	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	8	2	...	1	...	...	...	...
...
...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	4	...	65	...	...	13	...	...
...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	...
...	...	3	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	21	62	...	...	17	1	...
...
...
...
...	3	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	2	...	3	3	...	...	...	1
...	12	8	...	10	...	...	...	5	...	...	48	18	15	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	73	1322	153	4	842	161	42	16	...	...	10	64	214	6	48	20	4	...
...	16	679	5	...	28	65	6	55	...	...	13	3	347	10	11	85	18	...
1	6	14	6	...	...	4	2	2	1	...	...	8	1	2	1	1	...	...
...	1	6	1	...	2	...	1	1	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	1	2	...
4	37	77	27	2	33	44	22	17	6	3	22	7	11	16	15	5	2	2
...	1	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	...	1	...	...	...	1
...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...

	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. Chancellorville	12. Gordonsville	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Darlington Heights
Date	12/29	12/30	12/26	12/28	12/15	12/30	12/16	12/15	12/18	12/22	12/16	12/16	12/23	12/30	12/19
Barn Owl	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Screech Owl	10	49	5	7	14	10	15	7	...	2	5	2	2	1	2
Great Horned Owl	5	38	1	1	11	7	7	7	...	3	1	3	...	3	...
Barred Owl	...	1	...	3	...	3	7	7	1	3	...	2	...	1	...
Long-eared Owl	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-eared Owl	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saw-whet Owl	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Owl sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belted Kingfisher	42	36	32	16	27	51	40	26	6	24	4	6	13	14	6
Common Flicker	155	353	109	125	152	102	162	160	66	251	18	41	81	58	21
Pileated Woodpecker	1	3	11	9	8	5	42	16	28	47	17	15	30	20	8
Red-bellied Woodpecker	27	51	30	29	26	40	71	94	51	148	19	38	82	71	19
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	1	1	...	1	...	3	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	...	8	2	6	5	6	13	27	6	14	...	7	11	14	2
Hairy Woodpecker	4	4	2	3	12	2	11	5	11	67	5	9	11	10	2
Downy Woodpecker	24	43	32	39	28	54	83	72	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Western Kingbird	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ash-throated Flycatcher	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern Phoebe	2	5	...	1	1	1	2	...	...	1	...	1	2	1	4
Horned Lark	96	34	9	...	...	2	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	53	...
Tree Swallow	...	...	...	22	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Jay	29	71	80	48	22	53	87	105	100	399	132	128	325	314	131
Common Raven	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...
Common Crow	127	483	353	267	300	674	375	325	200	1918	620	182	738	845	173
Fish Crow	5	6	64	16	107	86	63	1	12	165	8	1	...	3	...
Crow sp.	...	...	...	...	600	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-capped Chickadee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	...	...
Carolina Chickadee	69	410	120	174	136	159	225	242	131	1127	135	56	248	209	75
Chickadee sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tufted Titmouse	31	125	71	67	78	166	174	104	80	751	37	36	119	92	26
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	2	7	17	4	4	37	22	12	114	17	14	44	22	6
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	...	4	...	...	1	5	...	1	2	1	1	3	2	...
Brown-headed Nuthatch	47	8	16	21	...	10	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Creeper	20	39	13	11	10	22	25	26	3	76	22	4	9	13	9
House Wren	5	30	2	5	1	1	9	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...
Winter Wren	4	40	5	9	2	8	10	10	1	16	3	4	6	6	2
Carolina Wren	44	290	40	95	65	136	102	136	45	154	17	27	117	87	26
Long-billed Marsh Wren	10	37	3	8	12	8	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Marsh Wren	8	50	...	10	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mockingbird	35	93	77	51	154	122	97	99	56	203	58	49	180	111	35
Gray Catbird	7	32	3	31	1	19	6	3	...	3	1	...	...	...	...
Brown Thrasher	5	8	14	15	6	15	6	13	1	44	3	...	1	2	...
American Robin	304	1504	843	909	17	347	7	41	10	44	1	113	62	40	8
Hermit Thrush	15	65	2	19	3	14	3	15	12	26	1	5	7	10	7
Eastern Bluebird	37	7	...	5	9	247	66	29	43	18	26	74	133	89	65
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Golden-crowned Kinglet	42	143	12	214	6	27	91	35	14	147	23	15	21	28	43
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	12	67	28	82	11	24	66	60	7	28	16	6	22	7	8
Water Pipit	...	171	...	451	...	20	...	21	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
Cedar Waxwing	3	88	172	35	16	58	70	43	16	75	28	177	341	192	17
Loggerhead Shrike	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	3	2	11	4
Starling	1659	6153	5755	1840	2956	1856	1093	1792	2800	1898	607	1036	5331	855	253
Black-and-white Warbler	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	7	3	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nashville Warbler	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-rumped Warbler	6452	5968	1123	3500	1739	2069	1487	567	32	168	29	42	126	74	23
Yellow-throated Warbler	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fine Warbler	6	52	16	10	4	25	20	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Palm Warbler	8	348	1	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Yellowthroat	5	7	1	10	...	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...

	16. Sweet Briar	17. Lynchburg	18. No. Shenandoah Valley	19. Shenandoah Park	20. Big Flat Mtn.	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.
	12/22	12/15	12/15	12/16	12/27	12/15	12/29	12/15	12/22	12/18	12/16	12/16	12/15	12/15	12/15	12/31	12/29	12/29	12/22
...	...	...	3	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	1	...
...	3	34	28	14	...	...	12	5	11	2	2	37	19	5	13	4	3	1	5
...	1	9	8	6	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	5	4	...	1	2	4	...	2
...	...	1	6	7	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	5	1	5	...	...	...	6
...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	3	18	65	23	1	16	12	18	24	...	1	12	31	17	7	19	6	3	7
...	24	40	71	44	1	11	16	16	26	9	13	61	88	27	3	13	10	25	14
...	16	37	46	27	5	4	11	5	19	18	9	21	30	8	6	4	11	7	20
...	21	61	100	25	3	11	35	28	53	9	9	36	31	26	7	7	9	10	4
...	...	...	3	3	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	1	...	4	...
...	10	23	15	5	2	1	5	8	7	7	...	10	15	4	1	4	1	4	1
...	3	10	42	7	5	1	5	6	4	13	5	7	9	8	4	5	1	5	4
...	28	95	190	101	14	39	75	73	102	47	29	71	63	83	54	55	29	15	51
...
...	1	11	3	1	...	...	1	1	4	1	1	3	1	4	1	7	2	4	...
...	...	13	348	36	...	...	107	97	9	...	...	58	2	65	1	...	...	...	...
...	158	354	532	286	1	108	253	281	430	17	126	435	280	156	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	8	8	114	5	5	3	4	7	2	23	10	12	3	29	194	286	103	241
...	97	847	2446	1451	10	398	106	2700	1567	50	410	1380	547	836	194	339	245	345	346
...	...	...	7	5	...	7	160	1480	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...	...	...	9	15	...	16	...	...	31	3	10	21	11	7	5	...	...	...	10
...	56	409	686	330	70	140	243	105	219	96	184	233	564	287	170	135	94	72	237
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	87	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	42	259	388	162	10	76	133	75	160	40	64	114	179	177	112	80	37	153	153
...	15	60	218	70	14	29	56	37	48	23	24	52	67	75	62	50	15	30	60
...	...	13	4	...	...	...	1	...	8	2	10	6	4	...	1	...	...	5	1
...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	3	25	57	13	5	2	11	2	6	9	15	19	36	9	5	7	8	4	7
...	...	3	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	3	13	4	2	4	2	5	1	8	6	6	1	9	3	1	2	2	4	1
...	20	137	49	51	1	15	38	18	101	20	10	62	86	67	61	27	14	17	54
...
...	20	116	188	111	1	39	150	92	88	2	15	121	182	81	7	62	43	44	9
...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	5	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
...	3	3	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	3	1	3	6
...	...	27	113	20	5	3	76	126	218	117	15	65	10	8	3	...	6	49	210
...	4	18	2	4	...	...	...	5	11	15	20	7	11	1	3	2	6	...	10
...	15	254	164	88	4	44	61	67	158	42	36	98	37	69	52	54	42	117	112
...
...	...	174	18	47	22	5	6	3	51	22	8	66	45	22	5	9	4	31	26
...	6	32	7	16	2	5	8	5	15	2	14	8	36	2	...	4	1	4	2
...	...	105	...	...	...	...	12	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	98	140	295	132	...	...	130	74	321	44	60	416	34	310	...	37	255	321	37
...	...	4	14	1	...	4	2	14	8	...	1	8	4	...	3	3	3	5	4
...	291	4565	768,000	3821	...	8422	35,347	11,000	3417	...	241	2059	2630	1839	2476	4239	1859	2550	1156
...
...
...
...	58	139	138	80	1	7	227	53	294	...	8	83	30	69	...	6	28	148	18
...
...	...	21	5	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

	1. Chincoteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Port Belvoir	11. Chancellorsville	12. Gordonsville	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Darlington Heights
Date	12/29	12/30	12/26	12/28	12/15	12/30	12/16	12/15	12/18	12/22	12/16	12/16	12/23	12/30	12/19
Yellow-breasted Chat	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Redstart	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
House Sparrow	155	132	170	76	487	177	266	100	110	461	140	33	77	37	85
Eastern Meadowlark	235	417	50	390	102	399	130	215	2	3	6	69	8	395	91
Red-winged Blackbird	1247	3094	1920	3060	1499	1213	3269	1237	440	1096	14	1049	553	234	330
Northern Oriole	...	...	...	...	10	1	13	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rusty Blackbird	...	11	5	7	1	16	37	4	2	17	28	...	...	1	6
Brewer's Blackbird	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	672	1469	100	225	39	47	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	104	807	3505	825	20	26	86	94	1	13	78	70	...	...	...
Brown-headed Cowbird	24	381	169	207	919	123	210	101	...	79	19	...	17	...	7
Blackbird sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	139	344	99	99	159	241	260	289	210	647	136	96	385	377	73
Evening Grosbeak	...	17	...	2	1	6	16	69	...	...	2	...	...	...	12
Purple Finch	3	15	12	20	8	25	12	17	20	20	8	8	45	13	5
House Finch	49	24	190	...	15	1	3	71	86	19	7	235	76	85	14
Pine Siskin	...	...	1	...	4	12	...	...	...	3	4	...	1	...	...
American Goldfinch	31	191	6	76	70	202	162	152	90	500	68	29	190	166	98
Red Crossbill	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Aufous-sided Towhee	28	88	21	69	44	77	50	54	6	23	1	2	7	20	5
Savannah Sparrow	106	513	25	169	52	34	36	47	1	3	2	...	7	6	13
Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow	12	20	...	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Le Conte's Sparrow	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	12	61	16	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	3	12	8	4	...	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	6	64	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Lark Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dark-eyed Junco	88	61	150	267	131	533	374	694	560	1777	477	286	803	821	234
Tree Sparrow	1	1	...	...	3	...	1	...	3	12	7	...	3	...	...
Chipping Sparrow	1	35	4	17	35	10	18	5	1	...	1	...	1	...	2
Field Sparrow	67	316	83	62	77	176	211	150	210	358	33	27	126	152	88
White-crowned Sparrow	2	6	...	21	8	...	...	10	2	...	5	27	16	60	8
White-throated Sparrow	1102	3368	437	758	360	687	954	1860	650	1516	307	295	933	1079	203
Fox Sparrow	9	14	6	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	1	...	2	1	...
Lincoln's Sparrow	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	100	395	18	203	27	29	119	92	10	99	2	4	8	35	5
Song Sparrow	421	1744	116	162	291	312	513	366	110	660	108	73	272	471	64
Lapland Longspur	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Bunting	22	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	155	168	134	142	174	119	110	103	86	99	86	73	76	87	64
Total Individuals	74,013	80,508	59,350	77,803	27,171	20,095	20,636	28,833	9509	27,910	4444	7900	13,446	9147	3038
Total Party-hours	188	242	108	114	68	120	86	83	75	216	43	45	99	95	27
Number of Observers	46	53	29	34	37	53	31	23	13	57	12	13	19	17	8

	16. Sweet Briar	17. Lynchburg	18. No. Shenandoah Valley	19. Shenandoah Park	20. Big Flat Mtn.	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.
	12/22	12/15	12/15	12/16	12/27	12/15	12/29	12/15	12/22	12/18	12/16	12/16	12/15	12/15	12/15	12/31	12/29	12/29	12/22
...
...	141	135	1520	661	...	878	950	450	224	...	229	208	189	377	469	583	115	95	248
...	20	108	164	75	...	67	61	79	50	...	2	113	50	117	32	35	39	48	47
...	3	7	165	98	...	10	69	7000	4	...	1	3	12	226	18	...	414	5	25
...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	1	...	19	13	...	4	13	4	...	...	...	3	...	7	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	22	49	...	...	24	6213	300,000	3	...	4	2	...	...	8	55	1601	32	30
...	...	58	351	...	...	150	113	1400	4	...	...	1	1	450	6	...	...	48	...
...	125	279	645	341	12	132	318	174	406	32	124	313	547	310	181	132	82	93	191
...	...	...	36	19	1	4	...	14	1	1	15	8	5	...	4	...	...	7	...
...	17	107	146	41	3	10	87	33	202	6	4	119	42	41	2	1	31	234	1
...	9	214	596	62	...	157	271	187	181	...	90	169	358	138	67	1	18	...	...
...	...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	...
...	34	178	335	408	6	33	162	54	162	25	46	154	281	170	64	147	40	231	52
...	8	32	3	5	1	2	1	5	15	2	3	15	11	18	20	12	11	6	23
...	1	7	1	1	...	...	3	12	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
...
...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	169	825	1903	1423	192	297	739	274	1158	325	215	812	639	546	152	116	83	375	264
...	...	...	26	5	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...
...	7	128	301	150	...	20	136	83	86	23	25	143	96	164	74	40	44	60	205
...	8	11	326	136	...	67	66	144	38	...	6	182	33	69	1	53	4	147	4
...	617	1173	1634	637	79	365	433	197	1008	35	151	892	766	634	102	171	117	138	200
...	1	7	2	...	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	3	14	...	5	1	...	19	1
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
...	...	11	10	2	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	4	3	3	4	3	10	3	8
...	24	185	247	81	2	44	91	91	217	39	37	235	389	281	294	171	57	58	267
...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	53	89	110	82	38	64	75	77	79	41	58	83	86	76	75	65	69	65	63
Total Individuals	2277	12,899	788,762	12,782	516	13,798	79,946	327,257	12,250	1127	2518	10,007	11,069	10,170	5244	7811	6266	6179	4513
Total Party-hours	22	123	244	130	20	51	103	73	76	39	34	98	172	121	81	57	41	29	94
Number of Observers	11	44	77	51	2	21	33	20	27	9	16	28	48	41	26	16	10	6	18

Virginia Christmas count, the first being at Chincoteague in 1971. Little Creek reported the only Great Cormorant, whereas for the second year both Hopewell and Brooke had single Double-crested Cormorants, a rare bird in winter on the western Coastal Plain. Coastal heron and ibis counts were probably about normal, interesting but not record counts including 29 Cattle Egrets at Back Bay and 11 Glossy Ibis at Cape Charles. For really superlative winter counts of herons, see the 1975 Christmas counts (*Raven*, 47: 3-23, 1976). Inland records of interest this year included a Green Heron and a Black-crowned Night Heron at Northern Shenandoah Valley and an American Bittern at Fort Belvoir.

Some of the inland counts had good numbers of waterfowl, undoubtedly helped by a lack of ice. Some of the best counts came from Fort Belvoir, Rockingham County, and Blacksburg. Among the more interesting of these inland reports were a Mute Swan at Gordonsville; Whistling Swans at Chancellorsville, Northern Shenandoah, Waynesboro, and Blacksburg; Snow Geese (white or blue form) at Fort Belvoir, Gordonsville, and Northern Shenandoah; 3 White-winged Scoters and 95 Ruddy Ducks at Chancellorsville; and 1016 Common Mergansers at Fort Belvoir. Single Common Eiders were found on three southeastern counts, including Newport News. Although Hooded Mergansers were down a bit from the 1978-79 season, they were still recorded on 21 counts, and the 48 at Fincastle was an excellent number. Northern Shenandoah's 1322 Turkey Vultures was probably an all-time state record for this species, and other good vulture numbers came from Rockingham and Blacksburg. Sharp-shinned Hawks remained at rather high levels with only seven counts *not* reporting them. Ever since the 1974-75 Christmas count season Red-tails have been in high numbers, but this year they outdid themselves. Three of the mountain and valley counts had Red-tail totals higher than the top winter one listed in the "Red Book" (*Virginia Avifauna* No. 2, 1979), with a peak of 77 being listed by Northern Shenandoah. Other good totals included 43 at Cape Charles, 41 at Hopewell, and 37 at Lynchburg. Rough-legged Hawks were found only at Chincoteague, Northern Shenandoah, and Tazewell, that last location also being the only one reporting Golden Eagles—3 of them. A Peregrine Falcon at Brooke and a Merlin at Shenandoah Park were unusual inland.

There were few surprises in the shorebirds. Two Piping Plover were unusual at Newport News, an American Golden Plover at Chincoteague was only the second state Christmas count report, the first being in the same place in 1965, and a Spotted Sandpiper was reported at Little Creek. The large wintering flock of Marbled Godwits at Cape Charles was totally missed this year, and the Least Sandpiper was almost blanked, the only record being 2 at Cape Charles. There seems to have been a definite decrease in these birds wintering on the coast in recent years. Unprecedented far inland were a Lesser Yellowlegs at Northern Shenandoah and a Pectoral Sandpiper and a Dunlin at Augusta County. Jaegers were represented by a Pomarine and 4 Parasitics at Little Creek and a Parasitic at Back Bay, and a Thayer's Gull reported at Fort Belvoir was a first record for a Virginia Christmas count. Other species of interest were 25 Laughing Gulls at Hopewell, a Bonaparte's Gull at Charlottesville, and 4 Common Terns at Little Creek.

The Fort Belvoir and Northern Shenandoah counts produced some record numbers of Pileated, Hairy, and Downy Woodpeckers, and the 42 Pileateds

at Williamsburg and 37 at Lynchburg were also impressive. A Western Kingbird at Hopewell was confirmed by other observers the following day, and an Ash-throated Flycatcher at Cape Charles, a third state count record, was photographed the next day.

For the past few years these Christmas count summaries have followed the fluctuations in populations of some supposedly semihardy birds. This year the Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Phoebe, and Hermit Thrush were essentially stable in comparison with 1978-79, whereas the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker declined from 306 to 244, or from 9.7 to 7.6 birds per 100 party-hours. Both Winter and Carolina Wrens showed marked recoveries in numbers, the Winter Wren increasing from 155 to 203 (4.9 to 6.3 per 100 party-hours) and the Carolina from 1552 to 2229 (49 to 69 per 100 party-hours). The Mockingbird also reversed its decline noted last year with 2791 recorded versus 1824 last year, an increase from 58 to 87 birds per 100 party-hours.

If anything, this was a bluebird winter. The population of Eastern Bluebirds surged from 1457 last year to 2462 this year, a jump from 46 to 76 birds per 100 party-hours, or a rise of 65%. This was the best showing for this species since the late 1950's, after which the species hit rock bottom in the 1961-62 season with only 8 birds per 100 party-hours (*Raven*, 34: 7-16, 1963; *ibid.*, 48: 75-76, 1977). The 347 totaled at Mathews may be a record count for Virginia. The kinglets were a study in contrasts. Populations of both species hit their lows in the 1977-78 season (*Raven*, 49: 19-32, 1978), and both recovered substantially the following year (*ibid.*, 50: 19-33, 1979). This year the Golden-crowned Kinglet continued its recovery, going from 1090 last year to 1425 this year, or from 34 to 44 per 100 party-hours. To confuse things, no doubt, the Ruby-crown took a contrary course, declining to 611 from 1282 last year, a drop to 19 from 40 per 100 party-hours. In terms of percentages, this was an increase of 29% for the Golden-crown and a decrease of 53% for the Ruby-crown. There are obviously some unknown factors involved in these fluctuations.

There were 252 Common Ravens recorded on 19 different counts, four of these on the upper Piedmont, and Waynesboro reported a record 1480 Fish Crows. This wintering population of Fish Crows west of the Blue Ridge has been known for years, but where they go to nest—and the migration routes they use—remain an enigma. Black-capped Chickadees experienced another flight year in the mountain and valley area, with particularly good numbers at Lexington, Fincastle, Roanoke, and even Wise County. There were probably more that were misidentified as Carolina Chickadees; note that Lexington was the only count that was honest enough to list unidentified chickadees. It's difficult to believe that every other chickadee recorded on a Virginia Christmas count (where both species occur) was accurately identified to species! With 216 and 244 total party-hours, respectively, Fort Belvoir and Northern Shenandoah came up with record counts of Carolina Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, and White-breasted Nuthatches, and Northern Shenandoah also totaled a remarkable 57 Brown Creepers and Fort Belvoir 203 Mockingbirds. Other unusual counts included 6 Brown-headed Nuthatches at Lynchburg and 50 Short-billed Marsh Wrens at Cape Charles. With 102 Loggerhead Shrikes recorded this year on 23 counts, can this species finally have turned the corner and be on the increase again? Only time can tell, of course, but at least it looks good for

this year as the 8-year history in Table 2 shows. Table 1 clearly shows that this species is currently partial to the Piedmont and Valley areas since only 3 of the 102 birds were recorded on the Coastal Plain.

TABLE 2. *Virginia Christmas count totals for Loggerhead Shrikes and House Finches for the past eight years. The figures in parentheses are the totals per 100 party-hours.*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Party-hours</i>	<i>Loggerhead Shrike</i>	<i>House Finch</i>
1972	1606	74(4.6)	185(12)
1973	2020	108(5.3)	598(30)
1974	2514	163(6.5)	297(12)
1975	2657	120(4.5)	291(11)
1976	2663	108(4.1)	943(35)
1977	3026	73(2.4)	1481(49)
1978	3168	54(1.7)	2435(77)
1979	3222	102(3.2)	3393(105)

Black-and-white Warblers now seem to be an annual event in winter, and this year they were found on four counts, including Lynchburg. The 10 Orange-crowned Warblers at Back Bay equaled the record state count of this species, and single Nashville Warblers were noted well at Cape Charles and Little Creek. The Yellow-throated Warbler at Warren was another first for a Virginia Christmas count, and the American Redstart at Fort Belvoir was only the second count record. Curiously, the first count redstart was also seen at Fort Belvoir in 1978. Other interesting warblers included 21 Pines at Lynchburg, a Palm at Wise County, and a Common Yellowthroat far inland at Shenandoah Park. A Brewer's Blackbird at Northern Shenandoah was the only report of this species. Helped along by a record 596 totaled at Northern Shenandoah, House Finches surged to 3393 this year, easily surpassing the Purple Finch total of 1358. The remarkable increase in this species is detailed in Table 2 for the past 8 years. Finally, there was a Le Conte's Sparrow at Little Creek, a Lark Sparrow at Waynesboro, and a Snow Bunting well inland at Roanoke. These were the third time on a state count for the Le Conte's and the fourth for the Lark Sparrow.

1. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 2 miles N of center of Chincoteague. Dec. 29. Forty-six observers in 24 parties. Total party-hours, 188 (162 on foot, 20.5 by car, 5.5 by boat) plus 5 hours owling; total party-miles, 494 (143 on foot, 331 by car, 20 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.
2. CAPE CHARLES. Center 1.5 miles SE of Capeville P.O. Dec. 30. Fifty-three observers in 31 parties. Total party-hours, 242 (209 on foot, 28 by car, 5 by boat) plus 10 hours owling; total party-miles, 500 (180 on foot, 300 by car, 20 by boat). Compiler: Henry Armistead.
3. LITTLE CREEK. Center 3.8 miles NE of Kempsville in Virginia Beach. Dec. 26. Twenty-nine observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 108 (90 on foot, 18 by car) plus 1 hour owling; total party-miles, 466 (55 on foot, 411 by car). Compiler: Paul Sykes, Jr.
4. BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 1.5 miles E of Back Bay. Dec. 28. Thirty-four observers in 12 parties. Total party-hours, 114 (92 on foot, 16 by car, 6 by boat) plus 4 hours owling; total party-miles, 386 (76 on foot, 299 by car, 11 by boat). Compiler: Paul Sykes, Jr.
5. NEWPORT NEWS. Center SW corner of Langley Air Force Base. Dec. 15. Thirty-seven observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 68 (47 on foot, 21 by car); total party-miles, 270 (40 on foot, 230 by car). Compiler: W. P. Smith.
6. MATHEWS. Center 0.5 mile E of Beaverlette P.O. Dec. 30. Fifty-three observers in 14 parties. Total party-hours, 120 (78.75 on foot, 37 by car, 4.25 by boat) plus 6 hours owling; total party-miles, 443 (61 on foot, 354 by car, 28 by boat). Compiler: Mary Pulley.
7. WILLIAMSBURG. Center Colonial Williamsburg Information Center. Dec. 16. Thirty-one observers, 30 in 11 parties, 1 at feeder. Total party-hours, 86 (62 on foot, 24 by car) plus 1 hour at feeder, 4 owling; total party-miles, 365 (59 on foot, 306 by car). Compiler: Bill Williams.
8. HOPEWELL. Center Curles Neck. Dec. 15. Twenty-three observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 88 (70 on foot, 10.5 by car, 7.5 by boat) plus 6 hours owling; total party-miles, 333 (56 on foot, 262 by car, 15 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.
9. BROOKE. Center 3 miles ESE of Brooke. Dec. 18. Thirteen observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 75 (68 on foot, 7 by car) plus 1 hour owling; total party-miles, 125 (41 on foot, 84 by car). Compiler: E. T. McKnight.
10. FORT BELVOIR. Center Pohick Church. Dec. 22. Fifty-seven observers, 56 in 35 parties, 1 at feeder. Total party-hours, 216 (188 on foot, 22 by car, 6 by boat) plus 6 hours at feeder, 2 owling; total party-miles, 414 (166 on foot, 242 by car, 6 by boat). Compiler: Jackson Abbott.
11. CHANCELLORSVILLE. Center junction Sickles Drive and McClaws Drive. Dec. 16. Twelve observers, 11 in 9 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 43 (22 on foot, 19 by car, 2 by canoe) plus 2.5 hours at feeders, 8.5 owling; total party-miles, 410 (34 on foot, 373 by car, 3 by canoe). Compiler: Sam Cooper.
12. GORDONSVILLE. Center junction rts. 15 and 33. Dec. 16. Thirteen observers, 12 in 5 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 45 (27.25 on foot, 17.75 by car) plus 4 hours at feeders, 2 owling; total party-miles, 240 (29 on foot, 211 by car). Compiler: Helen Goldstick.
13. CHARLOTTESVILLE. Center near Ivy. Dec. 23. Nineteen observers in 12 parties. Total party-hours, 99 (84 on foot, 15 by car) plus 5 hours owling; total party-miles, 325 (101 on foot, 224 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.
14. WARREN. Center near Keene. Dec. 30. Seventeen observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 95 (82 on foot, 13 by car) plus 4 hours owling; total party-miles, 217 (85 on foot, 132 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

15. DARLINGTON HEIGHTS. Center Darlington Heights P.O. Dec. 19. Eight observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 27 (19 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 159 (13 on foot, 146 by car). Compiler: Vera Copple.

16. SWEET BRIAR. Center Sweet Briar College campus. Dec. 22. Eleven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 22 (on foot); total party-miles, 16 (13 on foot, 3 by car). Compiler: Gertrude Prior.

17. LYNCHBURG. Center Lynchburg College. Dec. 15. Forty-four observers, 41 in 16 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 123 (85 on foot, 38 by car) plus 9 hours at feeders, 8 owling; total party-miles, 522 (61 on foot, 461 by car). Compiler: Myriam Moore.

18. NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY. Center junction Crooked Run and rt. 606. Dec. 15. Seventy-seven observers in 25 parties. Total party-hours, 244 (106 on foot, 122 by car, 16 by canoe) plus 11 hours owling; total party-miles, 1500 (114 on foot, 1356 by car, 30 by canoe). Compiler: Rob Simpson.

19. SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK-LURAY. Center Hershberger Hill. Dec. 16. Fifty-one observers, 47 in 18 parties, 4 at feeders. Total party-hours, 130 (81 on foot, 43 by car, 6 by canoe) plus 7 hours at feeders, 3 owling; total party-miles, 516 (71 on foot, 436 by car, 9 by canoe). Compiler: Dennis Carter.

20. BIG FLAT MOUNTAIN. Center Pasture Fence Mountain. Dec. 27. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 20 (19 on foot, 1 by car) plus 1 hour owling; total party-miles, 52 (37 on foot, 15 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

21. ROCKINGHAM COUNTY. Center Ottobine. Dec. 15. Twenty-one observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 51 (18 on foot, 33 by car); total party-miles, 341 (24 on foot, 317 by car). Compiler: Max Carpenter.

22. AUGUSTA COUNTY. Center junction rts. 780 and 781. Dec. 29. Thirty-three observers, 30-32 in 13 parties, 1-3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 103 (68 on foot, 35 by car) plus 9.5 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 434 (65 on foot, 369 by car). Compiler: John Mehner.

23. WAYNESBORO. Center Sherando. Dec. 15. Twenty observers, 17 in 9 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 73 (43.5 on foot, 29.5 by car) plus 8 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 367 (41 on foot, 326 by car). Compiler: Ruth Snyder.

24. LEXINGTON. Center Big Spring Pond. Dec. 22. Twenty-seven observers, 26 in 14 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 76 (43 on foot, 33 by car) plus 2 hours at feeders, 5 owling; total party-miles, 432 (45 on foot, 387 by car). Compilers: Bob Paxton and George Tolley.

25. PEAKS OF OTTER. Center Peaks of Otter Visitor Center. Dec. 18. Nine observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 39 (23 on foot, 16 by car); total party-miles, 65 (37 on foot, 28 by car). Compiler: Almon English.

26. CLIFTON FORGE. Center junction rts. 42 and 60. Dec. 16. Sixteen observers, 13 in 7 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 34 (28 on foot, 6 by car) plus 4 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 177 (20 on foot, 157 by car). Compiler: Allen LeHew. A dead American Bittern and a Yellow Warbler with no details were omitted from the count. There were also no details for the House Wrens and Gray Catbirds.

27. FINCASTLE. Center near junction rts. 220 and 679. Dec. 16. Twenty-eight observers, 26 in 15 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 98 (66 on foot, 32 by car) plus 7 hours at feeders, 8 owling; total party-miles, 353 (49 on foot, 304 by car). Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

28. ROANOKE. Center junction Oakland Blvd. and Williamson Rd. Dec. 15. Forty-eight observers in 22 parties. Total party-hours, 172 (103 on foot, 59 by car, 10 by canoe) plus 8 hours owling; total party-miles, 623 (110 on foot, 503 by car, 10 by canoe). Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

29. BLACKSBURG. Center near Linkous Store. Dec. 15. Forty-one observers, 40 in 17 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 121 (80.5 on foot, 36 by car, 4.5 by canoe) plus 4 at feeders; total party-miles, 348 (78 on foot, 262 by car, 8 by canoe). Compiler: Brian Murphy.

30. TAZEWEEL. Center Fourway. Dec. 15. Twenty-six observers, 25 in 9 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 81 (32 on foot, 49 by car) plus 8 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 406 (37 on foot, 369 by car). Compiler: Sarah Cromer.

31. GLADE SPRING. Center junction rts. 750 and 609. Dec. 31. Sixteen observers, 15 in 6 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 57 (20.5 on foot, 36.5 by car) plus 3 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 432 (27 on foot, 405 by car). Compiler: Charles Byrd. Worm-eating Warbler with poor details omitted from list.

32. BRISTOL. Center junction rts. 647 and 654. Dec. 29. Ten observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 41 (16 on foot, 23 by car, 2 by boat); total party-miles, 319 (11 on foot, 288 by car, 20 by boat). Compiler: Rockwell Bingham.

33. NICKELSVILLE. Center Nickelsville. Dec. 29. Six observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 29 (7 on foot, 22 by car); total party-miles, 188 (8 on foot, 180 by car). Compiler: Eugene Scott.

34. WISE COUNTY. Center Dorchester. Dec. 22. Eighteen observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 94 (66 on foot, 28 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 401 (59 on foot, 342 by car). Compiler: Richard Peake.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

IN MEMORIAM: ALEXANDER WETMORE

A worthy tribute to Alexander Wetmore might well fill several issues of *The Raven*. His contributions to the Virginia Society of Ornithology have been notable. Perhaps most important was his extensive and inspiring association with J. J. Murray, Sr., a founder and long-time editor of *The Raven*.

Wetmore and Murray camped and birded together over many of the ornithologically lesser-known areas of Virginia. Among the most important excursions were the camping-birding-collecting trips to Mount Rogers in 1937, Highland County in 1938, Burkes Garden in 1940, and Fairy Stone State Park in 1941. The two men and their families remained close friends throughout the years.

Dr. Murray, in his *Check-list of the Birds of Virginia* (Virginia Society of Ornithology, 1952) stated: "Special thanks are due to Dr. Alexander Wetmore for his continued kindness in identifying specimens through the years for many Virginia workers and for checking the names in the annotated list"; also, "The author has drawn very heavily upon the observations of... Alexander Wetmore." Dr. Murray further noted: "Special mention should be made of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, who has a particular interest in Virginia birds and who has provided us with a comprehensive study of the Shenandoah National Park area in *The List of Birds of the Shenandoah National Park*, Third Revision (Shenandoah National Park, Luray, Virginia, September 1950). In spite of heavy administration duties he rarely misses a meeting of the Virginia Society, and always finds time to help Virginia workers." This demonstrates that many of us remember about Dr. Wetmore. He was a member of the VSO for many

years and attended meetings and field trips whenever his official duties permitted. No question or comment was ever so trivial that it did not receive his undivided and serious consideration.

Dr. Wetmore was elected to two consecutive terms on the VSO Executive Committee (now the Board of Directors), 1960-63 and 1963-66, and was a founder of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the VSO a quarter of a century ago. He was active in the chapter, giving programs at his home and elsewhere and participating in field trips up to the time of the beginning of his last illness. Being an attentive chapter member was just another example of his consideration and interest.

Frank Alexander Wetmore was born at North Freedom, Wisconsin, on 18 June 1886. When he was only 13 he wrote his first published paper, "My Experience with a Red-headed Woodpecker." His family moved to Independence, Kansas, when he was 18. Before he was 20, he had his first museum job as an assistant at the University of Kansas Museum. In 1910 he was appointed an agent for the U. S. Biological Survey. Two years later, after he received an A.B. degree from the University of Kansas, he was promoted to assistant biologist with the Survey team and went to Washington, where he began working on the food habits of North American birds. He then earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from George Washington University. He obtained invaluable experience as a field biologist and collector and made a number of overseas trips in his research. He was made Life Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1919, served a term as president (1926-1929), and was Honorary President from 1975 until his death, the only person so honored. He was active on the Council and many of the Union's committees, notably its Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, which, under his chairmanship, engineered the compilation and publication in 1957 of the fifth (and latest to date) edition of the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds*.

In 1940 Dr. Wetmore was made Secretary-General of the Eighth American Scientific Congress and served as Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution from 1945 till 1952, when he asked to be relieved of administrative duties so that he could devote more time to his beloved ornithology. He was appointed Chairman of the Interdepartmental Committee on Research and Development in 1948 and served terms as president of the National Academy of Sciences, the Cosmos Club of Washington, the Explorers Club of New York, the Biological Society of Washington, the Baird Ornithological Club, and the Tenth International Ornithological Congress. He was a Trustee of the National Geographic Society beginning in 1933 and a long-time member of its Committee for Research and Exploration, for many years serving as the Committee's Vice Chairman. He was principal author-editor of the Society's popular 2-volume *Book of Birds* (1937) and its 2-volume successor in 1965, *Water, Prey, and Game Birds of North America* and *Song and Garden Birds of North America*. In 1957 he was the recipient of the Society's Hubbard Medal.

Dr. Wetmore received many other professional honors and was an officer or trustee of scientific associations too numerous to mention here. He contributed more to the field of avian paleontology than any other person. Some 56 new genera, species, and subspecies of birds (both recent and fossil), insects, mollusks, amphibians, and one plant bear scientific names given in his honor, as

well as a bridge in Panama and a glacier in the Antarctic. His technical contributions were almost endless.

At the time of his death he was completing the fourth and last volume of *The Birds of Panama*. This work was based on his many years of field study in that country from sea coast to mountain tops.

Dr. Wetmore was a man of great stature in every sense of the word and a man of seemingly inexhaustible energy and charm. He will be missed by all who knew him. He died of congestive heart failure at his home in Glen Echo, Maryland, on 7 December 1978. He is survived by his widow, Beatrice, of the home address, and a daughter, Margaret Fenwick Harland, of Gloucester, Virginia.

James W. Eike

A HERITAGE OF BLUEBIRDS

ELIZABETH D. PEACOCK

There has never been a time when I was not aware of the sweet *churly* of the Eastern Bluebird. It may be a part of my subconscious memory as well. Who knows? I like to think so, for I was reared on the banks of the York River, and members of my family have lived there since the early 1600's.

My own ancestor, John Robins, came in 1623. His relatives, Obedience and her husband, were already living in the colony when he arrived. My grandfather told me that if you befriended an Indian, he would be a friend for life, even risking his own life for you. I often wonder if that was how the family survived during these early years, because his name was Powhatan and he in turn named my mother Pocahontus!

As my mother tried to keep me still long enough to plait my hair into two long, black braids, she often told me that I was wild as an Indian and my name should have been Pocahontus. I was always trying to take the bateau out of Fox Creek into the river by myself. I never succeeded though, as first my grandmother and then others along the bank would spot me, and I would have to turn back. It was easy to imagine that I was the real Pocahontus and easy to imagine how she must have awakened to the song of the bluebird just as I do now in Gloucester whether it is summer or winter.

When my husband and I moved to Pine Ridge in Fairfax County 37 years ago, bluebirds nested in the old-style paper boxes. On our first spring bird count in 1948 there were 16. The invention of the clear-ended paper box was the first blow to the bluebird population. I appealed to my brother who always spoke in superlatives: "I will make so many boxes that we will fill the sky with bluebirds." I sold the boxes to residents at cost for \$1.50 including freight. This helped for awhile, but nothing could protect us from the onslaught of new families, each with their "sacred" pets. The desire for big lawns brought a rash of deafening power mowers, and the insane belief that vegetables and flowers had to be "perfect" caused a continual dousing of vegetation with all kinds of chemicals. This finally spelled the doom of the little blue American thrush in Pine Ridge, as none have nested here since 1962.

That same year we went back to Gloucester to reclaim the old house and were delighted to find a pair of bluebirds on the farm. We put out two boxes and three or four broods were raised each year. When people began to call us, "The bluebirds are back," I began my first trail along a three-mile circle leading from the farm in 1975. The seven boxes yielded 11 broods of 56 eggs and 42 young plus one brood of 6 Barn Swallows, the latter the first record for this species nesting in a box. In 1976 I put out 22 boxes along a 25-mile network. Bluebirds tried to nest in 21, were successful in 17, and the 42 clutches of 175 eggs yielded 114 fledged young.

The extreme cold in January 1977 reduced the number of breeding pairs, and this concern led me to establish a nesting trail farther south in Perquimans County, North Carolina. Only 83 young were produced in Gloucester that year, but the 20 boxes in North Carolina yielded 110 young bluebirds. In 1978 I extended my North Carolina trail down to Washington County on the south side of Albemarle Sound. The 19 boxes in Gloucester yielded 126 eggs and 104 fledged young, whereas the 47 boxes in North Carolina produced 312 eggs and 248 young. Thus the 1978 grand total of 66 boxes produced 438 eggs and 352 fledged bluebirds.

Our greatest problem has been competition from House Sparrows. We found it advisable not to put up a box unless the lid could be opened to remove sparrows and it was placed low enough so it could be monitored easily. Otherwise the bluebirds would be hurt rather than helped. The only practical solution to the sparrow problem is to sneak up to the box at dawn, cover the hole with one hand, and remove the female bird with the other. Where black snakes are a problem, either remove the snake or change the location of the box. Good luck!

I think my greatest satisfaction came in 1978 when bluebirds nested twice in a box I had erected at the corner of the family plot in the old Bellamy Church cemetery. They made such a beautiful picture perched on those old tall tombstones. And so I leave a heritage of bluebirds!

3140 Highland Lane, Fairfax, Virginia 22030

THE 1980 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON

Marymount College, in Arlington, Virginia, was the scene of the forty-sixth annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology on 16-18 May 1980. A total of 167 persons registered for the meeting, according to an announcement made at the banquet by Mr. Don Wiesnet, supervisor of registration for the host club, the Northern Virginia Chapter.

Dr. Robert L. Ake, President of the VSO, opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. on Friday, 16 May, in Butler Hall. He then turned the proceedings over to Mrs. Myriam Moore, who presided over the annual Local Chapters Workshop. Mrs. YuLee Lerner, chairman of the Records Committee, urged listeners to submit records to update the newly published checklist, *Virginia's Birdlife*. Mr. Jerry Via listed activities to be undertaken by the Education Committee,

of which he was chairman. These included a series of articles for *Virginia Wildlife* magazine, additional "miniprograms" for use by chapters, and a six-week short course on ornithology. Mrs. Thelma Dalmas made an eloquent plea for better ethics and etiquette on the part of the growing numbers of birders. Mrs. Moore described a method of censusing hawks by recording those observed along roadsides. Others who spoke briefly were Mr. James W. Eike, Mrs. Dorothy Silsby, Mr. Barry Kinzie (chairmen of the Membership, Publicity, and Research Committees, respectively), and Mr. John Dillard, circulation manager for *The Raven* and the Newsletter. Dr. Ake spoke on behalf of the Conservation Committee, of which he is acting chairman, and the Trip Committee, the chairman of which (Mr. David Hughes) was absent. Mrs. Ruth Beck urged hearers to contribute to the site guide which she was preparing with the assistance of Mrs. Sarah Cromer, Col. Larry Lawrence, and Dr. Richard Peake. The workshop concluded with a pair of hilarious movies produced by a group of creative VSO members with a rare talent for humor.

The annual business meeting opened with a report by the Treasurer, Mrs. Dalmas, showing assets totaling \$12,134.05. Dr. Ake tendered a resolution, which was formally approved, putting the Society on record as supporting the creating of large wilderness areas in Alaska.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Mrs. Claire Eike submitted the following slate of nominees:

President: Robert L. Ake, Norfolk

Vice President: Mrs. YuLee Lerner, Staunton

Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington

Treasurer: Mrs. Thelma Dalmas, Lynchburg

Editor: F. R. Scott, Richmond

Board of Directors, Class of 1983:

Philip E. Shelton, Wise

Robert C. Simpson, Stephens City

Bill Williams, Williamsburg

A motion to approve these nominees was carried.

Mr. Dan Peacock, of the Northern Virginia Chapter, gave a preview of the weekend field trips. Concluding the evening, Mr. William M. Cole, state director of The Nature Conservancy, presented a motion picture of the Virginia barrier islands.

Of the three field trips on Saturday morning, 17 May, the most popular was that to Dyke Marsh on the Potomac River. Other trips covered areas above and below Great Falls.

Vice President Lerner presided at the presentation of papers on Saturday afternoon in Butler Hall. Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, of the College of William and Mary, drew an alarming picture of the status of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Virginia. A three-year survey found birds in five counties in 1977, but in 1978 and 1979 they were seen in only two counties. No nests were found in any of these years except in Sussex County. Dr. Byrd estimated the total population of the species in Virginia at not over 20 birds and expressed the view that it was probably doomed as a breeding bird because timber management practices call for harvesting pine trees before they reach an age suitable for nesting sites for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

"The Silencing of Spring," another pessimistic paper, was a collaborative effort. Ms. Shirley A. Briggs, of Washington, D. C., presented results of a study of three wooded areas in or near the District of Columbia. Sharp declines were found in the numbers of territorial males of summer resident species, notably warblers, flycatchers, and Red-eyed Vireos. No such decline was found in permanent resident species. The cause of the decline was probably severe and rapid habitat degradation in Latin America, where the declining species winter. Ms. Briggs' collaborator, Dr. Joan H. Criswell, of Fairfax, supported these conclusions with data from 15 censuses taken elsewhere in the eastern United States.

More cheerful tidings were borne by Mr. Jackson M. Abbott, of Alexandria, a founder of the Bald Eagle Survey in the Chesapeake Bay area. The survey began in 1957 with an aerial search for nests which were then followed to determine nesting success rates. Within the last few years, research has been greatly expanded, and efforts have been made to increase the population by introducing viable eggs or captive-hatched young into wild nests. Partly owing to these developments, Bald Eagle population trends within the last few years appear cautiously encouraging.

Further aspects of the Bald Eagle Survey were presented by the next two speakers, both from the College of William and Mary. Mr. David O. Walling traced the movements of seven juvenile eagles that had been fitted with radio transmitters before leaving the nest. The birds remained near the nests for some weeks after fledging, but by September and October they had begun to wander farther afield. Mr. Norman B. Jaffee had observed hunting methods used by Bald Eagles and the factors contributing to their success. He found that the birds tended to be opportunistic and flexible in their methods, so that they were less handicapped by unfavorable environmental conditions than might have been expected.

The Willow Flycatcher, which was first observed in Virginia in 1947, was the subject of Mr. Jerry W. Via, of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The establishment of breeding populations of this species in the state raised a question of possible competition with other flycatchers, particularly the Eastern Kingbird. Mr. Via found, however, that the Willow Flycatcher, in contrast with the kingbird, tended to prefer shrubby rather than cleared fields, to forage from higher perches, to use a greater variety of plants for perching, and to "glean" food to a large extent instead of relying entirely on "hawking." These facts mitigate the competition between the two.

"Virginia's Golden-winged Warblers: A Population in Trouble?" presented by Dr. Richard H. Peake, of Clinch Valley College, was based on a recent article by Frank Gill in *The Auk* suggesting, on the basis of historical records, that the Blue-winged Warbler tended to "swamp" the Golden-winged, which may become rare or extinct in another hundred years. Dr. Peake urged VSO members to compile information on Blue-winged and Golden-winged populations in Virginia and on indications of changes. He speculated that stripmining may offer short-term hope for the Golden-wing, since it produced, temporarily at least, good habitat for the species.

"Kiptopeke College" was the whimsical name bestowed on the Kiptopeke Beach banding station by Mr. Charles W. Hacker, of Yorktown, who gave a summary of the history of the station, prepared by him with the aid of Mr. Walter P. Smith. The "college" began operating in 1963, when some 200 birds

were banded in seven days. Now, from 100 to 150 people take part in the operation each year, and the station has furnished data for a wide range of studies in ornithology as well as important information on bird distribution.

The banquet took place in Butler Hall at 8 p.m. on Saturday, 17 May. President Ake, after introducing the people sitting at the head table, drew attention to the fact that Mr. Watson had completed 26 years of service as VSO Secretary (one more than his only predecessor, Dr. Florence Hague) and that Mr. Eike had been a member since 1934 and had missed only one meeting in that span. Mr. Watson and Mr. Eike received a round of applause. A resolution submitted by Mrs. Julie Russell, chairman of the Resolution Committee, tendering "grateful thanks" to those responsible for organizing the meeting, was enthusiastically approved. A number of door prizes were handed out, mostly contributed by the exhibitors in Butler Hall.

The 1980 Conservation Award was presented by Dr. Ake to Mr. Jackson M. Abbott in recognition of his invaluable work for conservation of the Bald Eagle.

The featured speaker was Mr. William S. Clark, director of the Raptor Information Center of the National Wildlife Federation. The Center, set up in 1976, focuses primary attention on the Bald Eagle and has a number of projects aimed at studying and preserving this species. However, other raptorial birds are by no means neglected. A major effort is now underway to establish sanctuaries for the eagle and for other raptors.

When Sunday morning, 18 May, dawned, a heavy downpour forced the cancellation of the formal field trips. Nevertheless, those who joined the informal trips were treated to clearing skies and ultimately a delightful morning.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

LOCAL CHAPTERS OF THE VSO

This list of local chapters, compiled by Myriam P. Moore, chairman of the Local Chapters Committee, has been revised to May 1980. The number in parentheses after the chapter name is the approximate total number of members of that chapter.

1. Allegheny Highlands Bird Club (20), Clifton Forge
2. Augusta Bird Club (100), Staunton-Waynesboro
3. Bristol Bird Club (50), Bristol
4. Cape Henry Audubon Society (200), Norfolk
5. Charlottesville-Albemarle Bird Club (60), Charlottesville
6. Clinch Mountain Bird Club (14), Nickelsville
7. Clinch Valley Bird Club (30), Tazewell
8. Cumberland Nature Club (30), Wise
9. Danville Bird Club (20), Danville
10. Hampton Roads Bird Club (107), Newport News-Hampton
11. Lynchburg Bird Club (175), Lynchburg

12. Marion Bird Club (25), Marion
13. Montpelier Bird Club (25), Gordonsville-Orange
14. New River Valley Bird Club (65), Blacksburg-Radford
15. Northern Neck Audubon Society (280), Kilmarnock-White Stone
16. Northern Virginia Chapter (150), Arlington-Fairfax
17. Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Society, Middletown
18. Richmond Audubon Society (600), Richmond
19. Roanoke Valley Bird Club (125), Roanoke-Salem
20. Rockbridge Bird Club (15), Lexington
21. Rockingham Bird Club (70), Harrisonburg
22. Virginia Beach Audubon Society (200), Virginia Beach
23. Margaret H. Watson Bird Club (25), Darlington Heights
24. Williamsburg Bird Club (60), Williamsburg

NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

AMPLIFICATION. Claudia P. Wilds writes that although she did see the gull described as a first-year California Gull at Alexandria on 10 September 1978 (*Raven*, 51: 4, 1980), she does not concur in the specific identification.

NESTING AT CHINCOTEAGUE. Because of heavy public use of the southern hook of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, a 10-acre fenced enclosure was constructed in 1978 to attract and protect nesting beach birds. Unfortunately, those birds that attempted to nest that year were mostly disrupted by Red Fox predation. In 1979 three strands of electrified wire were added to the fence and greatly improved the nesting success. According to Ed Britton of the refuge staff, 236 nests were identified here in 1979 as follows: 186 Least Tern nests (296 eggs), 36 Common Tern nests (90 eggs), 9 Piping Plover nests (36 eggs), 4 American Oystercatcher nests (12 eggs), and 1 Willet nest (4 eggs). Hatching success was 82% for the Least Terns, 81% for the Common Terns, 78% for the plovers, 25% for the oystercatchers, and 50% for the Willets.

SPRING BROAD-WING FLIGHTS. Although the fall hawk migration through Virginia is rather well known, there is little published material on spring flights in the state. During 1979, however, there were a number of observations of migrating Broad-winged Hawks in the spring. The peak count was apparently 126 in kettles over the Blue Ridge just south of Big Meadows on the Skyline Drive (Madison and Page Counties) on 22 April 1979 (Charles Ziegenfuss), and on the same day Clair Mellinger counted 60 over Singer's Glen on route 613 in western Rockingham County. Interesting late flocks included at least 60 over the James River Visitor Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway (Amherst and Bedford Counties) on 20 May, seen by Dan Puckette, Yulee Lerner, Leonard Teuber, and many other VSO members, and 30 in one kettle about 3 miles south of the Front Royal entrance to Shenandoah National Park (Warren County) on 24 May (Kathleen Finnegan).

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 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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THE LOUDOUN COUNTY FORAY OF JUNE 1978

F. R. SCOTT

Thirty members and friends of the Virginia Society of Ornithology participated in the eleventh breeding bird foray sponsored by the Research Committee of the VSO. This time the foray was held in Loudoun County, Virginia, west of Washington, D. C., and the northernmost county on Virginia's Piedmont. As an experiment, the foray was extended over a nine-day period from 10 to 18 June 1978. Headquarters for the project was the Piedmont Motel in Leesburg, and the foray director was Robert L. Ake. Special thanks are due to William S. Clark who led several small groups into restricted areas of Dulles International Airport and to John B. Bazuin, Jr., who made a number of useful suggestions of localities to be covered by the field parties.

Field work was almost entirely confined to Loudoun County, though it did overlap slightly into Clarke County in the Blue Ridge and into Fairfax County at Dulles Airport. Although the western border of Loudoun runs along the crest of the Blue Ridge, the maximum altitude here was only about 1900 feet versus a minimum for the county of 190 feet along the Potomac River at the Fairfax County line, and elevation here seemed to have very little effect on the distribution or abundance of birds. Most of the Piedmont areas varied from 250 to 500 feet above sea level except for several ridges. In the northern part of the county Short Hill Mountain extended up to 1440 feet and Catoctin Mountain to 891 feet, while in the extreme south the Bull Run Mountains (up to 800 feet) extended a few miles into Loudoun from Fauquier and Prince William Counties. Certainly the mountain elevations were not high enough to attract the usual "Alleghanian" species such as the Veery and Dark-eyed Junco. Of this group, only a single Rose-breasted Grosbeak was located.

Drainage was wholly into the Potomac River, which formed the entire northern boundary of the county, and the major streams were Goose Creek, Catoctin Creek, and Bull Run. Land use was mainly farmland, though urbanization was steadily encroaching into the county around Dulles Airport and Leesburg. Extensive forests were found only in the mountains and along Goose Creek, and these were primarily deciduous.

Some of the other areas named in the annotated list are noted below based more or less on the direction from Leesburg, which was situated slightly east of the center of the county:

Southeastern Loudoun—Dulles Airport, Sterling Radio Laboratory, Waxpool, and—along the Potomac—Sugarland Run community, Algonkian Regional Park, and Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park.

Northeastern to northwestern Loudoun—Balls Bluff, Whites Ferry, and Point of Rocks along the Potomac, Lucketts, Waterford, Taylorstown, and Lovettsville.

Considering how close this area is to Washington, it is perhaps surprising that there has been no major publication on the birds of this county. Many short notes have appeared, however, in several periodicals, including *The Raven*, the most interesting of these recently being notes on the nesting of the Short-eared and Long-eared Owls (Clark, 1973; Scott, 1973 and 1977). Neither of these species were recorded on this foray.

The weather during the foray period was exceptionally good for the most part with light rain on only two days and temperatures mostly in the 60's and 70's,

though it did get down to 44° on the 15th and up to near 90° on the 18th. Of the 120 species recorded, all but eight were probably or possibly locally breeding birds. The probable nonbreeders were Great Blue Heron, Lesser Scaup, Marsh Hawk, Osprey, Least Tern, Blackpoll Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Pine Siskin. Aside from the owls already mentioned and the hoped-for Alleghanian species, the following birds were looked for but not found: Spotted Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, Bank Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Bobolink, Dickcissel, and Savannah Sparrow.

Procedures for the foray were generally similar to those of the previous ones. Participants divided into small parties, and the most productive areas were covered by different parties on different days, thus compensating for differences in weather and observers' field abilities. Each party submitted a detailed field card each day, and if totally different areas were covered on one day, two or more cards were filled out. The resulting 48 cards were then edited, tabulated, and summarized for the following annotated list.

These observers are identified by last name only in the list which follows: Jackson M. Abbott, Robert L. Ake, Robert T. Barbee, William S. Clark, John and Thelma Dalmas, James W. Eike, H. George Hausch, Barry Kinzie, Kerrie Kirkpatrick, YuLee Lerner, Norwood C. Middleton, Dorothy Mitchell, Myriam Moore, Isabel Obenschain, John Pancake, F. R. Scott, Charles E. Stevens, and Claudia P. Wilds.

Great Blue Heron. Since there are no breeding records of this species on Virginia's Piedmont, it was not surprising that there were only two foray records, both at Dulles Airport. Two were seen here on 11 June (Clark) and one on 13 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Green Heron. Fairly common throughout the county with two peak counts of 4 at Dulles Airport.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Noted by several observers in Algonkian Park, where they often fed in the early morning on the mowed grass of the picnic area and driving range, and in the nearby Sugarland Run community. The best count in the park was 7 adults and 2 immatures on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). Single unidentified night herons were also noted near Lucketts on 13 June (Ake) and at Dulles on 15 June (Clark).

Canada Goose. Birds of unknown origin and wildness were seen in most parts of the county with a maximum of 40 in southwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Two broods of young were noted at Dulles on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott), and in southwestern Loudoun Kinzie and Pancake found two broods on 16 June and the Dalmases one brood on 17 June.

Mallard. Rather uncommon. Reported by eight parties in all sections except southwestern Loudoun with a high count of 8 adults at Dulles on 10 June (Ake *et al.*). On this last date 3 females with separate broods totaling 31 young were also found by the same observers.

Black Duck. A single bird at Dulles on 12 June (Clark) was the only report.

Wood Duck. Fairly common with a peak count of 9 adults in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases). Thirteen broods totaling 78 young were reported by six different parties between 10 and 18 June.

Lesser Scaup. One record. A single adult male was noted on a farm pond along rt. 650 in southcentral Loudoun on 16 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Turkey Vulture. Common with a high count of 31 in southwestern Loudoun on 14 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Black Vulture. Fairly common. The peak count was 7 in northern Loudoun on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott).

Sharp-shinned Hawk. One record. Mitchell and others saw a single bird on rt. 734 in southwestern Loudoun on 14 June.

Red-tailed Hawk. Fairly common with a maximum count of 8 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Red-shouldered Hawk. Uncommon with a total of only 9 birds reported by four parties.

Broad-winged Hawk. Uncommon. Reported by only five parties with a high count of 3.

Marsh Hawk. One record. The Dalmases found one bird near Lucketts on 15 June.

Osprey. Clark made the only observation of this species, a single bird at Dulles on 17 June. There are no breeding records of this species on Virginia's Piedmont, and this was undoubtedly a nonbreeding vagrant.

American Kestrel. Fairly common with numerous reports from most sections. The peak count was 5 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake).

Ruffed Grouse. Three records. In the northwest Ake found one between Short Hill and the Blue Ridge on 12 June, and there were two records from rt. 601 in the southwestern Blue Ridge, one on 14 June (Mitchell *et al.*) and 2 adults with 3 half-grown young on 17 June (Scott).

Bobwhite. Common throughout with a maximum count of 29.

Ring-necked Pheasant. Fairly common in northeastern Loudoun where the high count was 9 on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). A female with 7 half-grown young was seen in the Lucketts area on 16 June (Kinzie and Pancake). Only scattered records elsewhere.

Killdeer. Fairly common with three maximum counts of 6.

Upland Sandpiper. Probably uncommon and local. Three or possibly four apparent family groups were located and observed by numerous parties. One group at the Sterling Radio Laboratory on rt. 606 just west of Dulles had 4 birds on 18 June (Scott). In the Lucketts area of northeastern Loudoun the peak counts were 9 birds in one hay field at rts. 662 and 658 on 14 June (Larner *et al.*) and 4 birds together at rts. 15 and 658 on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). The last two locations were only 2 miles apart and could well have included some of the same birds, but the 9 birds on 14 June certainly included more than one family group. There were no reports elsewhere.

American Woodcock. Uncommon with four parties reporting a total of only 7 birds.

Least Tern. A bizarre experience was the appearance of 4 of these birds at the Dulles sewage lagoon on 10 June (Ake, Clark, and Wilds). There are no other June records of this species away from the eastern part of the Coastal Plain. One can't help but wonder where they came from and where they went. Winds on 9 and 10 June were out of the northwest and not from a direction that would tend to blow birds in from the coast.

Rock Dove. Common throughout with a high count of 60.

Mourning Dove. Common with a peak count of 43 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Ake noted an occupied nest in northern Loudoun on 14 June.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Common with four high counts of 11 birds.

Black-billed Cuckoo. Two records. One was noted near Lucketts on 12 June (Larner and Obenschain), and another was heard calling near Dulles on 18 June (Scott).

Screech Owl. Only two reports of this bird were received, both in southwestern Loudoun on 13 June, one by Middleton and the other by Larner, Moore, and Obenschain.

Great Horned Owl. Rather uncommon with reports from five parties. The peak count was 3 in southeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases).

Barred Owl. Uncommon in southeastern Loudoun where the best count was 3 in Algonkian Park on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). Curiously, there were no reports from the other sections of the county.

Whip-poor-will. Rather common with a high count of 12 near Waxpool on 15 June (Ake, Scott, *et al.*). There were other high counts of 10 and 11 birds elsewhere.

Chimney Swift. Common with two maximum counts of 16.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Uncommon. Reported by only seven parties with a high count of only 2.

Belted Kingfisher. Only fairly common with a peak count of 4.

Common Flicker. Common throughout although the maximum count was only 10.

Pileated Woodpecker. Fairly common and widespread. The best count was 4 birds. Hausch noted a bird entering and leaving a nest hole at Sugarland Run on 18 June.

Red-bellied Woodpecker. Common with two high counts of 15. An occupied nest was noted at Sugarland Run on 18 June (Hausch).

Red-headed Woodpecker. Two records. Larner, Moore, and Obenschain found 2 well-separated pairs in southwestern Loudoun on 13 June, and Mitchell and others saw one near Lucketts on 15 June.

Hairy Woodpecker. Uncommon. Reported by eight parties with a peak count of 3.

Downy Woodpecker. Common in all areas although the maximum count was only 7. Adults were feeding young in a nest hole on the Blue Ridge near the Potomac River on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake).

Eastern Kingbird. Common with a peak count of 26 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Great Crested Flycatcher. Common. Mitchell and others obtained the top count of 21 in the Lucketts area on 15 June.

Eastern Phoebe. Common throughout. The best count was 14 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Kinzie found a nest with 5 eggs under a bridge north of Waterford on 15 June.

Acadian Flycatcher. Common with high counts of 21 in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott) and 19 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Willow Flycatcher. Locally common at Dulles Airport where Ake, Clark, and Wilds got the peak count of 14 on 10 June. Uncommon elsewhere with seven parties reporting a total of 9 birds. Mitchell saw an adult carrying food just south of Lovettsville on 15 June.

Least Flycatcher. A singing bird was discovered in southwestern Loudoun on rt. 743 east of rt. 619 on 14 June by Kinzie and Pancake. It was also found here the next day by Larner and Obenschain but could not be located by other parties. This seems to be the first breeding-season record for the Virginia Piedmont, and—at 520-foot elevation—it was probably a low-altitude record for this season.

Eastern Wood Pewee. Common in all areas. Peak counts were 38 in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott) and 20 in southeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott).

Horned Lark. Fairly common in southeastern Loudoun where the best count was 11 at Dulles on 12 June (Clark *et al.*). Elsewhere there were only two reports from the Lucketts area.

Tree Swallow. One record. Three birds were seen entering and leaving a blue-bird box at Algonkian Park on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). On the next day the box was found to be occupied by bluebirds.

Rough-winged Swallow. Fairly common with a high count of 10 in the Lucketts area on 15 June by Kinzie and Pancake. The same observers located two nests, one with eggs and the other with 5 young, in drain pipes under a bridge west of Waterford on 15 June.

Barn Swallow. Very common with a maximum count of 62 in southwestern Loudoun on 14 June (Kinzie and Pancake). Eike, Middleton, and Scott located a nest with young near Lovettsville on 16 June and found many fledged young being fed by adults at Red Rock Park on 15 June and in northern Loudoun on 16 June.

Cliff Swallow. Three records. Two were seen near Lucketts on 15 June by the Dalmases and on 16 June by Eike, Middleton, and Scott. Also on the 15th Kinzie and Pancake found 3 pairs nest building on a barn at Waterford. This is a new breeding locality for this species in Virginia.

Purple Martin. Rather common in all areas with a peak count of 36 in the Algonkian Park area on 17 June (Hausch). There were at least four active colonies in Algonkian Park (Hausch *et al.*).

Blue Jay. Fairly common throughout, although the two peak counts were only 9 birds each. Fledged young were found in Leesburg on 15 June (Scott).

Common Raven. One record. Mitchell and others located 4 birds along rt. 665 between Waterford and Taylorstown on 13 June. This road runs along the western side of Catocin Mountain, where the birds may have originated.

Common Crow. Common in all areas with a high count of 62 in northern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases). Fledged young were noted at Balls Bluff and Red Rock Park on 15 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott) and in southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott).

Fish Crow. Two records. One was seen just west of Dulles on 14 June (Larner *et al.*) and 3 were found at Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch). The species was much less common than had been anticipated.

Carolina Chickadee. Although this species was fairly common in all areas, it was much less so than expected. There were two peak counts of only 12 each.

Tufted Titmouse. Common with a peak count of 20 in northeastern Loudoun on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). This species was clearly more common here than the Carolina Chickadee.

White-breasted Nuthatch. Fairly common and widely distributed. The maximum count was 5 in northeastern Loudoun on 14 June (Larner *et al.*).

House Wren. Common throughout the county. The best count was 35 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*). The species was far more common than anticipated. Hausch noted an occupied nest box at Sugarland Run on 18 June.

Carolina Wren. Only fairly common at best but widely distributed in all areas. The high count was only 7 birds.

Long-billed Marsh Wren. Three parties recorded singing birds at Dulles with a maximum of only 2 on 17 June (Clark *et al.*). On 18 June Scott located two empty nests and one nest without a cavity. It is apparent that there is a small breeding colony here that should be investigated more intensely. There is only one other nesting locality known on Virginia's Piedmont, and this is at the western end of Lake Gaston in Mecklenburg County (Scott, 1979).

Mockingbird. Common with a peak count of 26. An adult was feeding young in the nest in southwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Gray Catbird. Common with a high count of 36 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*). This bird was considerably more common here than the Mockingbird.

Brown Thrasher. Common. The maximum count was 21 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Kinzie and Pancake found 3 fledged young (adults nearby) near Lucketts on 15 June.

American Robin. Very common with a peak count of 82 in northeastern Loudoun on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). On 18 June Hausch found a nest with 2 eggs and 2 young plus an adult feeding fledged young at Sugarland Run.

Wood Thrush. Common with a high count of 38 in the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake) and 38 in southeastern Loudoun on

12 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Ake noted fledged young in the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June.

Eastern Bluebird. Common over most of the county. The top count was 19 in Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch), where there were also three nests with eggs on the same day. These were second broods in a group of nesting boxes run by Hausch. Elsewhere, Mitchell and others had a fledged young bird in southern Loudoun on 12 June, and Kinzie and Pancake found adults feeding young in a nest in a fence post near Lucketts on 16 June.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Common with a maximum count of 12 in Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch).

Cedar Waxwing. Uncommon with only five parties reporting a total of 9 birds, mostly in northwestern Loudoun.

Loggerhead Shrike. Only 5 adults in all were reported by four parties, and only 3 of these were probably different birds. One adult was feeding 3 fledged young near Lucketts on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*), and another adult was feeding one fledged young in extreme southwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Kinzie and Pancake).

Starling. Abundant with a peak count of 140 in northeastern Loudoun on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott).

White-eyed Vireo. Fairly common in southeastern Loudoun where the maximum count was 8 in Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch). Uncommon elsewhere with no count over 3.

Yellow-throated Vireo. Fairly common and widely distributed. There were two top counts of 5 birds each.

Red-eyed Vireo. Common with peak counts of 54 in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott) and 31 in the Lucketts area on 16 June (Eike, Middleton, and Scott). An abandoned nest with one cowbird egg was found at Sugarland Run on 18 June (Hausch), and Ake saw an occupied nest in northern Loudoun on 14 June.

Warbling Vireo. Fairly common with a high count of 11 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases). Although most common along the Potomac, it was found in all lowland areas.

Black-and-white Warbler. One record, a single bird in extreme northwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Ake). Prior to the foray Clark had noted a singing bird at Dulles on 3 June. The almost complete absence of this species was surprising.

Prothonotary Warbler. Uncommon and local with only 16 birds noted by seven parties, all apparently along the Potomac shore. The maximum count was 6 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases).

Worm-eating Warbler. Uncommon and local with only 11 birds reported by six parties. Except for one near Algonkian Park on 15 June (Kirkpatrick), all records were from the Blue Ridge, both near the Potomac and in southwestern Loudoun.

Blue-winged Warbler. Four records. In southwestern Loudoun on 14 June Kinzie and Pancake found 2 adults feeding a very weakly flying young and 2 additional singing adults in different spots. Another singing bird was located

by the same observers just west of Waterford on 15 June. These were the first summer records for the Virginia Piedmont.

Northern Parula Warbler. Fairly common and well distributed in all sections but still somewhat local. Reported by 11 parties. The two best counts were only 6 each.

Yellow Warbler. Only fairly common though well distributed. There were three peak counts of 4 each.

Cerulean Warbler. Fairly common in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun where the top count was 7 on 17 June (Dalmases). Elsewhere the only records were three reports of single birds along the Potomac. There is apparently no sizable population along the river here as there is at Great Falls in Fairfax County.

Yellow-throated Warbler. Uncommon, occurring only along the Potomac shore of eastern Loudoun. The best count was only 4 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Dalmases). Scott and others found an adult feeding a fledged young at Whites Ferry on 15 June.

Blackpoll Warbler. One record. A late spring transient was singing in the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June (Ake, Kinzie, and Pancake).

Pine Warbler. Only two records. Single birds were found at Dulles on 11 June (Clark *et al.*) and in southwestern Loudoun on 13 June (Larner, Moore, and Obenschain).

Prairie Warbler. Common with a peak count of 19 in the Dulles area on 18 June (Scott *et al.*).

Ovenbird. Only fairly common with a high count of 12 in the Blue Ridge. No more than 4 were reported by any of the lowland parties. An adult feeding a fledged young was found in the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake).

Louisiana Waterthrush. Fairly common with three maximum counts of 6 each. Hausch located a nest with 3 eggs at Sugarland Run on 18 June, and Stevens and Barbee noted fledged young near Balls Bluff on 14 June.

Kentucky Warbler. Common in the Blue Ridge where the peak was 17 near the Potomac on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake), though no other Blue Ridge count was over 8. In the lowlands the bird was only fairly common if widely distributed with no count over 3. Kinzie and Pancake found adults feeding 5 half-grown young in a nest on the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June.

Common Yellowthroat. Common throughout with a high count of 32 in Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch). An adult was carrying nesting material here on 16 June (Ake).

Yellow-breasted Chat. Common with a maximum count of 15 at Dulles on 10 June (Ake, Clark, and Wilds).

Hooded Warbler. Fairly common locally in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun where the best count was 6 on 17 June (Dalmases). Remarkable as it may seem, there was only one report elsewhere, 2 in the Short Hill Mountains on 16 June (Ake). The total absence of this bird from the rest of the Piedmont and the northern part of the Blue Ridge was puzzling.

Canada Warbler. Stevens and Barbee saw a repeatedly singing male at Balls Bluff on 14 June. This was undoubtedly a late migrant as it was not found here again.

American Redstart. Common in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun with a peak count here of 21 singing birds on 17 June (Scott). The species was rather uncommon and local elsewhere with no count over 4. Ake found a pair nest building in northwestern Loudoun on 16 June.

House Sparrow. Common throughout. The maximum count was 125.

Eastern Meadowlark. Common with a peak count of 115 in southeastern Loudoun on 16 June (Dalmases).

Red-winged Blackbird. Abundant. The best count was 165 in southeastern Loudoun on 16 June (Dalmases).

Orchard Oriole. Fairly common in all sections though the high count was only 6.

Northern Oriole. Common and well distributed with a maximum count of 11 in northeastern Loudoun on 12 June (Larner and Obenschain). Adults were noted feeding young in three different nests, one near Lucketts on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*), one near Waterford also on the 15th (Kinzie and Pancake), and another in northwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Ake).

Common Grackle. Abundant. The peak count was 165 in northwestern Loudoun on 16 June (Dalmases), and there were four other counts of over 100.

Brown-headed Cowbird. Common throughout, the best count being 34 in Algonkian Park on 17 June (Hausch). See Red-eyed Vireo for breeding record.

Scarlet Tanager. Common and well distributed. Kinzie and Pancake totaled the best count of 21 in the Blue Ridge near the Potomac on 15 June, whereas the top lowland count was 16 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*). Adults were feeding young in the nest in the Blue Ridge on 15 June (Kinzie and Pancake).

Summer Tanager. Rather uncommon with only 11 birds reported by nine parties. These were well distributed, however, with one even found at 1700 feet in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott).

Cardinal. Common with a peak count of 63 in southern Loudoun on 12 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak. One record. A singing bird was noted by three parties at 1900 feet in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Ake, Dalmases, and Scott).

Blue Grosbeak. Fairly common. Hausch got the maximum count of 12 in Algonkian Park on 17 June.

Indigo Bunting. Very common in all sections. The peak count of 58 was obtained by Mitchell and others in southern Loudoun on 12 June.

Pine Siskin. One record. A lingering migrant was noted carefully at a thistle feeder in Sugarland Run on 15 June by Hausch.

American Goldfinch. Common with a high count of 39 in northeastern Loudoun on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Rufous-sided Towhee. Common throughout. Maximum counts were 41 in the Blue Ridge of southwestern Loudoun on 17 June (Scott) and 35 in the Dulles area on 18 June (Scott *et al.*).

Grasshopper Sparrow. Common in all areas of the county. The Dalmases had the best count of 23 in southeastern Loudoun on 16 June.

Henslow's Sparrow. Common very locally at Dulles Airport with a peak count of 18 on 10 June (Ake, Clark, and Wilds). No records elsewhere. After the end of the foray Abbott and Clark recorded 30 singing birds at Dulles on 23 July. This is by far the largest colony of this species ever reported in Virginia.

Vesper Sparrow. Rather uncommon locally in northern Loudoun where there were two high counts of 4 each. Elsewhere there were two reports from southwestern Loudoun, but none were noted in the southeast. An adult was carrying food south of Lovettsville on 15 June (Mitchell *et al.*).

Chipping Sparrow. Common with a peak count of 20 in Sugarland Run on 18 June, where several adults were found feeding fledged young (Hausch).

Field Sparrow. Common with two maximum counts of 31 at Dulles. Adults were feeding fledged young near Waxpool on 16 June (Middleton and Scott).

Song Sparrow. Common and well distributed. The best count was 33 in the Lucketts area on 12 June (Larner and Obenschain).

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SOME SPECIMEN RECORDS FROM VIRGINIA

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The Virginia Commonwealth University bird collection was initiated in 1969 and now comprises more than 1200 catalogued items including about 1000 skins and 200 skeletons. A total of 216 species are represented. The collection consists largely of birds salvaged from a variety of natural deaths. Although specimens from 16 states are present, the material now at hand is mostly from Virginia (more than 50 counties are represented). The collection is available for use by responsible investigators, and contributions to this collection in the form of donated specimens or salvaged birds would be appreciated.

Because of the present size of the collection and the recent acquisition of important specimens, the following notes should be of interest. Based upon

the available literature, these specimens are either noteworthy because of their rarity or the location at which they were obtained or are first specimen records for Virginia.

KING EIDER, *Somateria spectabilis*

An immature male (VCU 917) obtained from hunters by C. F. Murray in January, 1976, may represent the first specimen record for Virginia. The date of collection is unknown, but is presumed to be the winter of 1975. The collection locality was stated to be "near Lewisetta" (Northumberland County).

CLAPPER RAIL, *Rallus longirostris*

Two records from specimens picked up in Richmond (VCU 492, 12 September 1973; VCU 919, 14 April 1976) represent unusual inland migrants.

PAINT-BILLED CRAKE, *Neocrex erythrops*

This highly unusual South American bird was obtained in western Henrico County on 15 December 1978 (VCU 1113; on permanent loan to the U. S. National Museum; no. 575802; see Blem, *Wilson Bulletin*, 92: 393-394, 1980). This is the first specimen record for Virginia.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER, *Tryngites subruficollis*

A male (VCU 502) from western Henrico County near the Goochland County line and the James River by L. C. Goldstein on 15 September 1973 represents an unusual inland occurrence for this species and one of the few specimen records for Virginia.

SOOTY TERN, *Sterna fuscata*

A male (VCU 1243) was found in western Henrico County by N. Thomasson on 6 September 1979 after the passage of hurricane David. Although other Sooty Terns were reported inland at about this time, this individual apparently represents the second specimen record for Virginia and the first inland specimen record.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio otus*

A female (VCU 1020) found dead on I-64 in Albemarle County on 27 January 1978 by C. Schaeff is noteworthy because of the scarcity of specimens of this species from Virginia.

SAW-WHET OWL, *Aegolius acadicus*

A female (VCU 343) found dead on Route 60 in Powhatan County by D. Bailey on 15 November 1971 represents one of the few Virginia specimen records.

HOUSE FINCH, *Carpodacus mexicanus*

Although this species has been present in Virginia since 1962, there is apparently a paucity of specimens. Currently, only two birds salvaged from mist-net fatalities at Richmond in 1974 are in the VCU collection. I encourage banders and birders to salvage any of these birds they may find. Future studies of the establishment, modification, and subsequent evolution of this species will depend greatly on specimens obtained in the early stages of its colonization.

DARK-EYED JUNCO X WHITE-THROATED SPARROW

Junco hyemalis X *Zonotrichia albicollis*

More than 20 records of this hybrid are now known nationally. Of this number, at least seven have been found in Virginia. The VCU specimen (VCU 1028) was snap-trapped by M. Goehle in Richmond on 26 November 1977 during a study of small mammal populations. The identity of the bird was confirmed by Richard Banks of the U. S. National Museum, and a more complete description of this specimen will appear elsewhere.

TREE SPARROW, *Spizella arborea*

Although the Tree Sparrow is not particularly rare in Virginia in winter, there is an apparent scarcity of specimens. Two males from Northumberland County near Kilmarnock were obtained on 13 March 1971.

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MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD ON JAMES RIVER

THOMAS C. ARMOUR

On 6 September 1979, the morning after the remnants of hurricane David passed west of Williamsburg, Virginia, I checked the James River at Kingsmill—just east of Jamestown in James City County—in hopes of finding a storm-imported accidental. Much to my amazement I discovered an adult Magnificent Frigatebird, *Fregata magnificens*.

A strong southwest wind was producing an updraft along the river's north shoreline which was being used by a group of Turkey Vultures, *Cathartes aura*, and the frigatebird. The updraft was so strong that the birds were remaining almost stationary with little apparent effort, and the frigatebird soared like a small sailplane. Even though I was hoping for such a sight, it took me a few moments to comprehend.

I first observed the bird about 8:30 a.m. and saw it spiral down to the river surface and feed on two small dead fish. After watching it for about 20 minutes, and since it seemed to be staying in the area, I made a dash for home for my camera and while there called Ruth A. Beck at the College of William and Mary. When she arrived shortly with Mitchell A. Byrd, the frigatebird was barely visible about 2 or 3 miles away. It soon returned, however, and afforded plenty of opportunity for observation, and some excellent photographs of the frigatebird and the vultures soaring together were obtained. It remained in the area until about 1 p.m. and as far as I know was not observed after that time.

132 Holdsworth Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

RAVENS ATTACK THEIR REFLECTIONS

CHARLES D. CREMEANS

On 17 June 1979 my daughter reported fresh blood on the deck of a friend's house located near mine on Flattop Mountain in Greene County, Virginia. I immediately visited the house and discovered fresh splashes of blood and some dried spots on the wooden deck in front of two large glass doors and on the sill of a 2-by-3-foot window. I estimated that there must have been at least half a cup (4 oz.) of blood spilled. There were also smears of a gray fatty substance about 10 to 14 inches long and of varying widths, though none over 1.5 inches wide. These smears were roughly at right angles to the floor. The deck in front of one of the doors was 8 feet wide and had a 4-foot rail on the outside edge. The deck in front of the other door was 6 feet wide, also with a rail, and that in front of the window was only 4 feet wide and also had a rail. There was proportionately more blood and more smears on and below the window than the doors. There were large white spots on the rails and deck and some casts about 0.375 inch in diameter and 0.5 inch long.

I immediately assumed that some bird or birds were attacking their images in the glass because the gray smears were very like the smears left on my windows in Fairfax after they were attacked by a breeding male Robin. The presence of excretion on the deck and railings was also indicative of birds. I had also frequently seen Common Ravens, *Corvus corax*, perched on these railings and, less frequently, Common Crows, *C. brachyrhynchos*.

I visited the house frequently over the next two months but never saw birds attacking the glass, though more blood appeared on the deck and window sill until the first week in August. Toward the end of July I was hiking on Little Flattop, about a mile from the house in question, when two ravens flew over me at low altitude from the direction of the house. They looked as though they had just gone through a thrashing machine. Several primary feathers were missing on each bird, and their body feathers were very disheveled. Three days later, George Gilbert, a wildlife artist who knows birds well and is familiar with the raven, heard a racket at the house in question and went up to find five ravens on the railings. He saw one after another fly into the glass and then saw the birds squabble and flight among themselves. Unfortunately, no photograph was obtained.

Flattop Mountain is in extreme southern Greene County, Virginia, about 20 miles northwest of Charlottesville in the Blue Ridge. Shenandoah National Park is on three sides of the property and the area is raven territory. The house is on the northern crest of Flattop at an elevation of 3200 feet overlooking Bacon Hollow with plentiful nesting habitat for ravens. Ravens patrol the mountain in ones and twos and sometimes in groups as large as six or seven throughout the year.

9101 Southwick Street, Fairfax, Virginia 22031

NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

PIED-BILLED GREBE BREEDING. An adult Pied-billed Grebe was seen feeding 5 downy young on a pond on rt. 659 east of Port Republic, Rockingham County, Virginia, on 1 June 1979. Observers included Leonard Teuber and other members of the Rockingham Bird Club. On 5 June Leonard Teuber, Isabel Obenschain, and YuLee Lerner saw the adult bird with 7 young. The birds were seen regularly thereafter though the numbers decreased, possibly because of predation by snapping turtles in the pond. The last observation was of one adult and one young bird on 7 July 1979.

LOUISIANA HERON IN AUGUSTA. On 4 August 1979 Leonard Teuber located a Louisiana Heron on a farm pond along rt. 776 in northeastern Augusta County, Virginia, near Harriston. It was also seen by other members of the Rockingham Bird Club. This was the fourth record of this species for Virginia west of the Blue Ridge and the first for this county.

NIGHT HERONS IN VALLEY. On 22 June 1979 Mary and Dick Smith counted 13 Black-crowned Night Herons along a 5-mile stretch of the North River between Mt. Crawford and Weyers Cave in Rockingham County. The ratio of adults and immatures was not determined. This species seems to be increasing in this area as a summer resident (see *Raven*, 49: 75, 1978).

WOOD STORKS IN ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY. Wood Storks were present in Rockbridge County, Virginia, along Kerr's Creek from 25 July through 29 August 1979. Local residents notified Jill Huntley, Polly Turner, and other members of the Lexington Bird Club. The maximum count was 19, but the ratio of immature and adult birds was not determined. The birds were seen by many birders from across the state, including Myriam Moore, Kathleen Finnegan, Leonard Teuber, YuLee Lerner, and Isabel Obenschain. A photograph of two of these birds by Nell Bolen appeared in *American Birds*, 34: 160 (1980).

HOODED MERGANSER IN SUMMER. A male Hooded Merganser was present on a pond along rt. 659 east of Port Republic, Rockingham County, from 5 June through 7 July 1979. It was seen by Leonard Teuber, Kathleen Finnegan, YuLee Lerner, Isabel Obenschain, and others. There are very few summer records of this species in Virginia.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK NESTING. On 27 May 1979 a Sharp-shinned Hawk was flushed from a nest in a red spruce on the summit of Beartown Mountain, Tazewell County, Virginia, by Alison B. Davenport. Unfortunately, the nest contents could not be determined. A single bird had been noted flying over this area the previous day by Thomas F. Wieboldt.

RAVEN NESTS. Alison Davenport and Tom Wieboldt found a pair of Common Ravens and a nest with unknown contents on Buffalo Mountain, Floyd County, on 8 April 1979. The VSO foray to this area in 1976 found a number of ravens but did not locate a nesting site (*Raven*, 50: 6-7, 1979). The same observers saw another pair at a nest with unknown contents on a rock cliff on Doefoot Mountain, northwestern Amherst County, on 21 April 1979.

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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SOME NOTEWORTHY BIRD RECORDS FROM LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA, FROM 1974 TO 1979

JOHN B. BAZUIN, JR.

Louisa County is located in central Virginia and covers 517 square miles. It is a very rural and its topography is a typical, rolling Piedmont type.

I lived in Louisa County from October 1974 to March 1979 and continue to visit there regularly. My ornithological efforts there have primarily revolved around two areas. One is the 14,000-acre dioritic section of the Green Springs igneous intrusion, which is located southeast of Boswells Tavern in the west-central part of the county, and the other is Lake Anna, which is partially included in the northeast section of the county. I am also compiling a list of the birds of Louisa County.

Of the 239 species of birds established in Louisa County as of this writing, I have selected the 26 of greatest significance for description here. However, all but a few records from the Louisa County part of Lake Anna have been omitted since I intend to publish on the birds of this area later.

The term "Green Springs," as used in this publication, is considered to be an abbreviation for "Green Springs igneous intrusion, dioritic section." Green Springs is roughly 75% farmland with the rest in varied woods, fallow fields, and a very small percentage of oldfield. Farmland is over 90% pastures, hayfields, and cornfields. Virtually all observations of water-related birds in Green Springs were made either at Hawkwood Lake, a 25-acre U. S. Soil Conservation Service lake about 4 miles south of Boswells Taven, or at Nolting Pond, a 20-acre lake established privately in 1920 about 2 miles southeast of Boswells Tavern. All records below are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

SNOWY EGRET, *Egretta thula*

One record. One was seen flying over Nolting Pond on 18 May 1978, possibly a late spring date for the Virginia Piedmont (see Lerner *et al.*, 1979).

GLOSSY IBIS, *Plegadis falcinellus*

One record. A flock of 5 was seen flying into and foraging along Hawkwood Lake on 17 April 1976. The count is the highest ever for the Virginia Piedmont (Lerner *et al.*, 1979).

CANADA GOOSE, *Branta canadensis*

A common winter resident in Green Springs with peak counts each winter of 777 to 1400. A resident free-flying population of breeders of unknown origin also exists in western Louisa County, with known nesting at both Hawkwood Lake and Nolting Pond during the period. Suspected breeding pairs of this species were also noted at several ponds along route 250 in the southwestern part of the county in the late spring and early summer of 1978. Resident geese in Green Springs have had downy young as early as 6 May 1977, young molting into juvenal plumage as early as 2 June 1977 and as late as 13 July 1977, and adult-plumaged young at least by 13 July 1977. Initial fall flocking of residents has gotten underway as early as 2 August 1976 (14 birds) and has been essentially completed as early as 26 August 1976 (55 birds). Migrant Canada Geese have arrived as early as 26 September 1978, and the majority of the

migrants arrive about 1 to 15 October. Departure of the migrants occurs predominantly during the last 10 days of March and is generally complete by 30 March. The geese "night-over" on Nolting Pond during the winter season (and apparently began doing so as early as the early 1920's; personal communication, E. Nolting) and have kept a "puddle" open on this lake even during the severest winters of my study.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, *Anser albifrons*

A casual species but recorded in four of the six years. The first record was an adult bird found with several hundred Canada Geese at Nolting Pond on 3 October 1975. With it were three birds that seemed very much like White-fronted Geese but which had mottled brown-and-white heads and upper necks and which lacked the black mottling on the lower breast. These four birds were seen sporadically all that winter with Canada Geese until 14 March 1976. On 12 October 1976 the adult White-fronted Goose reappeared—this time at Hawkwood Lake and again with hundreds of Canada Geese. On 27 December 1976 the White-fronted with two of the three original white-and-brown-headed birds was seen at Nolting Pond. The associated birds had molted since the previous spring, however, so that their heads and upper necks had become completely white except for a narrow brown stripe that extended up the spine and dorso-medial skull area to end just below the crown. The adult White-fronted was last seen that winter on 8 March 1977.

On 16 November 1977 the adult White-fronted Goose reappeared in Louisa County for the third consecutive fall—this time again at Nolting Pond. The two white-headed geese, which I had become by this time to believe were hybrids of White-fronted and blue-morph Snow Geese, were again with it. On 20 November 1977 these three birds were again found and with them were four other apparent hybrid geese. These last four included two birds the size of the White-fronted Goose and two the size of large Canada Geese. These birds showed some characteristics similar to those of one species (neck length and shape; cheek patches that varied from almost invisible to quite white) and other characteristics similar to those of the other species (bill and leg color like one of the two species; general body plumage most like that of Canada Geese, etc.). There seemed little doubt that these birds were hybrids of White-fronted and Canada Geese. These seven birds were seen regularly until 23 March 1978.

In the fall of 1978 the two presumed hybrids of White-fronted and blue-morph Snow Geese and at least two of the presumed hybrids of White-fronted and Canada Geese were refound, but the White-fronted Goose failed to reappear.

SNOW GOOSE, *Chen caerulescens*

Rare but fairly regular in fall migration; rare and irregular in winter. Always with Canada Geese. An adult white-morph bird was present in Green Springs on 7 and 9 October 1976, and an adult blue-morph bird was also found here on 21 October 1976. An adult white-morph bird occurred in Green Springs from 29 September (possibly an early date for the Virginia Piedmont; see Larner *et al.*, 1979) to 15 October 1978. Three adult white-morph and one adult blue-morph Snow Goose appeared at Nolting Pond on 4 January 1979 (B. W. Keelan; Scott, 1979). The white-morph geese remained until 21 February, but the blue-morph bird was joined by two other adult blue-morph birds on 18 February, and these three remained until at least 27 February 1979.

EURASIAN GREEN-WINGED TEAL, *Anas c. crecca*

One record. The second record for Virginia's Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979) was established when a male was found with several other duck species (including one other teal species) on a small pond in Green Springs on 3 April 1978.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, *Buteo lagopus*

Rare and irregular in winter and spring. One was found in Green Springs over pastures on 7 January 1976, and an immature dark-phase bird was found over fallow fields here 27-28 March 1977. A light-phase adult bird was found over a fallow field in Green Springs 14-15 February 1979. An adult light-phase bird was also found near the main dam at Lake Anna on 15 January and 19 February 1978 (B. W. Keelan and T. F. Wieboldt) and a different light-phase bird at Green Springs on 19 February 1978 (Keelan).

BALD EAGLE, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Rare and irregular during much of the year. An adult was found soaring with Turkey Vultures over Green Springs on 23 September 1976. A large number of other records have been obtained at Lake Anna at various times of the year and by various observers. These records include 27 January 1978, 21 March 1979, 19 April 1976, and 8 August through 1 November 1979.

PEREGRINE FALCON, *Falco peregrinus*

One record. An adult was found in Green Springs on 10 October 1975.

KING RAIL, *Rallus elegans*

One record. One was found in a wet area dominated by *Juncus* rushes beside Hawkwood Lake on 18 April 1976.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, *Pluvialis dominica*

I consider this likely to be a rare but regular migrant on the central Virginia Piedmont in both spring and fall but probably more common in fall. The second and third spring records for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979) came in Green Springs with two birds on 30 March 1977 and one bird on 25 March 1978. During the fall of 1976 one to three birds of this species were seen at Green Springs on six dates between 13 September and 9 October, and in 1977 four daily fall records were accumulated between the dates of 9 September and 5 October. The high count of 7 birds on 9 September 1977 was a peak count for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979). Most birds were seen with flocks of Killdeer in pastures and plowed fields but several were found along Hawkwood Lake. There were no records in the fall of 1978.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One record. A winter-plumaged bird found at Hawkwood Lake on 9 October 1977 was a first record for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER, *Calidris melanotos*

A flock of 56 found in a pasture in Green Springs during a rainstorm on 25 March 1978 was a peak count for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979). Other birds were recorded irregularly from 19 March 1978 to 26 May 1977 in spring and from 29 July 1977 to 31 October 1976 in fall.

BLACK SKIMMER, *Rhynchops niger*

One record. An immature appeared at Hawkwood Lake on 11 August 1976 two days after hurricane Belle passed by Virginia just offshore. During its presence the bird actively skimmed in the shallows at the edge of the lake, and several excellent color photographs were taken of it. It was last seen on 22 August by Paris and Alice Coleman. This was a first record for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979).

LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio otus*

One record. A freshly road-killed bird was found on route 613 near Lake Anna on 12 March 1979.

SHORT-EARED OWL, *Asio flammeus*

A rare but regular winter resident in Green Springs; seen at least once every winter from 1975 to 1979. During the winter of 1978-79 at least 3 wintered in Green Springs. The earliest fall date was 3 November 1978 and the latest spring date 15 March 1979. The owls roosted in fallow fields and could be seen emerging from them at dusk. Short-ears were also seen regularly at Lake Anna during the winter of 1978-79.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, *Parus atricapillus*

Rare and irregular. There was an unprecedented invasion of this species down the Virginia Piedmont in the fall of 1975 (see Larner *et al.*, 1979). The first birds found in Green Springs were two in a loblolly pine plantation on 7 November 1975. The species was then seen quite regularly in this area until 2 December 1975 with a peak count of 4 on 8 November. The last record was of one bird in Green Springs on 1 January 1976.

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH, *Sitta pusilla*

One record. One was found in a very large winter association of birds in Green Springs in a grove of Virginia pines on 23 November 1975. This is considerably northwest of its usual range.

CEDAR WAXWING, *Bombycilla cedrorum*

Of interest primarily because of its presence in Green Springs during the entire summer of 1976. A pair was seen building a nest in a large shortleaf pine on 25 June, and on 8 August an apparently incubating bird was found (by S. H. Thomas) on a nest in a large red cedar about 0.35 mile east of the previous record. The outcome of these two nests is unknown, but an immature bird was seen in Green Springs with several adults near these two nestings on 3 August.

DICKCISSEL, *Spiza americana*

Three records, probably of the same bird. A winter-plumaged male was found with House Sparrows in the barnyard of a dairy farm in Green Springs 16-17 February 1979. An interesting note is that one of the barns here was filled with alfalfa hay, a favorite of Dickcissels. On 5 March 1979 a winter-plumaged male Dickcissel believed to be the same bird was found in a yard about 1.5 miles east of the first location.

HOUSE FINCH, *Carpodacus mexicanus*

Uncommon to common in Green Springs during the winter season and increasing during the period. Fall arrival dates were 23 October 1974, 28 October 1975, 16 October 1976, 16 October 1977, and 17 October 1978. The last spring dates were 9 March 1975, 14 March 1977, and 2 April 1978. Peak seasonal counts were 30 on 20 January 1976, 16 on 19 October 1976, 100 on 14 January 1978, and 230 on 9 and 10 February 1979.

COMMON REDPOLL, *Carduelis flammea*

One record. Three were found in alders along Nolting Pond on 12 March 1978 following the spectacular invasion of the winter of 1977-78 (see Scott, 1978).

TREE SPARROW, *Spizella arborea*

A rare bird in Louisa County during the period, though it was apparently occasionally common in winter in central Virginia at least until the late 1960's (see Larner *et al.*, 1979). However, during the invasion of this species into Virginia in January 1978 (see Scott, 1978) a total of 58 was found in Green Springs on 29 January.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW, *Melospiza lincolnii*

Fairly rare but regular in Louisa County in fall (all records from Green Springs) but unknown in spring. There are 27 fall records for the period with the earliest being on 12 September 1976 and the latest on 18 November 1975. The period of greatest abundance is 9-23 October, during which 16 of the records have been accumulated. Both extreme dates are apparently records for the Virginia Piedmont (Larner *et al.*, 1979).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR, *Calcarius lapponicus*

A rare but regular winter visitor in Green Springs during the period. Records were three on 16 January 1977, two on 18 January 1977, two on 16 January 1978, and one each on 8, 9, and 10 February 1979. The bird on the 9th was seen by David Fields and Stan Walens and that on the 10th by B. W. Keelan. The longspurs have always been found in barnyards with large flocks of Horned Larks and always during periods of heavy snowcover, when seed-eating birds, as a general group, were under severe food-location stress and thus flocked to the open barnyards.

SNOW BUNTING, *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Rare and irregular in the county in fall and winter on the south side of the east end of Lake Anna. Records are two with a large flock of Water Pipits in Green Springs on 6 November 1975, 27 flushed from a dike near the eastern end of Lake Anna on 6 December 1977, one at Lake Anna on 21 February 1978 (T. F. Wieboldt—apparently a late date for the Virginia Piedmont), 15 at Lake Anna on 20 January 1979 (B. W. Keelan, personal communication), and several records at Lake Anna in the fall of 1979 from 3 birds on 4 November (Sam Cooper—apparently an early date for the Virginia Piedmont) to 8 birds between 11 and 24 December (B. W. Keelan, *et al.*, personal communication).

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SABINE'S GULL AT CHINCOTEAGUE

WAYNE KLOCKNER

On Saturday, 19 May 1979, at approximately 2:30 p.m. Danny Bystrak and I were birding along the sandy beach near the abandoned Coast Guard station on Tom's Cove, Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia. The weather was characterized by partly cloudy skies, scattered showers, and a heavy cloud-bank moving in from the ocean despite a northwest wind of up to 15 m.p.h. Large numbers of shorebirds and gulls were feeding and loafing along the entire strand. While approaching a flock of Laughing Gulls, *Larus atricilla*, I noticed, without the aid of binoculars or scope, a gull with conspicuous white areas in its wings land amidst the flock. I called Bystrak's attention to the bird and said that I thought it might be a Sabine's Gull, *Xema sabini*.

We rapidly located the gull with 8.5x44 Swift binoculars and a 20x wide-angle Bushnell spotting scope. During the following 25 minutes, both of us had leisurely views of the gull while it was on the ground and in flight. At one point we approached to within 120 feet of the bird. We positively identified it as a Sabine's Gull from the following characteristics. It was distinctly smaller than the Laughing Gulls with which it associated, and as it stood with them, its legs were noticeably shorter. The gull had no eye ring. The dark gray hood had a narrow black collar which separated it from the white neck, and the bird's mantle was a lighter gray. The outer primaries were black with thin white streaks running the length of some of the feathers. The secondaries and inner primaries were white, creating a vivid pattern with black primaries and gray mantle. The underside and tail were white. The bill was short and black with a yellow tip, and the legs were dark. While feeding on the ground, the Sabine's Gull frequently threatened the Laughing Gulls by assuming a horizontal posture and opening its bill, thus revealing the red interior of its mouth. The gull was apparently in full adult breeding plumage because the hood was uniform in color, and the bird lacked any trace of the black tail band of an immature.

While this Sabine's Gull was my first, Bystrak had observed one in identical plumage at Sandy Point, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, on 21 May 1976.

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

TURKEY NESTING. A rare find for Tom Wieboldt occurred on 26 June 1979 when he flushed a Turkey from a nest containing 6 eggs. The location was a pine-heath community 2 miles north of West Augusta in Augusta County.

AVOCETS ON PIEDMONT. An observation of an American Avocet, previously unpublished, was made at Lake Anna, Louisa County, Virginia, on 28 June 1978 by William R. Willis, John W. Bolin, and Jeffrey L. Jones. Another one was seen and photographed at the same locality on 14 August 1979 by Willis and Frank Massie. These appear to be the third and fourth records for the Virginia Piedmont.

EARLY COMMON SNIPE. Possibly the earliest Virginia fall record of a Common Snipe was obtained on 4 August 1979 at a pond near Harriston, Augusta County, by Leonard Teuber, Kathleen Finnegan, and others.

KNOT AT SALTVILLE. There are few records of the Red Knot from Virginia west of the Blue Ridge, the latest Virginia checklist noting only three. Thus one found at Saltville 28-30 August 1979 by A. M. Decker was of great interest. This was probably the same bird reported here 2-3 September 1979 by Tom Haggerty, according to George A. Hall (*American Birds*, 34: 161, 1980).

COMMON NIGHTHAWK BREEDING. Employees of the Mack Truck Corporation in Harrisonburg, Virginia, reported 2 young Common Nighthawks on 1 July 1979 which had been present for over a week and had been seen on the gravel lot and on the truck cabs "sunning." The adult birds with the young were photographed by Mary Smith and Kathleen Finnegan who followed the young birds' progress through 11 July. On the last date about 7:30 p.m. they observed what was apparently a "flying lesson" when a parent would dive and almost strike the young on the ground, causing it to fly, and then would circle over it, calling, flying higher and farther away until the young bird, after staying in the air for about a minute, returned to the original spot. One of the birds seemed considerably weaker than the other.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH IN SUMMER. A calling Red-breasted Nuthatch was located in a pine stand on Great North Mountain 3.5 miles northeast of Ramsey Gap in southwestern Augusta County on 3 July 1979 (T. F. Wieboldt). This area is west of Craigsville and the elevation varies between 2600 and 3000 feet. This appears to be the first summer record from this area though it has been found in the southeastern part of the county in the Blue Ridge (*Raven*, 46: 87-88, 1975) and in western Rockingham County (*ibid.*, 39: 33, 1968).

CAROLINA WREN ON BRIDGE-TUNNEL. The four artificial islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel are a well-known trap for migrating land birds, but finding nonmigratory permanent residents on these bare rock piles is unusual at the very least. On 19 August 1979 H. T. Armistead, Joanna Bassert, and E. W. Marshall, III, found 3 singing Carolina Wrens on the second island from the north end.

SAVANNAH SPARROWS PROBABLY NESTING. Two singing Savannah Sparrows were discovered by Leonard Teuber and Isabel Obenschain on 2 June 1979 along route 778 near Harriston in northeastern Augusta County, Virginia, and on 5 June two singing males and one apparent female were observed. They were also seen on 8 June by YuLee Larner and Bill and Virginia Francis and on 12 and 15 June by Tom Wieboldt. The male birds were singing as if on territory, and one of them returned repeatedly to definite positions in the hayfield. The observers walked carefully through the field trying to locate a nest but were unsuccessful. On 21 June a pair of birds was seen by Teuber and Obenschain carrying food to a nest site and removing fecal sacs. The field was mowed soon after and further attempts to locate the nest failed. At the same location Teuber again heard a singing male on 1 August 1979. The Savannah Sparrow has been found nesting in Virginia twice before (*Raven*, 47: 57-58, 1976; *ibid.*, 49: 13-14, 1978).

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